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Remembering the Decolonial Nation: The M.T. Steyn Statue as a Site of Struggle

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DECLARATION

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as a Site of Struggle

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Ethical Clearance number: 9862

A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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(CCMS), School of Applied Human Sciences, College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal (Howard College), Durban, South Africa.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES DECLARATION

I, Johannes Jacobus Pretorius) declare that:

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I'd like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all of the people below; neither organised in alphabetical order, nor in order of importance, nor in the amount of 'gratitude' felt. Convention does, however, dictate for a reason;

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ABSTRACT

The study tracks the meaning/s of the M.T. Steyn statue, that stood on the grounds of the University of the Free State main campus, through two contextual periods: against a fledgling Afrikaner nationalism at the time of the statue's unveiling in 1929, and against the cries for transformation and decolonisation associated with the #RhodesMustFall movement that swept through South African campuses in 2015 and which eventually led to the relocation of the statue. This is done to understand how a cultural artefact embodies different meanings over a range of social and historical contexts, which, when read against these contexts can express and illuminate them in new and insightful ways. In this way the meaning/s of the statue is explored as a key in developing an understanding of how 'heritage' was and is constructed in the different periods in question. The research utilised theories of representation (Hall, 1997) combined with the notion of articulation, as used by Stuart Hall (1996), that imagines discourse as made up of unities consisting of 'articulated' elements that are both 'structured' and 'spoken' at the same time. This is used to describe 'heritage' as consisting of articulated notions of culture, identity and the past that transform over time and which, at different times, present different conceptualisation of the nation, who belongs, what culture is worth preserving, and what past constitute the past of the 'nation' i.e. that constitute the mirror in which a nation or a group can recognise itself. The study found that the statue of M.T. Steyn articulated an Afrikaner nationalist discourse, culturally expressed as a drive towards endogeneity and 'ownness', at the time of its unveiling in 1929, and the antithesis of what the #RhodesMustFall movement articulated as its own *modus operandi* in 2015, namely decoloniality. Furthermore, a relationship between what both these drives for cultural transformation embodied became evident when 'reading' the two periods together in an attempt to gain insight into a pre-dominant construction of heritage in contemporary South Africa. This 'reading' suggested that an opportunity to re-articulate the statue in a productive and affirmative way, that could resonate with a broader, outward looking, decolonial struggle many could identify with, got lost with its relocation. The contribution of the research to the study of 'heritage' in South Africa was using the theory of articulation to understand the landscape 'holistically', i.e., that included both a discursive and semiotic approach. Furthermore, by exploring the 'meaning' of a particular statue that had not been extensively researched in any academic text, hopefully provided new insight into the contemporary heritage landscape, embodied in a *particular* cultural artefact.

Key Words: Heritage, cultural transformation, decoloniality, #RhodesMustFall, Afrikaner nationalism, articulation.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACTAG	Arts and Culture Task Group
ACVV	Afrikaanse Christelike Vroue Vereeniging
ANC	African National Congress
ATKV	Afrikaanse Taal en Kultuur Vereeniging
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DACTS	Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology
FAK	Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
HNP	Herstigte Nasionale Party (Reformed Nasionale Party)
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
LP	Labour Party
NP	National Party/Nasionale Party
SAP	South African Party
SRC	Student Representative Council
SSSC	Statues, Signs and Symbols Committee
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFS	University of the Free State
#RMF	#RhodesMustFall
#BLM	#BlackLivesMatter

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Appendix A	Ethical Clearance Form
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Introduction

In March 2015 a student-led protest movement started on the campus of the University of Cape Town (UCT). Fueled by a polemic that developed around the statue of Cecil John Rhodes, a prominent and controversial figure in South African history whose statue occupied a prominent spot on the main campus of the university, the movement rapidly grew in scope and intensity under the name of #RhodesMustFall (#RMF), including sparking a similar protest, with very much the same core concerns, at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom, an institution that also had a deep connection with Rhodes' legacy (Knudsen & Anderson, 2018:2).

Although the #RMF movement putatively started when a student threw human feces at the statue of Rhodes, that particular incident manifested what would later be described as persistent undercurrents of exclusion and marginalization experienced by the black student body on campus, despite South Africa's transition to a multiparty democracy in 1994 and the resultant advent of majority rule. These latent tensions became the driving force of the #RMF movement and its particular struggle articulated succinctly as a struggle against a "perpetuated sense of inferiority and inadequacy" (Nyamnjoh, 2016:51) that the black student body had experienced.

At the level of university politics, the #RMF movement heralded the start of a range of similar protest movements in around campuses around South Africa (Bosch, 2016) which in the months following would be described as broader social calls for the transformation of tertiary curricula as well as the removal of the financial barriers that barred poor, mostly black, students from tertiary education in the first place (Marschall, 2019:1092, Knudsen & Anderson, 2018:6). Where #RMF lent force to the former the latter came to be organized under the #FeesMustFall movement, a range of protests which started on the campus of the University of the Witwatersrand in October 2015 but once again spread to campuses around the country.

The causes, implications and significance of #RMF and its associated movements have been subject to much scholarly debate. Two related understandings of the movement became pertinent and have bearing on the current research project. On the one hand attention was focused on the relation between the structural, socio-economic inequities that plagued post-apartheid South Africa and the various cultural forces and articulations that characterized the very same society (Marschall, 2019; Barnabas, 2016; Goodrich & Bombardello, 2016) most

notably expressed within the heritage sector and very often framed within debates around representation. On the other hand the #RMF movement was also seen as a form of counter-memory production, as a movement geared towards contesting a dominant understanding of South Africa's past and normative memory production (Bosch 2016; Marschall, 2019; Mbembe, 2016, Nyamnjoh, 2016; Kokot, 2017), as expressed in the many ways in which the past can weigh down on the present, be it in the differing forms of representation, within daily communicative constructions of the past or as embodied in official history writing.

At the same time the #RMF movement had to be understood as a movement that drew its trajectory from origins firmly rooted in a body of work having a connection with either a decolonial tradition or that of black consciousness (Ahmed, 2017; Gibson, 2016, Mbembe, 2016). Names of decolonial writers such as Ngugi wa Thiongo and Frantz Fanon were heard at rallies and discussions and a large portion of the ideas in the #RMF mission statement (RMF, 2015) were derived from the writing of Steve Biko. Furthermore, #RMF tied in with social justice discourses that drew on intersectionality theory, a body of theory that advocates for freedom from oppression based on race, gender, able-bodiedness and other factors of exclusion (#RMF, 2015).

Regardless of the particular currents of thought and the correspondences and differences they might have had, the result was that the #RMF movement re-activated and quickly became imbricated within discourses around decolonisation and the foregrounding of African epistemological traditions (Gibson, 2016:8). In two key respects there existed a resemblance between these two movements, a concern with the past, culture and identity and the relation it holds to the circumstances of the present.

With its momentum picking up and increasingly becoming politicised, what started as a student movement arguably became a card carrier for a broader struggle that stretched beyond the confines of the University and its sphere of influence (Knudsen & Anderson, 2018:6) taking with it some of its theoretical inspirations as well as some of its more strident calls for transformation. In one way or another the #RMF and related movements thus significantly changed the way monuments, memorials and statues are understood, received and appraised until the present.

On the campus of the University of the Free State (UFS) a particular statue also drew the ire of portions of the student body. In front of the main building on the campus of the University of the Free State stood the statue of the long dead president of an old Boer republic. The statue,

erected in 1929, was that of President M.T. Steyn, president of the Republic of the Orange Free State from 1895 until 1902 (Giliomee, 2004), when the small republic was dissolved into the British empire after the Boer defeat in the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899 – 1902).

The case around the Steyn statue proved interesting in a number of ways. Isolated calls for the removal of the Steyn statue had been heard as early as 2003 (UFS, 2018) but reached a climax in the wake of the #RMF protest, mostly by the UFS Student Representative Council (McQueen, 2020). What effects the #RMF movement might have had on how certain historical cultural artefacts are perceived to have had its time in the popular imagination; and what issues resurged on the campus of the UFS resonated with the #RMF movement. Apart from the timing, what set events at the UFS apart from those at UCT was the process that unfolded once calls to remove the statue were made. An intensive consultation process (UFS, 2018) ensued that involved many stakeholders, processes of public participation, appeals and counter appeals (McQueen, 2020).

In brief, when the protest movements started in 2015, Jonathan Jansen, the then Vice-Chancellor of the UFS, instigated a three day discussion session discussing the role of statues, symbols and signs on campus (UFS, 2018) where calls for the removal of the statue were once again heard. In 2017 the university instigated an Integrated Transformation Plan that tasked itself with an accelerated transformation on campus. It included the formation of the Names, Symbols and Spaces Task Team (NSSTT) whose mandate included exploring possible courses of action regarding the Steyn statue (McQueen, 2020). In 2018 the Student Representative Council (SRC) once again called for the removal of the statue, and another task team was established, this time by the new Vice-Chancellor Francis Petersen, to make recommendations on a course of action. This task team commissioned a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to be conducted that included a public participation process. The HIA recommended that the statue should stay in the interest of heritage preservation, but, considering that the statue faced the prospect of serious vandalism it recommended a compromise solution; that the statue should be relocated to the War Museum of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein (Roodt *et al*, 2018:77-78). The statue was thus to be removed from the campus of the UFS.

The historical personage of President Steyn, however, could not have been a personality further removed from that of Cecil John Rhodes. A figure acclaimed for the reconciliatory role he played between the Boers and the British at the end of the war, as well as the general esteem he held on both sides of the conflict, held him in an mostly elevated position in the eyes of the

post war world for years to come (Kruger, 1961; Pakenham 1979; Giliomee, 2004). Apart from that, the figure of Steyn also came to occupy an important place in post-war Afrikaner politics and he became a heavily mythologised figure in the psyche of the Afrikaner (Giliomee, 2004). With the renewed gaze on statues from yesteryear in the wake of #RMF, these sentiments became re-activated in those advocating for the statue to stay (Roodt *et al*, 2018:141).

Because an exhaustive process was followed, the figure of Steyn was, as statue and as personality, sharply illuminated in due course. The discourses that advocated for removal and the counter discourses that wanted Steyn to stay became topical. What happened at the UFS thus became a particularly noteworthy case study because the arguments were not made from one given political perspective and the opportunity for counter opinions to get expressed was rife. The deliberate process lent weight to discussion around the past and representation and the Steyn case gained the potential to become a microcosm of the South African situation and an exemplary case to consider when trying to understand how cultural artefacts, like the statue, were being appraised at the time.

The Statue was eventually taken down on the 27 June 2020 and relocated to the War Museum of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein. The removal of the statue was contextualized by relevant events around the world. If attention gradually shifted away from the concretised expression of the past the gaze was again firmly cast with the #Blacklivesmatter (#BLM) movement that swept through the United States in the wake of the death of George Floyd, an hitherto unknown black man that became the symbol of racial discrimination and police brutality, at the hands of police officers in Minnesota in 2020. Curiously the resurgent #BLM movement re-activated much of what the #RMF and #FMF protests stood for and in similar fashion anger was often directed to symbols of the past where the original spark that ignited the protests in the first place was considered to be situated in the circumstances of the present, albeit those inherited from a ‘disgraced’ past.

Problem Statement

Threaded through the dynamic explicated above is the concept of ‘heritage’. The concept of ‘heritage’ as derived from Stuart Hall (2005) and deconstructed in the theory chapter, is conceptualised as a *discourse* that articulate three categories together: ‘culture’, ‘identity’ and ‘the past’. Culture insofar as it indicates “being concerned with the production and the exchange of meaning shared by a common culture” (Hall, 1997:2); identity insofar as “a shared national identity ... depends on the cultural meanings, which bind each member individually

into the large national story” (Hall, 2005:22); and the past insofar as it is the construction of a past in which “the nation slowly constructs for itself a sort of collective social memory” (Hall, 2005:24). Heritage is conceptualised as discourse in which the aforementioned categories become articulated. As such a key guiding question is posited:, ‘what past and culture belongs to who’?

The heritage discourse, expressed and practiced in many different sites, is a key terrain where *nationhood*, *group identity*, *culture*, and a *past* is constructed (Hall, 2005; Rassool, 2000). As a discourse, the heritage landscape is open to transformation, that is, the categories that are linked within discourse can be, within bounds, articulated in a specific way, de-articulated and re-articulated. Importantly this process happens through *representation*, through the cultural artefacts, the texts and the ways of speaking that give voice to a discourse. As such representations ‘articulate’ heritage and become the mirror in which individuals or groups can see themselves reflected. This is the fundamental point of departure of the thesis and is developed fully in the theoretical framework chapter.

When South Africa went through political transition in 1994, the heritage landscape was considered a key site at which a ‘new’ nation, a ‘new’ collective South African culture, and a ‘new’ past could be constructed (Rassool, 2000, Sheperd, 2008; Marschall, 2019). Heritage became a catchword expressed and practiced at many different sites (Rassool, 2000). Heritage, however, considering the country’s past, was also imminently problematic (Barnabas, 2016:113; Tomaselli *et al*, 1996).

The official heritage landscape was administered by government policy documents, the main one being the well-respected 1996 *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* (Marschall, 2019:1091) which in line with the ethos of a new South Africa embodies a multi-cultural pluralism that celebrated diversity. Heritage policy immediately after the end of Apartheid negotiated a precarious terrain yet managed to maintain a balancing act between the old and the new that placated many calls for recognition (See Literature review Part 2).

To construct a nation consisting of a ‘historically excluded’ black majority and a white minority that held power in the country for a very long time, a strong collective identity had to be posited which allowed for the preservation of white heritage, albeit de-amphasised, while at the same time stressing a ‘new’ liberated identity, culture and past. This was consequently reflected in the official and popular heritage discourse (Rassool, 2000, Marschall, 2019).

This already fragile consensus was challenged with the student protests in 2015. #RMF positioned itself against much of what the 1994 ‘moment’ stood for, claiming that *nothing* had really changed since the end of formal Apartheid (#RMF, 2015). The movement embodied a more strident call for transformation and drew on tenets of social justice discourses, Black Consciousness and decoloniality. What the #RMF’s calls for transformation engaged with thus explicitly implicated on culture, identity and the past, and directly engaged with questions around heritage. Importantly, because of the fundamental tenets of the movement (see Literature review Part 2) what was targeted was mostly the iconography and cultural artefacts associated with a white history, culture and identity. As representation of the past many colonial and apartheid era cultural artefacts were considered inappropriate in the context of the time (Nyamnjoh, 2016, Mbembe, 2016: np) and any representations that were evaluated under the interpretative frameworks associated with #RMF had to take into account that it would be read in a discourse that struggles with terms such as ‘white supremacy’, ‘western epistemological traditions’, and ‘oppression’ among others.

A renewed tension between representations that stood for a specific heritage that embodied in the eyes of #RMF exclusion, alienation, oppression, and a continuation of an apartheid past and a drive towards a cultural transformation in the name of decoloniality emerged. This constitutes the broad problem of the study. The specific problematic, framed within the larger one mentioned above, emerged with the introduction of the specific case study.

As a case study, the research explores a historic Afrikaans cultural artefact that had become problematic in the wake of the #RMF protest. As indicated in the introduction, the study revolves around the statue of M.T. Steyn, a former president of the Orange Free State who was a prominent figure in the Afrikaans liberation struggle around the time of the Second Anglo-Boer war and who was consequently heavily mythologized in the rise of Afrikaner nationalism (Giliomee, 2004). Receiving a fair amount of media attention at the time (Rossouw, 2018; Makhafola, 2018; Pijoos, 2018; Morapela, 2018, Roodt *et al*, 2018), the statue quickly became topical and was eventually taken down on the 27th of June 2020. Representing an important Afrikaner figure, at times heavily mythologized in Afrikaner history, and because the statue was removed from a prominent space at a South African university only *after* an extensive process was followed, the removal of the M.T Steyn statue from the campus provided an ideal opportunity to investigate the contextual dynamics in the South African heritage landscape.

A key dynamic that emerged in the wake of the #RMF protests, was that the intensity of the #RMF movement itself focused attention, and initiated from the Afrikaner community, counter discourses that re-activated and re-inscribed some of these representations with meaning. This prompted many well-known figures from the Afrikaner community to make reference to the importance of some of the artefacts in preserving the ‘heritage’ of the Afrikaner. The statue of M.T. Steyn was one of them (Rossouw, 2018:1). Many of the figures had been forgotten and taken for granted until they became problematic, and with the re-focused attention many of these representations acquired a newfound power of expression around which many Afrikaners rallied (Roodt, *et al*, 2018:136-138; Rossouw, 2018:1-2). In the case of M.T. Steyn, what these counter-discourses, bar those on the very far right, invoked was not only that Steyn was deemed an important icon in Afrikaner ‘heritage’ but that he embodied an *Afrikaner* decolonial struggle.

The specific research problem is thus that a renewed tension had emerged between what these ‘disgraced’ representations have come to stand for against the background of #RMF and the culture, identity and past i.e. ‘heritage’, in this case Afrikaner, that they came to represent. As such, as a representation, a struggle for the sign (Tomaselli, 1996) raged around the Steyn statue. What was at stake over this ‘struggle’ was *who* could see themselves reflected in what the sign came to stand for, both at the level of a group identity and a broader nation.

Central research question

As a discursive site of struggle over articulations of culture, identity and the past i.e., heritage, what can the ‘meaning’ of the M.T. Steyn statue, as a representation, tell us about a divided and contested heritage landscape today.

Three Supporting Research Questions

1. What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of its unveiling?
2. What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of the #RMF protests, in the context of the movement’s calls for transformation and decolonisation?
3. What can an analysis of the ‘meaning’ of the M.T. Steyn statue tell us about how heritage is constructed today?

Broader objectives of the study

The discourses surrounding movements like #RMF and the associated ripples across the official heritage landscape concern the relationship between culture, identity, and the past, and the representations that work to articulate that relationship. These representations of the past then bring together a diversity of issues that are linked with notions of race, nationhood, meaning, memory, history, self and other (Marschall, 2008).

This research project aims to understand how the Steyn statue may function as a site around which various levels of analysis operate; as an expression that under current interpretative frameworks stands for and represents a past rendered untenable to a large proportion of the country's population, as site through which various social and political forces are, and have become articulated, and lastly, as a cultural artefact that grounds the history, in any small way, of a group like the Afrikaner.

“Every new political order forms a group identity through a process of selective remembering and invention of usable pasts” (Marschall, 2005:19). Similarly, movements like #RMF, associated with broader decolonial movements, which led to the removal of the Steyn statue, sought to bring about social, epistemological and symbolic transformation (Nyamnjoh, 2016:52) through an intense re-engagement with a culture, an identity, and a past. But what a decolonial project, as embodied by #RMF, posits to as its anthesis may also intersect with that which stands for Afrikaner heritage.

The above is important to understand because any appraisal or (re)construction of ‘a heritage’ has a bearing on;

1. Notions of self and identity, who belongs and who does not (Woodward, 2007). For Hall (2005:22) the national heritage landscape “is a powerful source of such meaning ... those who cannot see themselves reflected in its mirror cannot properly ‘belong’”.
2. Affirming a common historical experience. If heritage is “the material embodiment of the spirit of the nation” (Hall, 2005:24), any reconstruction has important implications on what constitutes the nation, and consequently nation building in a democratic dispensation.
3. The political landscape. The past has a strong political aspect (Tomaselli & Mpofu, 1995) and contrasting the rhetorical/political aspect and contrasting this with a broader call for transformation, also political, can help to develop a more nuanced understanding of the past.

The past tells us who we are in the present, and the heritage landscape has become a powerful place in which the past ‘lives’ today. The overarching, broad objective of the study is thus to find out how various instances of the past as exemplified by the case study of a specific cultural artefact, shape and are being shaped in contemporary South African society today, and how this may reveal the crises and contradictions of the present.

More generally, how an Afrikaner past can be negotiated as part of a broader South African, and consequently African identity in the current socio-political climate. What Afrikaner subject positions are created by representations of the Afrikaner past in a national heritage landscape that seeks to build a homogenised national identity.

Note needs to be made that the researcher is aware that when reference is made to ‘a group like the Afrikaner’ that this suggest an essential ‘groupness’. This matter has bearing on the theoretical and methodological point of departure of the study that will become evident in subsequent chapters. In short, the methodology sketches a heuristic device, suggested by the theoretical co-ordinates, that posits, as truthfully as possible, constructs with which subjects (groups, individuals etc.) have identified with at particular times in history. These constructs are conceptualized as recruiting subjects rather than a group necessarily identifying with a construct *because* they possess a specific ‘groupness’. This is implicit in the theory of articulation (see chapter two) as a strategy to *avoid* reductionism. Thus, when referring to ‘groups’ in an essentialist manner the reader should keep in mind that indeed a ‘groupness’ exist in the sense that a group have *come* to identify with a struggle at specific times, and are therefore a *group* in that sense, but that this is open to change and re-articulation.

A final note on nomenclature needs to be made: When reference is made to the *Anglo-Boer War* it refers specifically to the **second** war between the two Boer Republics and the British empire and its associated colonies waged between 1899-1902, unless stated otherwise. A justification of the use of the term *Anlo-Boer War* instead of the *South African War*, a term deemed more appropriate by contemporary scholarship, is made in the introduction to chapter 3.

Structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework. In this chapter the theoretical co-ordinates of the study will be discussed. These proceed from Stuart Hall’s discussion of representation in which both a discursive and semiotic approach is covered. Thereafter a deconstruction of heritage as

discourse is proposed. Lastly the theory of articulation is discussed as a means to ‘quilt’ the theoretical framework together under one overarching concept.

Chapter 3 – Literature review. The Literature review is divided into two parts. Part One covers the historical contextual block, pertaining to the first research question. It traces the progression of cultural transformations regarding culture, identity and the past from the Second Anglo Boer War up until the time of the unveiling of the M.T. Steyn statue in 1929. Part Two covers the more recent contextual block, pertains to the second research question, and traces transformations in the heritage landscape from the years of ‘reform’ in the late 1980s up until the publication of the 2017 *Revised White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage*.

Chapter 4 – Methodology. The methodology chapter proposes the methodological process followed in conducting the analysis.

Chapter 5 – Analysis. The Analysis is divided into two parts. Part One analyses the first ‘historic’ contextual block: BLOCK A. Part Two analysis the second ‘contemporary’ contextual block: BLOCK B.

Chapter 6 – Conclusion.

Chapter Conclusion

This concludes the introduction. With the scene set, the chapters below will aim to build a case to answer the research questions. The next chapter will sketch a theoretical constellation that will serve as the foundation of the methodological frame the rest of the study will proceed in, and which indeed informed a conceptualisation of the problem in the first place.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The research problem centres on the *construction* of a ‘heritage’ through the practice of representation - how a cultural artefact like a statue can be said to generate meaning in a specific cultural and historical context; in the case of the Steyn statue first as a signifying element that constructs and fixes meaning at a time of nascent Afrikaner nationalism, particularly the construction of memories of the Second Anglo-Boer War in the late 1920s, and secondly as the various meanings the statue came to accrue and circulate over time, ending up in 2015, a period framed by discourses of transformation and decolonization. Or, how the statue constructs meaning through its particular use of language or rhetoric, and how these meaning/s ‘work’ to generate notions of nationhood and identity through its representation/deployment of the past, both at the time of its construction and within a highly sensitive contemporary political climate.

The framework below consists of theories that will help trace the text, the meanings that circulate through them and the relation they hold to the social landscape through the passage of time and in their various historical contexts. It is hoped that these might shed light on the contexts themselves, in this case the heritage discourse. Theories of representation situated within a post/structuralist understanding of language and viewed through a *constructionist* lens are explored to develop an understanding of how meaning is made through language. Reference to both the semiotic and discursive mode of constructing meaning through language is made.

This will lead to a discussion on how the past and identity is inscribed through specifically the heritage discourse, a discourse particularly focused on constructing the past and generating the subjects that belong to that past. This will be preceded by a consideration of what is meant by ‘heritage’ and the relation this may hold with different conceptions of culture.

Finally, the concept of articulation is explored as a specific theory and strategy to understand how all of the above link together; how discourses link meaning together, how these meanings connect to the social or social forces, how this process impacts on an identity, a constituency, or a ‘nation’, and how all of this happens through the ‘text’ or a cultural artefact like a statue.

Theories Of Representation

An overview of representation

The first part of this section develops a framework to understand the following: what, in a *constructionist* approach, is meant by representation, meaning and culture and how are these related to language. Among others, the dissertation draws from Stuart Hall's 1997 work on representation. Furthermore, the post/structuralist foundation of Hall's work, with a focus on semiotics and discourse, is discussed to arrive at an understanding of how language constructs the world around us, codes, what constitutes a 'text', how meaning change over time and space and finally how this relates to subjectivity.

The mediation of the world through language

A structuralist and post-structuralist understanding of the world, one that informs this framework, shares a concern with the relationship between language and the world it inhabits. What we experience as reality is somehow *mediated* by language (Chandler, 2017). This mediation refers to how language can be thought of as a filter through which the world is appraised and experienced. Chandler (2017) outlines three broad approaches to how this mediation is conceptualised across various intellectual traditions. Firstly, a conceptualisation where the world 'exists' objectively and the filter causes us to see it in specific ways. This will be the 'realist' conception and is consistent with an empiricist or positivist understanding of reality where our experience leads us to 'build' conceptions of an existing world that is there to be known or discovered.

Secondly, the 'filter' can be thought of as already being brought to bear on the world 'outside' so that nothing can be conceptualized outside the knowledge and categories we use to interpret it. In such an understanding, that with which we interpret the world constructs the world of things and ideas around us and in more extreme renditions 'reality' becomes wholly determined by the structures through which the individual perceives it (Chandler, 2017).

Thirdly, *constructionists* argue, the world is indeed constructed by processes of mediation such as language, but that this is the result of the social processes that tie people together in a collective appraisal and understanding of the world. The relationship between language, things and the social thus becomes a key concern for constructionists (Chandler, 2017). It is this relationship that was described by Stuart Hall (1997) as the practice of representation i.e. the representation of 'things' through language, a language constituted by its use by a group of people. Hall's specific understanding on how the world is mediated by a language and how 'meaning' is constructed will be covered in the next section.

A delineation of representation courtesy of Stuart Hall

The practice of representation is described by Hall (1997) as a two-fold process. Firstly, a link or correspondence is established between the realm of things (the *things* that exist in the world be it objects, people, events, abstract ideas etc) and our conceptual map (the collection of mental representations of those *things*). This *conceptual map* consists of essentially meaningful categories that order and impress upon the world around us. The second process of representation entails those concepts being re-represented through a *language system* – an ordering of a set of signs that can convey meaning and allow for the communication and expression of those concepts (Hall, 1997:5).

Codes and culture

The first aspect that becomes pertinent in Hall's work is the emphasis on conventionalised codes that link the conceptual maps and the system of signs that represent those concepts together. Because there is no necessary relationship between our concepts and the language systems we employ to articulate them, a dynamic explored later in the chapter, their relationship can differ from one group or language system to the next. What is an originally arbitrary relationship becomes temporarily fixed by conventionalised codes that loosely 'fix' the two orders together into what is called the meaning of a particular sign. Here, meaning is referred to as the result of this 'fixing', of tying together a specific concept to a specific expression or sign that can be understood by a hypothetical group that understands the 'code'. These codes, according to Hall, are what makes the construction of meaning possible – they ensure that a common language and understanding can exist and that meaning can become fixed within a given culture or grouping. The dynamic between the conceptual map and the language that lends expression to it, however, is a complex one. The concepts at our disposal, or categories we use to think cannot exist prior to their representation in language, but language also necessarily draws on these conceptual categories to operate. Consequently, in such an understanding a relationship is established where meaning cannot exist outside of its representation in a language. Importantly a shared conceptual map also means nothing if it cannot be articulated through a language spoken by a subject (Hall, 1997).

Culture, in Hall's understanding, is threaded through the entire process. If there is no necessary link between the conceptual realm and that which we use to represent and articulate, the ways we fix these two domains together to establish a common meaning are acquired through a shared culture – through being inducted into a conventionalized way of relating ideas to specific signifying systems. For Hall (1997) the practice of representation *is* that which links meaning and language to culture.

Breakdown of three different approaches courtesy of Hall

A key component that underpins Hall's thought on representation is the *constructionist* approach to meaning-making (Hall, 1997). Although Hall's description of constructionism differs from the notion as delineated by Chandler (2017) in some ways, it shares some of its basic assumptions. Here the construction of reality is specifically about the construction of *meaning*. Meaning is *created* through the practice of representation – through the use of language to order and construct the world of things around us. This is opposed by Hall to both the reflective and intentional approaches to meaning making through language. In the reflective approach language merely reflects an essence that already exists prior to its symbolisation. This assumes that language mimics the inherent characteristics of the 'things' in nature and that there is a natural correspondence between the form of language and nature. This reminds one of Chandler's descriptions of 'realism' where it's all about nomenclature, that is, naming things that already exist in the world. In the intentional approach meaning is solely the providence of the author of the message (Hall, 1997:11). Here constructing meaning is an act of the individual that imposes his/her's description on things and consequently controls what meanings are attached to what things. The intentional approach ignores the inherently social character of language – that meaning is constructed within and through a language whose relationship to concepts and meanings have been conventionalized over time and that it is the act of representation, within this framework, that shapes our world (Hall, 1997). Thus, if the world is mediated through language, is *constructed*, albeit not necessarily in ways we intentionally produce, this happens within what Hall considers as 'culture'. In iteration, representation is the result of the process that links things, concepts and signs together and is at the heart of the meaning making process in culture (Hall, 1997).

It is important to note here that language is referred to in a broad sense. Any organized system of signs can be said to comprise a language system. Hence something like the 'language' spoken by arrangement of clothes people wear, the way various ingredients are blended together to create a culinary dish and even the arrangement of coloured lights we use to regulate traffic all comprise a language of signs, conventionally coded, that convey certain meanings within certain contexts and cultures.

The Structuralist Background and Semiotics

The constructionist approach to representation delineated by Hall is informed by the structuralist and post-structuralist's concern with how language systems construct meaning and the world around us (Hall, 1997). In *The Practice of Representation* (1997) two main treatments of representation are discussed; a *semiotic* approach and a *discursive* approach. These do not necessarily exclude one another but rather involves a shift in emphasis that has different methodological implications. Both of the above, in combination with the notion of *articulation* discussed later, will be drawn upon in the development of the methodology discussed in chapter 4.

Starting with the semiotic approach, Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist seen as the founding father of both structuralism and semiology (or semiotics), systemized the way language operates to create meaning. As a brief digression, it has to be noted here that there is a debate about the correct usage of the terminology, namely, regarding the use of the term 'semiotics, or 'semiology'. The term 'semiology' is often associated with the work of Ferdinand de Saussure and the term 'semiotics' with that of Charles Sanders Peirce, both who studied the generation of meaning through signs but who used vastly divergent approaches that do in some cases overlap (Daylight, 2014:37-50). The current researcher, however, uses the terms interchangeably, as does Daniel Chandler (2017), although when reference is made to semiotics it implies a tendency towards the tradition de Saussure worked in rather than that of Peirce's. To continue; although de Saussure explicitly focused on the linguistic aspect of meaning his system opened the way for other thinkers such as Claude Levi Strauss (1963) and Roland Barthes (1964) to extrapolate the linguistic to the broader cultural domain in which language would come to encompass any signifying system that generate meaning in a given culture. This broadening out by theorist such as Levi Strauss and Barthes refined the field of semiotics – the study of signs – that developed hand in hand with a post/structuralist approach to language (Chandler, 2017).

De Saussure formulated key concepts that have become standard terminology in the semiotic approach. The sign was split into two elements. The *signifier* was defined as the form the sign takes on i.e. the basic material unit that can carry meaning; the sound, image or word etc. The *signified* was defined as the concept that the signifier refers to; the notion of the 'thing' that we carry around in our heads. Together these two elements constituted the sign. Important to note however, as emphasised by Hall (1997:18), is that this split only becomes apparent upon analysis. In practice we do not make the distinction but are only confronted by the sign (Chandler, 2017). A language system thus functions as a system of signs; to function as a language they have to communicate meaning and to communicate meaning they have to rely

on the conventionalized codes that fix those meanings (Hall, 1997). These codes are nothing other than the cultural ‘fixing’ of the relationship between a signifier and signified. In this way semiotics offers a relation between ‘things’, concepts and signs as discussed at the start of the chapter.

An important component of de Saussure insights was that language operated as a system of difference. This means that in a signifying system signs can only signify or carry meaning if they are differentiated from other signs (Hall, 1997). In the semiotic approach signs acquire meaning in relation to that which they are not.

Other semiotic concepts include paradigms, syntagms, connotation and denotation. In brief, paradigms are groups of related yet different signifying elements that can be combined into a sequence that runs like a linguistic sentence, a sequence called syntagms. Roland Barthes (1964) uses the example of clothing; the paradigm of hats (all the different types) is combined with the paradigm of scarfs which when worn together forms a syntagm, an articulated expression consisting of various paradigms.

At the same time the paradigmatic signifieds can be broken down into their denotative and connotative modalities. At the denotative level signifiers point, literally, to the object it represents. A picture of a car points to the car in its materiality. At the connotative level, however, the picture of a certain car invokes “a whole range of cultural meanings that derive not from the sign itself, but from the way the society uses and values both the signifier and the signified” (Fiske and Hartley, 1977: 25). These semiotic concepts will be more fully developed in the ‘semiotic toolkit’ in the methodology chapter.

The Discursive approach to Representation

Hall’s 1997 summary of theories of representation is not limited to semiotics only. Within a poststructuralist paradigm the discursive approach provides another angle on how meaning is constructed within language (Hall, 1997:42), albeit language in a more comprehensive sense than hitherto discussed:

In the semiotic approach, representation was understood on the basis of the way words functioned as signs within language. But [...] in a culture, meaning often depends on larger units of analysis – narratives, statements, groups of images, whole discourses which operate across a variety of texts, areas of knowledge about a subject which have acquired widespread authority.

When one considers Hall’s three categories; ‘things’, concepts and signs described earlier, it is easy to see how this relates to signifier, signified and sign. Language makes reference to

concepts; concepts stand in a relation to ‘things’ and consequently the world is mediated by a language or systems of signs. The discursive approach formulated by Michel Foucault, however, consists of a much broader relation between language and the social and is more concerned with the networks of knowledge and meaning in which particular texts exist and are produced. Furthermore, a discursive approach to representation lays emphasis on meaning being historically situated, the importance of power/knowledge and a very specific construction of the subject. There is thus a different dynamic between what was previously described as the construction of meaning through the work of representation i.e. that of establishing a connection between the world of things, concepts and the sign or language (also *constructionist*).

To illustrate the above, and by way of constructing a definition, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1990) describes discourse as an *a priori* totality, containing both linguistic and non-linguistic elements neither of which can be understood apart from the other. Using the metaphor of building; asking for a brick and laying the brick in place are considered two separate instances, the former linguistic, the latter non linguistic. Both, however, form part of a single unified ‘thing’, the **process** (*as a social practice*) of building a wall. This ‘process’ would be the “totality which includes within itself the linguistic and the non-linguistic [that which] we call discourse” a process where there is a “strict relation between the social and the discursive” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990:100 as cited in Hall, 1997). Discourse is thus described as a social phenomenon.

This encourages the authors to elaborate further. Every social configuration is meaningful insofar as it establishes a set of relations between objects that are socially constructed and context dependent. The process of building a wall establishes a relation between asking for a brick and the action of placing it. But the asking and placing is only meaningful when done in the context of ‘practicing’ building a wall, a practice that only make sense in a broader historical context. Discourse is thus a set of relations. A round spherical object only becomes a football insofar as it forms part of a relation between ball, players and pitch and only insofar as this relation is situated in the broader contexts of ‘sport’ prevalent at a given time and locality. The meaningfulness of each element is only constituted within the totality, in this case the discourse of football (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990)

The relation between our three categories thus changes somewhat. The relation between what exists in the world, the practices around these, their expression in language and the systems of knowledge that ground them in particular contexts and times all moved the theoretical terrain

from a focus on the linguistic expression in semiotics, by the use of signs, to an emphasis on the totality in which certain expressions are linked to certain actions or practices.

As Hall (1997:62) notes, whereas the semiotic approach to constructionism and representation focuses on the construction of meaning through language and signification, Foucault and the discursive approach are more “concerned with the whole discursive formation to which a text or practice belongs” (Hall, 1997:51). Roland Barthes in *Myth Today* (1957:112) illustrates an example that is useful to describe the change of emphasis between the semiotic and discursive approaches to representation. Barthes elaborates on how an object acquires meaning in different context: “take a black pebble: I can make it signify in several ways, it is a mere signifier, but if I weigh it with a definite signified (a death sentence, in an anonymous vote) it will become a sign”, it will become meaningful. Whereas semiotics will explore the specific relation between signifier and signified to see how these signify ‘death’ the discursive approach would explore the historically situated discursive formation, linked to knowledge systems or *epistemes*, representing different expressions of power underpinning them, in which the black pebble can come to mean ‘death’ – for example trying to understand the institutional practice of the ‘anonymous vote’.

The broadening out of theories of representation to include the discursive serves to give background on the entire field of representation, as described by Hall. The two are not necessarily mutually exclusive and often use the same language and general framework. As such the description above adds extra nuance to the scope of representation, especially with regards to three instances, ‘praxis or practice’ the ‘historical context’ and ‘the subject’. I will briefly cover these below.

Representation and Praxis

The discursive, according to Laclau and Mouffe (1990), always makes reference to an action. What one says and what one does forms part of the same whole. Meaning and action are related insofar as it is through an action that a meaning becomes inculcated. In reference to Wittgenstein the authors note that “meaning is learned from, and shaped in instances of use, so both its learnings and its configuration depends on pragmatics” and furthermore that “every identity or discursive object is constituted in the context of an action” (Hall, 1997:7). Chandler (2017:79) confirms “[w]hatever our philosophical positions, in our daily behavior we routinely act on the basis that some representations of reality are more reliable than others”. The very distinction between language and action, what we do and what we say was taken account of by the idea of discourse which “defines and produces the objects of our knowledge [...] governs

the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about [... and] influences how ideas are put into practice” (Hall, 2007:44).

The Openness and Indeterminacy of Meaning over Time

A key theoretical implication of both approaches to representation is the ‘openness’ of the establishment of meaning through language or practice. If the relationship between a signifier and signified is arbitrary a different language would use different signifiers to refer to different signifieds: it would have “a distinctive and thus arbitrary way of organizing the world into concepts and categories” (Hall, 1997:17 in reference to Culler 1976). The codes that fix meaning within culture at any given time would then be subject to change; the way meaning is and can be constructed within a *culture* would be situated within history – it is something that can be analyzed over time. Concerning the *discursive*, the formations of knowledge and the practices that underpin their associated meanings, that “organise conduct, understanding, practice and belief” (Hall, 1997:51) are also valid only at a specific time and within a given culture; “They did not and could not meaningfully exist outside specific discourses, i.e. outside the ways they were represented in discourse, produced in knowledge and regulated by the discursive practices and disciplinary techniques of a particular society and time” (Hall, 1997:47). What was considered true at a given time would not be considered true in another. Considering the way ‘truth’, knowledge and practice work in relation to one another, action in one epoch did not have the same ‘meaning’ as an action in another. This understanding would allow us, in this particular case of the statue of M.T. Steyn, to examine how meanings were ‘fixed’ at particular times in history, and then what the same cultural artefact would come to mean in a contemporary context.

Meaning as an Act of Interpretation by a Subject.

The other implication of the argument above is that this “opening up of meaning and representation to history and change” (Hall, 1997:17) allows meaning to become ‘unfixed’ and the practice of meaning-making to become an act of interpretation (Hall, 1997). This does not mean, however, that meaning is completely open to interpretation. The implication is that meaning is not guaranteed – that the baggage that a language carries with it lends it a constitutive impreciseness. There is always something more (or less) in what we want to say than the meaning that is actually taken up. This implies that meaning relies on two sides; it has to be ‘encoded’ and meaningfully ‘decoded’ and that the one cannot exist without the other – that meaning is a give and take (Hall, 1997). This would be how the ‘text’ (a signifying system

that can be interpreted – a representation) such as the statue of M.T. Steyn would be opened to a different interpretation today than at its construction. From a *discursive* viewpoint to representation we recall that for Foucault the subject had a particular modality. Unlike the strictly linguistic, ahistorical, approach of de Saussure where the subject hardly featured, for Foucault discourse both produced subjects, the madman the sexual deviant etc., and produced the positions from which these subjects could be meaningfully appraised and be made sense of, and ultimately administered. According to Katherine Woodward (1997:39) “Discourses, whatever sets of meaning they construct, can only be effective if they recruit subjects. Subjects are thus subjected to the discourse and must themselves take it up as individuals who so position themselves”.

The above implicates on the way that a subject may relate to structures of meaning as constituted by a given representation situated within a given discursive formation. Subjects are constructed by their own interpretation of a text – an interpretation that never happens within total openness, one that is always situated within a field that is to some extent discursively fixed. That is – we – as children of our time must make use of the language and understanding at our disposal in order to make sense and interpret a given cultural artefact.

Culture, Identity and the Past Inscribed - Heritage

According to the passages above, meaning is constructed within representation and becomes fixed within different historical epochs by differently constituted subjects. If this is so the past itself and its relation to identity also becomes open to the domain of language, of being constructed and inscribed. The past and our relation to it is created within representation and language, be it through an understanding of language in semiotics or the workings of language in discourse. This leads us to a specific discourse that ‘works’ the past, that of ‘Heritage’, which formulates and inscribes the past and history in particular ways and with specific subject positions in mind, solidified by particular practices. The section below covers what is meant by heritage, how it relates to culture, and what is meant with the ‘Heritage Discourse’.

Heritage, Culture and the Heritage Discourse

A first conception of heritage can be gleaned from Stuart Hall (2005:21). Hall, starting with a definition he himself used as an introduction to the deconstruction of the term, defined heritage as “the whole complex of organisations, institutions and practices devoted to the preservation and presentation of culture and the arts”. For Sabine Marschall (2008:1) heritage would be that

“containing tangible artefacts and structures of the past, as well as landscapes and intangible aspects of culture, such as traditions, customs and oral memory. Heritage relates both to the past (‘history’) and the present (‘living heritage’).” Heritage is thus the tangible and intangible instances of culture, relating to both the past in its many guises, and the present. A common denominator between these two descriptions is that heritage implicitly makes reference to both ‘culture’ and temporality, be it the past or the present.

In many cases the term heritage seems almost interchangeable with that of culture. Starting with a definition of culture by Raymond Williams (1961/1994:48); culture has three modalities. Firstly, it can be described as a state or a process that aims at an ideal, an ideal of perfection that has a relation to absolute value. Secondly, culture can be the ‘documentary’, all the inscriptions (texts, documents, artefacts, imaginative works etc.) that has acted as records of thoughts and experiences within a given society. Thirdly, culture is a social phenomenon, “a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behavior” (Williams, 1961/1994:48). The third modality in Williams’ description resonates with Hall (1997:2) where culture is defined as “being concerned with the production and the exchange of meaning – the ‘giving and taking of meaning’ – between the members of a society or group”.

If one considers the definition of culture described above, and understands ‘heritage’ as being both the tangible and intangible aspects of culture, relating to both the present and the past, heritage would include those elements of culture relating to a past including the meaning/s and values we attribute to those cultural elements. But it will also include those elements of culture that comprise a living active production of meaning, that comprises the cultural output, the whole way of life and the tangible and intangible elements that are produced and cherished in the present.

In his description of heritage Hall, for example, contrasted this emphasis on what already exists with his own inclination to give preference to the active, contemporary production of culture alongside an emphasis on the past. This reminds one then of what Marschall (2005) called ‘living heritage’. But elaborating on the distinction between heritage as past and as present Hall (2005:21) identified, albeit in the British context, an emphasis on ‘preservation’ and ‘conservation’ which belied specific assumptions and meanings. This implied was that what is important is the *past*, a past which already exists, and that what we consider appropriate to conserve and preserve of that same past already has to fit into an understood narrative of what such a past may entail, i.e. what is considered valuable within a specific cultural context. Thus

the past is constituted within a given culture, and relied on a shared vision of that past and its meaning/s to lend it value.

This notion of a shared vision brings us then to a third instance of both culture and ‘heritage’, that of having to do with a nation, a group, or an identity. If “culture depends on its participants interpreting meaningfully what is around them, and ‘making sense’ of the world in broadly similar ways” (Hall, 1997a:2) and in Williams’ sense involves a ‘whole way of life’, then the notion of culture implicitly insinuates a hypothetical group of people that firstly share broad cultural co-ordinates that allows them to making sense of the world around them, but secondly who by virtue of the former can imagine a nation or an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1989) with which they can collectively identify.. As Hall (2005:22) in reference to Benedict Anderson (1989) notes, “a shared national identity thus depends on the cultural meanings, which bind each member individually into the large national story”.

Regarding heritage in particular, Marschall (2005:19) notes “that in any society, it is a shared heritage (language, tradition, leaders, a mutual experience of the past) that imparts a sense of group identity”. For Hall heritage (or ‘The Heritage’) becomes the “material embodiment of the spirit of the nation, a collective representation of [in his case] the British version of tradition, a notion pivotal to the lexicon of English virtues” (Hall, 2005:21).

Taken altogether heritage is then not simply the ‘culture’ of the past and the present that sits out there waiting to be discovered. It is in how these pasts are made sense of and from which subject positions they make sense, what is considered **valuable** to whoever is identified and who can identify with a specific construction of ‘nation’. For Hall, heritage ultimately had be thought of as a discursive practice, one in which “the nation slowly constructs for itself a sort of collective social memory” (Hall, 2005:24) and where it “inevitably reflects the governing assumptions of its time and context”.

As discursive practice heritage is:

always inflected by the power and authority of those who have colonised the past, whose version of history matters. These assumptions and co-ordinates of power are inhabited as natural – given, timeless, true and inevitable. But it takes only the passage of time, the shift of circumstances, or the reversals of history to reveal those assumptions as time and context bound, historically specific, and thus open to contestation, re-negotiation and revision (Hall, 2005:24)

If conceptualized as a discursive practice heritage is immediately situated within a given historical context and becomes something that is particular to its time. Consequently, it also reflects and draws power from the political context of the time. Shanade Barnabas (2016:111)

notes that “heritage includes a selective choice of inherited relics and legacies influenced by and capable of influencing the politics of both past and present”.

As such the heritage discourse becomes one site at which the past and the present are conceptualized and negotiated. The past is imagined within a particular narrative, and from a particular point of view. As something that has a bearing on how we conceive of ourselves and what past can be imagined in the construction of a future, how the heritage landscape is constructed has an implication on how a nation is imagined and nurtured. Returning then to the relation between culture and heritage, culture would be the organic profusion of life and the dynamic interchange of meanings and the practices that gives rise to them, heritage would be one way in how the cultural space is discursively constructed by asking – what, in culture, belongs to ‘US’.

To stress this idea, Keyan Tomaselli and Alum Mporu (1995) noted that history can be thought of as two distinct processes, history as *process* and history as *record*. History as process would consist of the collection of “collective actions and struggles of peoples, classes, groups, constituencies” (Tomaselli and Mporu, 1995:10) that develop across time. In this sense history as process is a way of describing a determining dynamic that moves events forward, as the movement of struggle and resistances between various collectives or groups within time. History as record, on the other hand, is a consequence of history being open to interpretation and expression, to history being written by those who have the power to do so. It is the way in which the past can be deliberately constructed and reconstructed, by representation for example, to suit a specific hegemonic bloc, to become a political resource that is “deployed when there is need to justify authority and establish legitimacy” (Tomaselli and Mporu, 1995:10).

In such a way history or the past can be thought of as a discursive resource where monuments would be sites through which particular views of the past of particular constituencies within a given social order are articulated. But the past is not only the province of political manipulation. As described earlier a discourse, like the heritage discourse, is constituted over a wide range of practices that give it its power.

One way in which this process of constructing the past through representation can be understood and knitted together (the process of connecting meaning to discourse, discourse or social formations and forces to history, discourse to a subject or group, and ultimately the former to a text or cultural artefact) is through the notion of *articulation*. Articulation, in the cultural studies tradition, is a pliable concept taken up and developed by different authors through time, including Louis Althusser, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe and Stuart Hall. In

the various ways it has been developed and employed over time the notion of articulation has alternated between being a theory, sometimes a methodology, sometimes a strategy for intervention and sometimes a little of all of the above (Slack, 1996). In this instance I will use it as a way of consolidating the theory hitherto explored, that of representation into a simple and narrowly focused way of understanding how meaning moves through time.

The Notion of Articulation

In its simplest terms the notion of articulation refers to a link forged under specific conditions between disparate elements into a temporary unity (du Gay, 1997:3). This link can be between elements within a discourse, between certain ideologies, between elements within a social formation, between this and that meaning, between different social practices, between completely different instances of whatever makes up the social fabric. The first point to take up is that articulation refers to links between various elements that make up the complex social landscape.

The double modality of ‘articulation’

The special thing about these links is that they can be conceived of as having a double modality. A link is something that connects one element to another, a joint that keeps them together wherever the elements might appear. But at the same time a link is expressed, it is uttered, very much in the same way as the theory of representation discussed earlier where the link between a concept and a ‘thing’ was represented. In the same fashion it is through their expression that these links are made and sustained. This double modality of the links described above is how Stuart Hall (1996:141) developed on the notion of articulation conceived by some of his theoretical predecessors. It is his appraisal of articulation that will be made use of in this section. Hall used the two meanings the word ‘articulation’ carries in the English language to explain how the two modalities of articulation come together. Firstly, articulation can mean to articulate, to speak or to utter. Something meaningful can ‘talk’, it can convey meaning and thus expresses something. Something is ‘language’d’, it represents.

Secondly it can refer to two completely different elements being ‘articulated’ together in a temporary unity. Over and above the ‘speaking’ part of articulation Hall (1996:141) used the metaphor of a truck and trailer to bring the second modality to mind. Two elements or processes can be linked together like a truck and its trailer. One can drive and the other can trail. But

importantly this connection can be broken, reattached to something else, or disarticulated completely.

No necessary correspondence

An important point to emphasise, and one that is stressed by Hall over and over again (Clarke, 2015), is that there is no necessary correspondence between the different elements thus linked together: “It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute an essential for all time” (Hall,1996:141). Something becomes articulated, but needs not have, under specific conditions, and can consequently be de-articulated and/or re-articulated. Also, the different elements that make up a specific articulation still maintain their own character and determinations and are not absorbed into one another, i.e. when articulated together they maintain their identity as a “distinction within a unity” (Clarke, 1996 in reference to Hall).

The social as articulated unities

This brings us to a more refined understanding of the social, whether understood as discursive or social formations, as a complex range of disparate elements articulated into unities that do not have to necessarily cohere together. Clarke (2015:277) notes that “no articulation – whether the combination of social instances in a social formation or a discursive alignment of meanings and politics – come with a lifetime guarantee”. Similarly, a discourse and the meanings it circulates and the instances it brings together under its scope are articulated elements that are tied together where “the so-called unity of a discourse [discussed earlier] is really the articulation of different, distinct elements” (Hall,1996:141).

Jennifer Slack (1996:119) sheds further light on what makes up the discursive when she notes the genesis of the idea of articulation, in this instance expressed by Laclau and Mouffe who are credited with originally emphasizing the no ‘necessary correspondence’ of articulation. They described common sense discourse (*doxa*) as made up of a system of misleading articulations that “do not appear with any inherent logical arrangement” making them “connotative, evocative links established by custom” (Slack 1996:119). What can be deduced from the above is that a particular discursive formation can be described as made up of links established over time, articulated together. Since there are no necessary links all links become essentially connotative (Slack,1996:119). This also means that those articulations that form part of a discourse can be thought of as connotative meanings linked together in a specific way.

In any social formation or discourse the ‘meaning’ and force of any element comes from what it is articulated to and to what other elements these very same articulations are connected to.

Something gains traction, weight and force only insofar it is positioned within a network. Using the example of religion as a social phenomenon, Hall (1996:142) notes that “its [religion] meaning – political and ideological – comes precisely from its position within a formation. It comes with what else it is articulated to”. Clarke (2015:278) concurs: “how different elements are articulated in a discursive or ideological formation [...] is the way in which they are assembled together, the forging of specific links and connections that give them their social, cultural or political force”.

The double ‘movement’ of articulation

Being embedded in a formation implies that a specific articulation can be connected to larger structures, also articulated, always non-necessarily, while carrying the double meaning of being ‘linked’ and being expressed or ‘speaking’. For Clarke (2015:278) the notion of articulation as developed by Hall always involves a double movement or dialectic. Something is articulated within a discourse for example, but then in a second movement becomes linked to a different instance or process. This second instance is sometimes construed as a political subject or a social force. Clarke (2015:278) notes that in this second movement entails “the ways in which [under certain conditions] an articulated discourse and a combination of social forces can (conjuncturally) be connected”. For Hall (1996:141) the double movement refers to how two distinct processes or forces become linked in a temporary unity and how then “that articulated discourse and the social forces with which it can, under certain historical conditions, but need not necessarily, be connected” lead to a new discursive formations. Furthermore “the theory of articulation is both a way of understanding how ideological elements [...] cohere to together within a discourse, and a way of asking how they do or do not become articulated at specific conjunctures, to certain political subjects” (Hall, 1996:142).

The work of articulation as something that moves across various social instances and that binds unities into even larger structures is explained by Lawrence Grossberg (1992:54);

Articulation is the production of identity on top of differences, of unities out of fragments, of structures across practices. Articulation links this practice to that effect, this text to that meaning, this meaning to that reality, this experience to that politics. And these links are themselves articulated into larger structure, etc.

Lines of tendential force

The quote above may lead one to think that articulation is a postmodern idea. The development of articulation as a theory, by Hall (1996:131) in particular, did take place in conversations

with discussions around the postmodern. But two things are stressed throughout. Firstly, that an articulation forms a unity under very specific conditions. Secondly, that a certain articulation's bonds can be very strong and lasting. Something, a meaning, can become very much ingrained in a society's way of life or consciousness. Hall (1996:142) uses the description 'lines of tendential force' which means that a specific articulation cannot easily be detached from its historical embeddedness and be rearticulated. Once again, he uses the concept of religion which in some societies have been strongly attached, for a very long time, to various social forces; political, economic and ideological. In such a society, religion becomes something so strong and ingrained that it is almost impossible, in any popular movement, to ignore. This is not taken as a negative in Hall's thought: "Social movements have to transform it [religion], buy into it, inflect it, develop it, clarify it – but they must engage with it". The very power of such an articulation is stressed as something that can give meaning to individuals' lives, that can guide as to "where they are, where they are going to, and why they are here" (Hall, 1996:142).

A subject or group

Articulation, as a theory, also developed out of a specific context. It not only addressed questions of necessity as in 'no necessary correspondence' but it also resisted reducing an ideology or discourse to a specific class position or group of people (Slack, 1996:120). This has to do with a specific dynamic. Instead of thinking about the subject (person) as someone who thinks and acts in a certain way because of their class position, the theory of articulation according to Hall (1996:142) rather asks how something became articulated in such a way that specific subjects can identify with it: "the theory of articulation asks how an ideology discovers its subject rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it" (Hall,1996:142). This puts a different spin on how subjects or groups are constituted within discourse. A couple of ways of thinking about articulation and identity thus present themselves. One, discourses, made up out of articulated meanings become something that recruits subjects. Which meanings, practices or ideologies are articulated have implications on what subjectivities can identify. Two, articulation asks how certain discourses become articulated to certain political subjects or forces that in turn become forces that 'interpellate'. Hall uses the example of the 'Rastafarian' movement that itself came from a re-articulation of religion. Using religion in its ideological sense, Hall (1996:144) described the Rasta movement as originating in a reworking of Biblical texts in such a way that they, the Rastas, could identify with it, that fit their experience. In this rearticulation of religion they became constituted as

new subjects, “they became what they always were” (Hall, 1996:144). But in a second movement this ‘new’ religion then became articulated to a popular political movement that drew in people who would never have been part of the Rastafarian religion in its original sense. A rearticulation of ‘religion’ became a political movement, a social force, which drew many people from various backgrounds together under one banner with which they could identify. New articulations, and the new ‘meanings’ or practices they become associated with, has the potential or ability to draw and consolidate many different interests together.

Concluding articulation

For Slack (1996:141) articulation has methodological, theoretical and practical implications. Methodologically it provides a strategy for contextualizing one’s object of analysis. But it also has epistemological, political and strategic implications. Epistemological in understanding the “correspondences, non-correspondences and contradictions, as fragments in the constitution of what we take to be unities” (Slack, 1996:141). Strategic as being able to shape the relationship between a social formation, a conjecture or context. Politically, being able to identify how the play of power relations are expressed and affirmed in a given set of relations that are articulated together.

What the notion of articulation offers this particular study includes the above. The idea that a particular social formation or discourse can be thought of as made up of articulated unities that can be linked to different elements which can be broken and reattached to yet more and different elements. That meaning/s can be forged – articulated and disarticulated over time and that these meanings can then be articulated into bigger and wider structures that also change over time. That articulation can be connected to political movements that in turn create new formations that draw all sorts of subjects together under its banner. Some these structures become embedded over time, and certain articulations are forged in a very durable way. But also, that the process of articulation links well with the work of representation discussed at the beginning of the chapter, insofar as an articulation, in its double meaning, links elements together and expresses them, or “languages” them as Hall says (1996:141); it links and speaks at the same time.

Furthermore, it also allows us a position to think about representation that may straddle both a discursive point of view and a semiotic one. A particular representation forms part of a discursive network, it articulates certain elements together – it binds meanings together. But what else it is articulated to within the discursive network in a way determines its meaning *a priori*. At the same time it articulates, it speaks, and can be re-spoken, re-articulated with some

effort that refuses the dominant set-up of meaning/s. Elements can be arranged, and re-arranged in a way that supposes a different meaning. This can perhaps happen through a different arrangement of signifiers.

This is cultural transformation. It is not something totally new. It is not something which has a straight, unbroken line of continuity from the past. It is transformation through a reorganization of the elements of a cultural practice, elements which do not in themselves have any necessary political connotations. It is not individual elements of a discourse that have political or ideological connotations, it is the ways those elements are organized together in a new discursive formation” (Hall, 1996:143).

When one considers the heritage discourse in this new light articulation allows us to think how at different times throughout history the past and its relation to identity itself became articulated, what elements within the heritage discourse became connected, what subject positions and identities they constituted and to which political subjects or social forces they became linked. Stated otherwise, the heritage discourse too becomes a space within which specific meanings were or are articulated together, articulated meanings which can, in turn, become associated with a political force, a cultural practice or social movement and be shaped into new discursive formations that would constitute the cultural transformation referred to above.

This can be traced through the ‘text’, representation, or cultural artefact. It is through cultural texts that articulations are sustained, reimagined or broken. The statue of Steyn ‘speaks’ differently today than it did at the time of its conception, and today constitutes a different site through which meaning is expressed and articulated. And insofar as this particular text forms part of the heritage discourse, it implicates on what past, and whose past we consider.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Introduction

The purpose of the literature review chapter is to sketch a contextual background against which the Steyn statue can be situated and 'read'. The section is split into two chapters each constituting a contextual block. In Part One the aim is to develop a historical context before and after the erection of the M.T. Steyn statue. Part Two focuses on a contemporary context and explores matters of heritage pre and post 1994 as well as a more immediate contemporary heritage landscape. As a broad structuring principle, a conception of 'heritage' as broken down in the theory chapter is used as a point of departure in both Part One and Two. Being a relation between culture, identity, nationhood and the past, as expressed in its articulation into discourse and given life by its associated social, cultural and political practices notions of 'heritage', the 'what belongs to us', implicitly guides the content of the First Part and explicitly that of the Second. In each period a socio-political context is mapped, how this relates to questions of identity and nationhood at the time, how this relates to movements within the cultural sphere and, how this in turn relates to the past. The overarching theme in Part One revolves around the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism and in Part Two it is the drive for nation building in a multi-cultural Post Apartheid society.

In Part One periodisation is spread as follows; I start with the Anglo-Boer War and map the political, social and economic landscape in its aftermath. The existence and struggle of the two 'language communities' are described with the summation in the unification of South Africa in 1910. In the period 1910 to 1920 the biggest social 'problem' of the day, the poor whites, is discussed as it relates to the development of a nascent Afrikaner nationalism. In the period 1920 to 1930 focus falls on the ascent of nationalism and its origins in the labour strikes in the early 20's. This also marks the period in which the M.T. Steyn statue was constructed. The section concludes with the description of a flourishing Afrikaner cultural life in the early to mid-1930s and the formation of the United Party. This constitutes the first contextual block.

In Part Two we move to the recent democratic era and here emphasis shift directly to matters of heritage. The term heritage becomes a contemporary vehicle of notions of culture, identity and nationhood as it pertains to the past. Scholars of the contemporary landscape started to

refer to the landscape as explicitly constituted by the 'heritage discourse'. To sketch this period up until the present reference is made to three policy documents tabled by the department of Arts and Culture and is then brought into a relation with the Rhodes Must Fall movement. This constitutes the second and last contextual block.

The area mapped out in the two parts can be taken as a first layer of 'context'. With this first layer in place, with the application of the theoretical framework in the analysis the statue, as the object of analysis, will hopefully fill and re-contextualise the space and provide a second more focused appraisal of the different period as well as the contemporary heritage landscape. Consequently, the nature of the methodology allows for the object of analysis to further contextualise the periods and circumstances in question through the application of the theory. For this reason, explicit mention of the case study is for the most part absent below.

LITERATURE REVIEW PART ONE – HISTORY

The period stretching from the end of the Anglo-Boer War until the mid-1930s are of importance in contextualising how the events around the war set the scene and stimulated an insipid nationalist sentiments which would ultimately crystallise in the victory of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party (NP) in the 1948. It was a period of great political change in South Africa with many different currents of thoughts and ideologies, embodied by different political figures and ideologies, representing different constituencies and interests. These became subsumed into one another, got transformed, and cross-pollinated social developments. Dovetailing with the rapid political changes were the pertinent social and economic issues and forces that fuelled the political fire which in turn corresponded with the rapid rise of a flourishing Afrikaner cultural life (Giliomee, 2004; Van Jaarsveld 1969; Hofmeyr, 1989; Louw, 2004; Vestergaard, 2001). It is this cultural life that was bookended by the reappraisal and re-envisioning of an Afrikaner past. Globally the period slotted into a landscape formed by the end of the First World War in 1918 and capped by the by the great depression that swept through the Western nations in the late 1920's and early 1930's. Although the aim of this chapter is to provide a historical context broader than one of pure politics only and the assumption is that the past is appraised and imagined at many different sites, where there is an overemphasis on politics it is done in the belief that it helps illuminating the sentiments and spirit of the times, especially regarding the appraisal and construction of the recent past.

Much of the emphasis revolves around the second Anglo-Boer War that stretched from 1899 to 1902. This is for the following reasons: the war proved to be a locus where the relation between identity, culture and the past became connected and determined much of the socio-economic problematics in its wake. As such it set much of the political tone for the first half of the century, became a traumatic site of memory production (Nasson, 2000), firstly in silence and then in profusion (Giliomee, 2004). For Foster (2008:19) the South African War was “undoubtedly the single most important event shaping white society in the subcontinent during the next half-century”. For (Nasson, 2000) the war became the “prime myth making instrument” for much of the 20th century. Lastly and most importantly, the war shot the figure of M.T. Steyn into prominence.

Here note must be made of the fact that reference is consciously made to what would be considered the ‘white’ sections of the population with only incidental reference made to

currents within non-white politics and cultural developments, insofar as it acted as driving force for specific movements and developments. When contexts and histories are discussed in the pages below, the presence of non-white cultural and political development should shine in its absence. This will become evident in part two of the literature review where focus explicitly revolves around changes in the heritage landscape that involved all South Africans.

A last note to be made before the chapter commences regards terminology. The Second Anglo-Boer War is often, in contemporary usage, referred to as the South African War, to reflect a more inclusive coverage of the war: that is that the war did not only involve the British and the Boers but also the wider South African population. Although this might be true, the researcher opts for the traditional usage of Anglo-Boer War for the very reason cited in the preceding paragraph: that the 'black' population of South Africa, did not play an active, affirmative role in the lead up to hostilities and were considered a 'merely a factor' to be taken account of by both sides. This is not to disavow the real role 'blacks' played in the progression of the war, willingly or unwillingly so, but it seems disingenuous to the researcher to use a name that suggest active participation when in fact this was not the case, and indeed that the 'black' population often experienced the real 'brunt of the war' without having any real say in the proceedings (Pretorius, 1985:89).

Period 1 – The Second Anglo-Boer War

In the early days of the 20th century the political landscape of South Africa was profoundly shaped by the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, a war fought between the British Empire and its associated colonies of the Cape Colony and the Natal Colony on the one hand and two independent Boer republics, namely the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, on the other. The war was fought for differing reasons by differing accounts. These include the need for a conservative British government to decidedly assert its colonial dominance and British paramountcy, a dominance under threat from both other European powers at the end of the 19th century and the liberalisation of the political sphere at home (Kruger, 1964:26), a slowly increasing pressure eventually ignited by the flame of commercial interest exemplified by the gold mining magnates on the Witwatersrand (Kruger, 1964:34). Others emphasise imperial and economic interest and ambitions proselytised by notable figures such as Alfred Milner the High Commissioner of South Africa and Joseph Chamberlain the Colonial Secretary on the government side and Cecil John Rhodes on the commercial and industrial one came into

conflict with forms of organisation not amenable to its interests, embodied by the Boer republics (Giliomee, 2004:189; Foster, 2008:19).

Whatever the causality might have been, from an Afrikaner perspective the forces of war met deeply entrenched republican aspirations that had slowly consolidated from the time of the Great Trek, a set of migrations from the 1830s to escape British Rule in the Cape colony, into the two independent Boer republics (Giliomee, 2004; van Jaarsveld, 1969). A strong spirit of independence and freedom became a characteristic construction of the two republics and together with a uncompromising Calvinism, became a theme of Afrikaner aspirations carried into most of the 20th century (Giliomee, 2004). This is confirmed by Dunbar Moodie (1975:31) who described the *trekkers* as being under the influence of some of the tenets of liberal French politics, notably the writing of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and characterized them as being a combination of radical liberalism and racial discrimination driven by the Calvinist doctrine of the elect. Nevertheless, the as yet unformed 'nation' or collective identity of the Afrikaner Republics, construed as early as 1875 as a particular nation in formation (Foster, 2008:14) felt enough of an affinity in cultural similarity or interest to stand together in resistance against the British. For the Boers the war became known as the *Tweede Vryheidsoorlog* – [The second war for Freedom]. The deeply religious nature of freedom and political independence came to the fore, when, upon being victorious in the first Anglo Boer War, independence was construed as tied to the Boers' fidelity to their faith. Paul Kruger, the president of the Transvaal at the time of the second Anglo-Boer war, noted that God granted the Boers their freedom so they may serve Him, but should they renege in their faith their very freedom and independence will be taken away from them as punishment (Moodie, 1975:28).

The war proved to be a bitter one, culminating in a war of attrition where on the one hand a handful of Boer generals and their commandos – the so called *bittereinders* – Trans: those that fight until the bitter end – relied on guerrilla tactics to frustrate a British army that controlled the capitals of both republics and almost all the important strategic territory (Pakenham, 1979). Wishing for a speedy end to a costly war the British commanders applied a ruthless tactic of destruction – burning down farms and interning the residents, mostly women and children, in concentration camps. This was a brutally effective strategy that on the one hand destroyed the source of supplies for those Boers still fighting, and on the other hand demoralizing those in the field (Giliomee, 2004:209; Pakenham, 1979:589). This ultimately resulted in the inability to maintain hostilities from the Boer side and a British victory in a war that stretched over more

than three years. Peace talks commenced in middle May 1902 and concluded on the 31st of May with the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging.

In the spirit of maintaining some form of independence by the Boers during negotiations a compromise was proposed; to trade off territory for maintaining independence as a British protectorate instead of a colony. This proposal was summarily rejected by the British who feared the resurgence of broader republican sentiments (Giliomee, 2004). Two options were left, either fighting continued or a South Africa as part of the British Empire had to be accepted. There were schools of thought at the negotiating table that had no issue advocating for the continuation of war. Commentators noted that one of Milner's 'concerns were that 'loyalist' Afrikaners (those amenable to the Imperial cause) instead of the *bittereinders* generals become the leading Afrikaner faction of a Boer constituency (Pakenham, 1971:584). They were seen as loyal subjects and would be amenable to thorough anglicization. On the Boer side diehard republicans, notable from the Free State, also resisted ending the war importantly equating independence and freedom with the very life of the Afrikaner. One of these diehards was the president of the Free State M.T. Steyn (Giliomee, 2016:219).

The negotiations revealed patterns that would continue to resonate after peace was concluded – Alfred Milner wanted to have the *bittereinders* banished and their property confiscated. The military commanders, however, tired of Milner's rigidity, insisted that if the country had to be rebuilt it had to be done by consolidating a wide base in the interest of maintaining a white South Africa through incorporating and relying on a strong Boer constituency (Giliomee, 2004:216). For a stable post war South Africa the support of the generals had to be enlisted. A mediating pragmatic force was that of Jan Smuts and Louis Botha, both reconciliatory in their approach, who attenuated some of the more radical elements (Giliomee, 2004:16). Besides matters relating to degrees and promises of independence, other concerns from within the Boer ranks included the right to retain their weapons and importantly to have the right to school their children in Dutch (Giliomee, 2004:218).

At the conclusion of negotiations the treaty stipulated the following: that all burgers lay down their arms and accept the lawful sovereignty of the British monarch King Edward VII; that all burghers so surrendering will retain their personal liberty and keep their property and with certain restrictions not be liable to civil or criminal prosecution for acts committed during the war; that the Dutch language may be used as a medium of instruction when the parent of children so wish as well as in courts of law where its use may benefit the administration of

justice; that the interim war office government will at soonest be replaced by a civil government and that this will be followed by representative institutions leading to self-government; and lastly that the question of Native franchise will not be decided until after the institution of self-government (Treaty of Vereeniging, 1902) an eventuality that had significant repercussions on the racial landscape of South Africa in subsequent years.. The treaty was signed on the 31st of May and so ended hostilities between the two combatants.

Period 2 - Post War South Africa

In the wake of the war South Africa was left a thoroughly devastated and deeply divided country. Materially the two former republics were on the brink of destitution. The scorched earth policy had reduced the rural landscape to ashes where as many as 30 000 homesteads had been destroyed (Pretorius, 1985:88). The displacement of women, children and the elderly to concentration camps, the shortage of food, the burnt-up environment, the either dead or exiled *burghers* all contributed to a wholly disintegrated landscape socially, economically and spiritually.

For the black population there was nothing but “confusion and calamity” (Pretorius, 1985:88). Privy to only a small portion of funds allocated to restitution, bereft of the weapons used to assist whichever side they fought on, women and children in concentration camps in conditions worse than those prevalent in the ‘white’ camps and deprived of the enfranchisement promised at the start of the war as a result of the treaty of Vereeniging, their position was dire. Six months after the end of the war they were still on the brink of famine (Pretorius, 1985:88).

After the settlement the Afrikaner as a group was divided, and division was often expressed along lines determined by the various positions taken up during the war. There was loyalist (Afrikaners loyal to the British Empire during the war), Cape rebels (Afrikaner citizens of the Cape Colony who fought against the British, *bittereinders* (those that fought until the end), Cape Afrikaners sympathetic to the republican cause, those that surrendered (*hensoppers*) and those that ended up fighting for the British (*joiners*) (Pretorius, 1985:88). These terms became assimilated into the mythological lexicon of the war and still carry power of expression among Afrikaners to this day.

To understand the social landscape in the immediate post war years note needs to be taken of the pervasive devastation and destitution of the country, the need to uplift and reintegrate those unsettled and dispersed by the war into a functioning society and economy again and the drive

towards dealing with the division within and between the two white language communities (Giliomee, 2004:220; van Jaarsveld, 1969:247; Pretorius, 1985:88). There were however differing opinions about how such a 'post-war' society would look like.

The tide of Milnerism

The former republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State were now British colonies under the governorship of Milner. Milner and his backers in the British parliament wanted a thoroughly British South Africa with a union of all four colonies under the aegis of the British Empire (Giliomee, 2004:220) at that time led by a conservative government in London. Milner and a group of assistants brought in from Oxford University, known as Milner's Kindergarten, were now concerned with building up South Africa on British principles with a capitalist 'flavour' and a strong bureaucratic civil service (Giliomee, 2004:220). Three themes characterise Milner's initial drive; 1. anglicisation and the promotion of empire, 2. social upliftment and 3. modernization. Milner's aim was to promote a union of all the colonies, thoroughly bonded to the British empire and under one language and culture (Giliomee, 2004; 220). In basic terms Milner's approach was a drive toward homogeneity.

For South Africa to become an anglicised link in the Imperial chain two main things had to be achieved; firstly, the promotion of English culture and values together with the denationalisation of the Afrikaner (Pretorius, 1985:89), and secondly, the promotion of immigration into the country. Van Jaarsveld (1969:247) concurs that Milner aimed for a federation in which the British 'way' reigned supreme. To achieve this, he had to both promote loyalty in the new Afrikaner subjects and promote the immigration of British people to South Africa.

Immigration was mostly unsuccessful with only 1400 families making the move to South Africa (Giliomee, 2004:221) an eighth of what was set as target (van Jaarsveld, 1969:247). On the matter of anglicization; English was proclaimed as the sole language of government and schooling. Dutch was allowed as medium of instruction for only three hours per week for Biblical study and for the study of the Dutch language itself, the latter only if the parents so requested. The ideology of empire and the cultivation of 'Britishness' was explicitly promoted at school level. This included a curriculum change and the import of 600 English teachers to the countryside (Giliomee, 2004: 221).

In lieu of denationalisation, the attenuation of republican sentiments had also to be promoted by driving a wedge in between those loyal to the empire and those that still yearned for an Afrikaner republic (Giliomee, 2004:222). An important question at the time was that of self-government. To attenuate potential resurgent republican sentiments, antagonistic to empire, support for the anglicization policies of Milner had to be achieved *before* self-rule was awarded to the respective colonies (van Jaarsveld, 1969:247). Both the British government and Milner knew that self-governance, as stipulated in the treaty, was also a way to cut across republican and loyalist sentiments (Giliomee, 2004:221). Self-rule with a responsible, anglicised constituency, responsible for their own affairs would moderate any republican sentiments that may arise after that. It was thus important to cultivate a voting constituency loyal to Empire before self-rule was imposed.

In material terms Milner was tasked with rebuilding a broken country. To do this those displaced had to be settled on farms; this included 200 000 Boers, 50 000 British and 100 000 'Blacks' (van Jaarsveld, 1969:247). A massive project of social upliftment had to be initiated. A department of agriculture was created and scientific farming methods were promoted. Forestry and irrigation schemes were initiated (Giliomee, 2004:221). Through the *Kindergarten* the reconstruction of the farms and the countryside took on the character of contemporary construction of environment and culture prevalent in Britain, notably that of locating the "nation's strength, stability, and identity in an unchanging, semi feudal, place bound way of life characterised by custom and repetition" (Foster, 2008:22). At the same time social upliftment and the inculcation of empire went the modernisation and bureaucratisation of South Africa. To facilitate unification the railways were brought under one system, new municipalities were created, and an effective civil service instituted (Giliomee, 2004:221). Economically Milner privileged the gold mining industry as key in building up the South African economy.

The period was characterised by a strong intervention into the social. This drive and tensions it wanted to assuage can best be summarised in the following quote from Foster (2008:23): "Milner and others in Britain perceived the project of reconstruction as a golden opportunity to establish a white man's country in Africa [which was] best achieved through the swift restoration of civil and economic life under an Imperial minded administration. The Boers but also the *uitlanders* had to be shown the contrast between the virtues of a British administration and the incompetence of the superseded republican governments".

Resistance against Milner and the move to union

The Imperial aspirations of Milner, however, contained the seeds of its own destruction. The bitterness of the war proved to be a double-edged sword – on the one hand it still caused a gulf between the English and Afrikaner communities. There were those embittered that simply could not reconcile themselves with the idea of becoming British subjects. Milner was notoriously uncompromising. “You see the true Imperialist is also the best South African” he stated at the time according to Foster (2008:14).

On the Afrikaner side the suffering during the war, the Boer resistance to British supremacy and the drive towards anglicization fired on a latent nationalism/republicanism (Pretorius, 1985:90). The inability to assimilate the *bittereinder* Afrikaner leaders into the state mechanism (Giliomee, 2004:223) pointed to a resistance to assimilation. Milner was unaware that his policies, especially those aimed at the anglicization of the population, were a breeding ground for republicanism (Giliomee, 2004:222).

On the other hand there was also some solidarity in struggle and the need to work together. Reconciliation was a delicate undertaking and this dynamic did not take well to the blunt anglicisation policies of Milner (Giliomee, 2004:). At the end of the day communities had to live together in a shared space. In South Africa, politicians and parties from both language communities started to organise their party lines around reconciliation in lieu of self-government as opposed to the one size fits all, homogenising policies of Milner (Giliomee, 2004:223).

Promise of self-government allowed for a broad potential consensus. Those yearning for a republic would work within a South African nation that could stand at the helm of its own ship. A resentment of capital brewed on different fronts. Milner’s labour policy (the import of cheap labour at all costs) alienated workers and he lost much of the *uitlander* support (Giliomee, 2004:222). Outside South Africa’s borders, resentment against Milner’s unification started brewing, echoed by resistance in both Canada and Australia (Giliomee, 2004:223) to Milner’s attempt to keep the constitution of the Cape colony suspended while he worked on the process of unification. This was seen, by Canada and Australia, as infringing on the rights due to a dominium of the British empire.

In 1905 an important political change took place in London with the resignation of the Conservative Prime Minister and the victory of a liberal government under Henry Campbell-Bannerman (Pretorius:1985:90). Some sections of the liberal government had been pro-Boer during the war and now advocated strongly for reconciliation between two different white language populations in South Africa (van Jaarsveld, 1969:248). The victory of the Campbell-Bannerman's Liberal government in 1905 had two direct consequences for South Africa: the disappearance of Milner and the granting of self-rule for the former republics in 1906 (Pretorius, 1985:90, Pakenham, 1979:575). A general transformation or opening up of political affiliations and entrenched positions were now possible.

The Afrikaner leaders organise and a drive toward Unification

A range of Afrikaner-led political parties sprung up in the years after the war. In the Transvaal colony Botha, Smuts and de la Rey created the *Het Volk* party in 1905. In the Orange Free State colony Steyn and Hertzog created the *Transorangia* party in 1906 (Giliomee, 2004, 227). All of the leaders of the aforementioned were *bittereinders*. In the Cape Colony the Afrikaner Bond, a traditionally liberal Cape Afrikaner organisation that had always straddled the interests of the two language communities (Giliomee, 2004:181; Moodie, 1975:74), led by John X. Merriman became the South African Party (SAP) (Pretorius, 1985:90). In the Transvaal Botha succeeded in consolidating and healing the breaches from within Afrikaner groupings into one political voice by emphasising reconciliation; this was done, according to Pretorius (1985:90), by drawing strength from the inadequacy of the post war reparations felt by all Afrikaners, both the *burghers* who fought in the war as well as those who collaborated or fought on the side of the British.

The granting of self-rule by the Liberal government in 1906 changed the attitude of Louis Botha and Jan Smuts to the British empire (Pakenham, 1979:576). The *uitlander* support lost by Milner drifted and their representatives aligned themselves to the Botha and Smuts led Het Volk party (Pakenham, 1979:575). The Het Volk leaders used anti-capitalist sentiments among English labourers to lure English support to the party (Giliomee, 2004:226). They were now able to stand for something much broader than their Afrikaner constituency. In 1907 Het Volk won the Transvaal election in a landslide victory, running a campaign with an emphasis on reconciliation (Giliomee, 2004:226). In the Free State, where Afrikaans speakers outnumbered English speakers, Milner's anglicisation policies drew resistance across the board. The *Transorangia Party* drew support from all classes and factions (Giliomee, 2004: 227). In the

immediate post-war years Steyn and Hertzog emphasised language and culture to uplift and strengthen the Afrikaner section of the population after the war. That there should be no superiority of one language over another was emphasised. Language and community were tightly bonded together and for Hertzog the fight for language equality became the fight for group equality (Giliomee, 2004:227). For Steyn in particular the dominance of the English culture would inevitably make the Afrikaans speaker feel inferior. This was to be resisted with an emphasis on dual language development. The *Transvaal Party* easily won the 1907 general election (Pretorius, 1985:90). These sentiments were a forerunner of notion of identity that stressed distinctness at the same time as a 'togetherness' discussed later in the chapter. In the Cape Colony the SAP won the general election of 1908 with an overwhelming majority (Giliomee, 2004:228).

In broad ideological terms the ruling parties in the Transvaal, OFS and Cape were on the same page (Giliomee, 2004:229). Because all the colonies shared the same constitutional status the drive for Unification became strong. The Imperialist section of the population had lost the initiative (Pretorius, 1985:90) and the drive for self-rule as well as the unification movement was now led by Smuts and Merriman. Both saw Steyn's support as important to let unification succeed. A convention was held between October 1908 and May 1909 where the framework for a union would be discussed. A draft constitution was deliberated. The three most important issues were: Black voting rights, language equality and the structure a self-ruling government might take on - federal or union. The constitution accepted by the British government included no voting rights for Blacks; with the intervention of Steyn, complete language equality between English and Afrikaans; and the structure of Union as opposed to federation (Giliomee, 2004: 229). On 31 May 1910, the Union of South Africa was born. Six years after the war in which the Boers were defeated, Afrikaners, two of which were *bittereinders*, were the elected leaders in three of the four colonies, which now merged into the SAP.

This set the scene for what was to come for much of the early 20th Century. Life in white South Africa was dominated by the political movements between the two language communities in a sometimes turbulent and often fragile consensus. This consensus was based on the understanding that South Africa had to be maintained as a white man's country. The remembrance of war, the latent nationalism, the flourishing Afrikaans culture and language, the question around 'native' rights, all played an important role in what came to constitute the social fabric of South Africa in the next two decades. The proximity of war and trauma allowed

for a forgive and forget pragmatic resolution to conflict between groups and a general opening up of relations. On the other hand, the proximity of the war also allowed for the suspension of memory creation and the 'linguaging' of the war (Giliomee, 2004:380; Foster, 2008:31). This came back to roost later and the battle for the 'soul' of the *volk* because as much political as cultural.

Period 3 - Unification

This section explores matters of culture, identity (nationhood) and the past in and around the time of unification of South Africa.

Nation and identity

The Afrikaners within the ruling consensus were on the same page regarding the need to reconcile and work together, but divided on matters of culture and identity and what constituted the nation. Broadly speaking two positions existed. The early nationalists were best represented by J.B.M. Hertzog, who eventually consolidated the nationalist-minded Afrikaners around him (Giliomee, 2004:312). The issues at stake were the new government's relationship to Britain (in general nationalists advocated for secession), and the 'distinctness' of language and culture. In general, those that subscribed to this view feared cultural domination. They were the early champions of 'culture'. On the other side were those that privileged maintaining relations for the sake of peace and progress. They did not emphasise distinction and were often branded as sell outs by those advocating for language rights and the promotion of Afrikaner culture. The Union was a compromise that addressed all these sentiments. For Giliomee (1978:191) the Union balanced the need for the English community to maintain links to empire and 'British culture', and for the Afrikaners to retain a sense of self determination. The clarity of distinction between Afrikaners and English were not simple however and became more imbricated in the years to follow. A consensus that relied on the notion of reconciliation and working together went hand in hand with a construction of nation that promoted a patriotism regardless of language or creed. For Foster (2008:29) this position used a 'homogenising political rhetoric of patriotism to erode ethnic, historic and regional differences in pursuit of economic and bureaucratic efficiency and promote a unified imagined community'. This patriotic 'South Africanism' was vague enough to bond together a fragile consensus between broad language

group and, with connotations of independence, could attenuate differences within the Afrikaner constituency.

What such a South Africa would constitute was broad. In some cases it was the “Greater South African position” (Foster, 2008:29) which meant a local national identity within a broader Imperial constellation roughly identical to what Giliomee (1978:191) calls the one stream outlook promoted by figures like Smuts and Botha. This was embodied by Botha who wished to create a nationality consisting of a diverse make-up and that “whoever had chosen South Africa as a home should regard themselves as children of one family and be known as South Africans” (Giliomee, 1978:191). On the other hand, this South Africa could also be the two distinct cultural identities eventually flowing into one [eventually Afrikaner] national stream propagated by Hertzog. For Foster (2008:29) this outlook constituted a little South African identity that was “formulated around an emerging, explicitly indigenous white culture” and which stood against that which minimised difference or a South Africanism. That which minimised difference was not however antagonistic toward something that both grew locally and was patriotic. In fact, for Moodie (1975:74) *patriotism* as a love of the fatherland, provided a broad base for identification. For him, the most important difference between, using Foster’s nomenclature, a Little or Greater South Africa, was between assimilation and separateness respectively.

The idea that there was a strong prevalent South Africanism at that time is contested by Giliomee (2004:312). Real consensus within the ‘ruling elite’ on what constituted the new ‘nation’ was divided and brittle (Giliomee 2004:312) and there was yet no ‘South African Nation’ unity that could stand in, with any force, for Imperialism on the one hand and a resurgent Afrikaner republicanism on the other. The South Africanism was thus in a precarious position. There was, however, at least a construct of nationhood that promoted something specifically South African and which was “engagingly idealistic and pragmatically vague” (Foster, 2008:30). The SAP, that represented this brittle consensus, was “imbued with the spirit of compromise ... although the background, interests and outlook of their members were highly diverse these parties tried to integrate the white population into a nation consisting of the two language groups” (Giliomee, 1978:191).

Culture

Culture was a sensitive issue in the early part of the 20th century and matters emphasising cultural distinctness and difference were not foregrounded by the Botha led government. Both Botha and Smuts made public statements concerning their pride in being 'Afrikaans' but their politics as being one of co-operation instead of forcefulness. In principle the two 'cultures' enjoyed equal status and in their mind those stressing language action were deliberately stirring unrest (Giliomee, 2004:313). On the other hand there were those amongst whom concerns of cultural dominance abounded. This position was generally associated with either those described as the Little South Africa or the Two Stream viewpoint mentioned earlier. Here culture became synonymous with identity and identity with nation.

A key moment that did foreground difference, culturally, was the development of the Afrikaans language (Giliomee, 2004 Pretorius, 1985, Hofmeyr, 1989, Huigen, 2011). A little prior to Unification a movement started that called for the development of Afrikaans as a language. This movement became known as the Second Language Movement and its advocates includes cultural organisers like Gustav Preller and poets like Eugene Marais and C.J. Langenhoven (Pretorius, 1985:90). For Huigen (2011:131) the Second Language Movement tried to solidify the language as something particular to an Afrikaans identity. Furthermore, this became intertwined with the retention or acquisition of political currency. For Pretorius (1985:90) the movement was an attempt or counter-reaction to retain an identity in the face of Anglicisation. In 1907 there were language associations in all the major South African cities, bar Durban (Giliomee, 2004:318). The language struggle had precedence in movement like the First Language Movement of the 1870's. In the Second Language Movement, unlike the first, the struggle for recognition was explicitly linked to an Afrikaner nation (Foster, 2008:31). For Huigen (2011:131), the Second Language Movement continued a struggle instigated by the First and was key in tying the Afrikaans language to an inherent Afrikaner identity that in turn became a driving force for the attainment of political power in later years. A key figure of the struggle, C.J. Langenhoven, cited in (Huigen, 2011:131) explicated in the following way: "Afrikaans was made in South Africa to suit our African circumstances and way of life; it grew up together with our national character; it is the only bond that holds us together as a distinct nation; the only characteristic of our people".

Although those from different political positions either emphasised or de-emphasised culture and specifically language, Moodie (1975:48) stresses the power of the language movement to dissipate differences among Afrikaners and for a 'Pan-Afrikaans' character to take hold

(Moodie, 1975:39), which could bring a variety of Afrikaners together (including ex-loyalists). For Moodie (1975:48) the language movement was from the beginning tied to nationalism but the broad currency it enjoyed, i.e. that allowed it not to be deemed exclusively Two Stream, was the fact that it was an essentially liberal notion of the right to speak one's 'own' language (Moodie, 1975:48).

The past

At the time of unification, the relationship forged between the English and Afrikaans population chose to deal with the past in a moderating and conciliatory way that attenuated the bitterness that still prevailed. For Nasson (2000:112), "Anglo-Afrikaner reconciliation specifically required a moderation of bitter war memories, in benign nation building rhetoric, the war became a tragedy or a regrettable imperial entanglement in that it had ruptured a natural Boer-British European settler unity". A new united nation had to be promoted and the war was expressed as silence.

There were those that eschewed union completely, who still yearned for an independent republic and who refused to forget the tribulations of war. They stressed that the Boer leaders like Smuts and Botha were sell-outs and co-opted into an Imperial machinery (Nasson, 2000:112). Here, cries of 'having forgotten the suffering brought about by the war' were heard.

Period 4 - 1910 to 1920 Social Issues and Political Shifts

Between the 1910s and 20s the social and political landscape was dominated by several issues – the so called 'poor white' problem, the promotion of Afrikaans to an equal footing with English, rebellion, and the formation of the National Party in 1914. With this came a resurgence in cultural and national sentiments promoting new forms of Afrikaner identification.

The dominant social issue of the early 20th century was the 'poor white' problem. Materially the devastation of the war, the migration of cheap Black labour, the rapid migration of the rural population to the towns and cities, and the poor level of education all contributed to the growth of a disenfranchised class of people living beneath the breadline. Most of these were Afrikaners (Giliomee, 2004:270). Concurrent with the economic realities other regarding the poor white problem came into play. One was the growth of the social sciences in the early part of the 20th

century (Giliomee, 2004:267) which started conceptualising social issues as a play of forces outside the control of individuals and groups. This was opposed to a previously dominant conception that would attribute social phenomena, in this case the prevalence of destitution, to moral inadequacy and/or an inherent lack of endeavour on the part of the group in question. As a result, social intervention became a catchword; it was understood that a population had to be 'uplifted' and that social intervention was necessary to effect change. This meant that such a population or group had first to be described and discovered (Giliomee, 2004:267). Accompanying this viewpoint was the tacit understanding that to maintain South Africa as a white man's country there could not be any 'poor whites' and that if anyone had to be uplifted it had to be the white section of the population. This was seen as an important driving force in solving the problem (Giliomee, 2004:267). A key dynamic that emerged was that the poor white problem became linked to the upliftment and consolidation of the Afrikaners as a group. Both the upliftment of the poor together with the Afrikaans community as a whole became part of key political and popular discourses. The gateway to this 'upliftment', as discussed later, was often stressed as the upliftment and development of a discrete cultural identity itself.

The struggles for and upliftment of the poor and the accompanying discourse around identity and culture became imbricated within a shift in the political landscape too. Afrikaner division within the ruling SAP escalated into the breaking up of relations between the different camps and the establishment of the National party in 1914 under the leadership of J.B.M. Hertzog. A growing and "simmering nationalism" (Van Jaarsveld: 1969:23) found a political home, and for the first time was able to gather momentum without the impedance of notions of reconciliation. This heralded the breaking of the brittle consensus of union and was instigated by those within the SAP, like Hertzog, who stressed the maintenance of a discreet Afrikaner cultural identity. Irreconcilable differences were cited as the 'one cultural stream' policy of the SAP and the accompanying fears that this would lead to Anglo dominance and exacerbate feelings of inferiority among Afrikaners, the subjection to British authority and the inability to inculcate an emphasis on culture to uplift (Van Jaarsveld, 1969:272) in a dispensation that de-emphasized differences.

For Moodie (1975:78), the most important element of Hertzog's NP was the promotion of two discrete cultural streams that represented 'white unity' but which placed the national interest before those of empire. The NP's position was thus more refined regarding its relationship with

empire and was, in name, not blatantly anti-empire. According to Moodie (1975:78) care was taken to distinguish between “national autonomy and national independence.”

In the NP there was also room for those that eschewed Union completely and who still yearned for the ‘old republics’ (van Jaarsveld, 1969:274). In 1914 there was an Afrikaner rebellion, generally consisting of those disenfranchised by the war and Afrikaner labourers. The flags of the old republics were once again raised. The rebellion had to be violently suppressed and the heavy-handedness of the state’s reaction exacerbated feelings of resentment against the ruling SAP. This resentment was re-activated by a general labour strike in the early 1920 discussed in a subsequent section. Van Jaarsveld (1969:276) describes the rebellion as a massive ‘*gevoelsuiting*’ an ‘acting out’ that revealed sentiments of resentment amongst a large portion of Afrikaners. The NP stressed culture and although it emphasised that there should be a unified [white] population, a South African nationalism, the insistence on two cultural streams made the party the natural home of a rising cultural awareness. In the 1915 election the NP took half of the Afrikaner vote (Giliomee, 2004:279). For the nationalist the Afrikaners within the SAP ranks were seen as English-minded that were skewed by Empire. Their eyes had to be opened to nationalism. For the SAP, on the other hand, the nationalists were divisionary, narrow-minded, reactionary and extremist who lacked any openness and broad-mindedness (Van Jaarsveld, 1969:275).

Identity, nationalisms and culture

If the first half of the 20th century was an epoch of Afrikaner ethnic mobilisation (Giliomee, 1978) the period between 1910 and 1920 represented the early simmerings; growing a cultural consciousness became a powerful driving force in general upliftment and discourses around nation, culture, identity and the past proliferated (Moodie, 1975:49). The construction of an Afrikaans culture, and its corollary identity promoted new forms of identification that stressed the language, culture and past in a different way and became tied up to the nationalist cause. Much of this took place as a position taken against an ‘Other’ i.e. the British, the Imperialists, the homogenising Anglo world order etc.

The mobilisation of culture at that time was described by Louw (2004:50) as the setting aside of a separate and discrete cultural space that allowed for the Afrikaans culture to exist as distinct from its Dutch and solely European origins. It was distinctness and locality that were promoted where the cultural struggle was one against Anglo cultural imperialism (Louw, 2004:44). Once again, the Afrikaans language was emphasised in popular and political

discourses. For political Leader like Hertzog and Malan the Afrikaans language movement was a vehicle through which the nation could be raised; "Raise the Afrikaans language to a written language, let it become the vehicle for our culture, our history, our national ideals, and you will also raise the people who speak it" and an "an awakening of our nation to self-awareness" (Giliomee, 1978). The culture was once again constructed as something necessary to counteract the homogenising threat of an English world culture (Giliomee, 1978:193). As noted before, the position described by this nascent nationalism was not necessarily *directly* anti-English and it was more than possible to construe, as it was by Afrikaner intellectuals, an Afrikaner national consciousness at the same time as a broader national consciousness in which both *consciousnesses* exist with the same purpose in mind (Moodie, 1975:79-80) i.e. a South African nation.

The emphasis on an 'own' culture and identity attenuated a general sense of inferiority experienced by the Afrikaner populace after the war. The nationalists were able to resonate the clearest, "For Afrikaner nationalists the alienation, anxiety and insecurity of the new order could only be reduced within the womb of ethnic collectivity. Only by stressing their ethnic identity could the humiliation of defeat and the cultural chauvinism of the English be overcome" (Giliomee, 1978: 193). Notions of the Afrikaner identity as divinely ordained, once again, made the rounds. (Giliomee, 1978:192).

Van Jaarsveld (1969:272) notes, however, that a broader idea of an Afrikaner identity started to be posited at this time. The term Afrikaner was in some instances used in an inclusive way where it not only had to be on an equal footing with a British one but being 'of South Africa' could come to be the universal white language of South Africa. This was something which in later years became a theme within the national party, that the two language streams could flow together into one white Afrikaner identity (Giliomee, 2004:321). Whether sometimes referring to English speakers as 'Afrikaners' amounted to positing an eventual single Afrikaner culture is debatable, but that Hertzog explicitly referred to those that put 'South Africa First' as 'Afrikaners' (Moodie, 1975:76), regardless of language, does perhaps point to an early inclination to collapse the broader South African nation with an Afrikaner ethnic identity. The early nationalism as described by Moodie (1975:81) was not exclusivist and was rather guided by moral obligation. Furthermore, it never was a movement conceived, by Hertzog at least, to effect Afrikaner dominance (Moodie, 1975:81). Any 'inclusivity' naturally excluded non-white segments of the population. There were however instances of involving the coloured population within the constellation of 'Afrikanerness' (Giliomee, 2004:344; Foster, 2008:30).

Thus, one can deduce that in those times those more inclined toward reconciliation, politically represented by a broader South Africanism (Foster, 2008) embodied by the SAP had an open ended notion around identity, and in fact, didn't emphasise identity at all. This correlates with an understanding of the social fabric which was, For Giliomee (2004:279), the approach of particularly Smuts, a leading voice in the notion of a Greater South African identity followed neo-Classical economic principle which implied a free balance of economic and social forces and was in general insensitive to the plight of the 'poor whites'. The identity posited by those open to the awakening of nationalist sentiments was not necessarily 'fixed', it was, however, restrictive in the sense that it emphasised ethnic distinctness. Hand in hand with this position went the need for strong social intervention that eschewed the idea that 'matters would run its own course' (Giliomee, 2004:278).

The past

The discourses around 'the nation' accompanied the creation and interaction with 'a usable past', a term Sabine Marschall (2015:18) used to describe the general selective reinterpretation and construction of the past that takes place under a new political dispensation. A new conception of the past took hold somewhere between the 1910s and 1920s that fuelled, and was fuelled by, the nationalists as a rising political force.

This new emphasis was embodied in the figure of Gustav Preller who became the leading 'cultural' organiser of the day. Preller is an oft-cited source of tracking the expansion of Afrikaans cultural consciousness and for Isabel Hofmeyr (1988:522) Preller's archives offers "an astonishingly rich source for those interested in the cultural fabrication of nationalisms". Preller became the great 'populariser' of history and was credited with the mythology built around the Great Trek that persisted into the late 20th century. In the case of Preller, however, his substantial contribution cannot simply be reduced to an instrument in the hands of the National Party. Hofmeyr (1988:524) notes that his political alignments were, at least at the beginning of his career, with the SAP and not the NP and his output thus exemplified a broader traction amongst the populace. His works were popular in the true sense of the word and he became a champion of Afrikaner culture and history by fighting for a people's history (Hofmeyr, 1988).

A general reappraisal of the past was also evidenced by another medium of cultural output. In 1916 the first Afrikaans feature film, *de Voortrekkers*, was produced with a script written by

Preller (Hofmeyr, 1988:527). The film was about the Voortrekker victory at the battle of Blood River and its screening was due to form part of a nationwide celebration of the battle's anniversary that ended up attracting considerable interest. The film did much, in form, to promote reconciliation between the Afrikaners and the English by specifically displacing the animosity to the 'savage natives' or other 'dubious characters' (Tomaselli, 1985:18). It did, however, stress an event that became *the* key myth of Afrikaner nationalism (Hofmeyr:1988:525). The most prominent themes in this mythology were "freedom from oppression, the experience of deprivation and suffering, and the humble desire for land and a modest home" (Marschall, 2005:19).

This 'relooking' of the past associated with a rising nation can also be exemplified by the emphasis on the role of woman in a political and popular nation building drive. A first instance of the official erection of a Boer War memorial from an Afrikaner side was the erection of the *Vrouemonument* in Bloemfontein in 1914 dedicated to the struggle of women in the war. For Foster (2008:31) the erection of the *Vrouemonument* explicitly tied into a wider "cultural and political movement that increasingly revolved around republicanism".

This particular monument has been read within the context of the construction of the *volksmoeder* (Trans: Mother of the Nation) ideal tied to an expression of early nationalism. The monument, amongst others, has been read against the backdrop of the romanticization of the role of women in the Great Trek by an Afrikaner male-dominated nationalist milieu as well as against nationalist leaning woman's organisation like the Afrikaanse Christelike Vroue Vereeniging (ACVV) (Trans: Afrikaans Christian Women's Association) complicity in constructing the *the volksmoeder* myth and perpetuating a 'mother of the rising nation' discourse as noted by Du Toit (2003, 158). Du Toit (2003:158) noted a transition at the time from the construction of women as 'amazons' to 'mothers of the *volk*'. The rising nation had to be nurtured rather than defended. The ACVV rallied around the slogan of Church, Nation and Language (Brink, 2011:9). From the perspective of another organisation, the *Suid Afrikaanse Vrouefederasie* (the South African Women's Federation) perspective the rising nation could only do so if the destitute and socially marginalised could be 'uplifted'. Thus, the idea that upliftment and nation went together found broad currency. Brink (2011:8) notes that "for them the uplifting of especially working-class woman and young girls represented the immediate challenge which would contribute concretely to the reconstruction of the nation". This nation

was idealised as consisting of women who had “a sense of religion and of freedom, [possessed] virtue, self-reliance, selflessness, housewifeliness and [had] an inspirational role” (Brink, 2011:7). Importantly these qualities were described as hereditary, ingrained in the Afrikaner women over their short history. Focus was once again laid on the Great Trek (Brink, 2011:8) where the role of the *volksmoeders* became emblematic. There was, however, apart from the *vrouemonument* still mostly silence on the Boer war (Brink, 2011:8).

It is this sentiment and the insistence on reconciliation by the SAP that proved to be too much for some Afrikaners in light of a bitter war: "For many nationalist there could be no question of conciliation with the English while the memories of conquest on war and concentration camps were still fresh in their minds" (Giliomee, 1978: 193). This would explain the focus on the trek as the prime historical underpinning of a rising nationalism, a veritable founding myth (Marschall, 2005).

In summary, the period between roughly 1910 and 1920 can be described as being one where an Afrikaner cultural consciousness was rising against the backdrop of a general destitution. Most authors associate this with the breaking away of Hertzog and the establishment of the NP. There was however a broader cultural awakening that accompanied specific identity discourses and an emphasis on the past, mostly the Great Trek. The cultural awakening had thus not completely taken shape and become fully articulated to political nationalism. Nationalism as a political force and the discourse around identity, culture and the past were natural bedfellows, however, and the one enforced the other. As soon as the sentiments to maintain a culture and identity in the broader social fabric found a political home the cultural nationalism became a true force (Giliomee, 2004:322). This force became associated with a general reappraisal and mythologizing of a shared past.

Politically, the main difference that took hold between the two camps was one of letting things grow organically on the side of the SAP and a strong social intervention on the side of the NP. In terms of identity this was exemplified by dynamics between the two language communities. On the one hand the SAP promoted a one stream outlook which saw the two language communities as a single stream flowing together. For the NP cultural distinctness was foregrounded and ethnicity important for the Afrikaner to hold its own. A two stream outlook was promoted. The associated myths, with particular reference to the past, included freedom from oppression, victory over adversity and the yearning for a place that belongs to ‘us’. This

is echoed in the myths of the Afrikaner woman as the victors over adversity who now became the nurturers of a rising nation.

Period 5 – 1920 to 1935 Labour Strike, PACT and NP Victory

For the next 10 to 15 years, from around the 1920s to the mid-1930s, the social landscape in South Africa was marked by two major local events and capped by a third. One was a massive mineworkers strike that became a general revolt against the government in 1922 (van Jaarsveld, 1969:275) and the other was the victory of the PACT government, a coalition between the Afrikaner Nationalist Party and the primarily English-speaking Labour Party. In the PACT government the Afrikaner nationalists came into power for the first time. With this the political and social construction of the Afrikaner became at once broader and narrower, broader insofar it assimilated various other interests and narrower insofar as it generated a more rigorous segregation policy. (Giliomee, 2004)). The PACT government precipitated shifts in the power structure across the two white language communities and constituted a curious consensus. The PACT government was once again victorious in 1929 but this time prepared the ground, wittingly or unwittingly, for a new consolidated political structure in a United Party victory in 1934. Dovetailing with the political shifts were those that took place in the cultural sphere. In this period the fledgling nationalism of the preceding decade became more pronounced and intertwined with politics. Anything cultural was political and everything political was a question of culture.

Labour politics

In 1922 a massive general labour strike known as the Rand Revolt shook the Witwatersrand (van Jaarsveld, 1969). The strike revolved around the question of white labour and the competition it faced from cheaper black labour. The strike quickly became a struggle for much more (Breckenridge, 2007:230). The seeds of the struggle, from an Afrikaner perspective at least, are as follows: in the early 20th century there was a gradual but consistent movement from the farms to the cities. The disenfranchised spread around the countryside started to move to the cities and the 'poor whites' became an increasingly urban problem. This intersected with a post-war period in which inflation was rising sharply and a large unemployment rate prevailed (Giliomee, 2004:276). Work was scarce and competition was tough. There were thus a large number of disenfranchised, unemployed and urbanised people who became associated with a largely unskilled Afrikaner labour force already on the Witwatersrand. The mines were the main source of work in the Witwatersrand and most of the mineworkers doing dangerous

work underground were Afrikaners. These were, according to Giliomee (2004:282), the most radical workers the mines had seen up to that point. Afrikaner workers and those competing for the same work were the main supporters of the 1914 rebellion.

The Afrikaner labourer in the 1920's faced multiple obstacles: illiteracy, competition from English speaking workers generally better educated and more broadly skilled than they were and an industry, in general, English in character (Giliomee, 2004; van Jaarsveld, 1969). But the main danger to white job security came from Black labour (Breckenridge, 2007:230), especially on the mines. Black mineworkers were paid much less than their white counterparts and, enjoying very much the same skillset as at least their Afrikaner counterparts, were economically much more feasible for the big mining companies to employ. Legislation, however, protected white mineworkers from overt competition from the Black labourer.

In economic terms there was a big disparity between English speakers and Afrikaners. It is therefore no wonder that two sets of antagonisms played out on the Afrikaner worker on the Witwatersrand. Giliomee (1978:193) notes that from an ethnic perspective emphasis was laid on the disjuncture in wealth between the two language communities. From a class perspective the enemy was 'Big Capital' in the form of the big mining companies who exploited the workers for capital gains.

With the focus on the upliftment of the Afrikaner, not only through education but specifically through inculcating a sense of common culture, the NP had already won the hearts of many of the Afrikaners. For Beinart (1978:5) "political unity proved elusive but by the 1920s, an elaborate ethnic and linguistically based nationalist movement reached into every aspect of Afrikaner social existence". In the current climate the NP started to present itself as a party that could reconcile nationalist as well as workers' sentiments and interest (Giliomee, 2004:281) through its emphasis on the upliftment of the poor, culture and resistance against Anglo dominance. This was backed throughout by the nationalist newspapers *Die Burger* and *Ons Vaderland* which from 1915 had circulated an anti-capitalist and anti-Imperial discourse. (Giliomee, 2004:281). Big Capital was associated to empire and latent anti Imperial sentiment, always simmering beneath the surface since the days of Milner, and expressed earlier through the 1914 rebellion, resurfaced. An "atavistic Boer republicanism" (Breckenridge, 2007:230) resurfaced.

The mine owners were indeed powerful. The mining industry dominated the economy in the early part of the 20th century. By the 1930's half of the state income as well as half of the direct

and indirect employment of the population came from the mines (Giliomee, 2004:279). Nonetheless the 20's were tough times. The gold price nosedived and inflation skyrocketed. Furthermore, the mine owners and the chamber of commerce were in general associated with the Unionist Party. At this stage the Unionist party was the official opposition and was according to Beinart (1978:59) "in favour of the imperial connection and was sympathetic to mining and commercial interests".

In 1920 the Unionist Party and the SAP merged. This aggravated anti-SAP sentiments amongst the workers (van Jaarsveld, 1969:1969). When mine owners started to dispute the legitimacy of the colour bar that deprived them of cheap Black labour sentiments on the side of White labour were rising (Breckenridge, 2007:236). No support from the SAP was forthcoming and workers resentment against the dropping of protection were dismissed by the SAP. The mines on the Witwatersrand became highly charged and eventually resulted in strike action being undertaken by both English and Afrikaans speaking mineworkers (Giliomee, 2004:283; Moodie, 1975:91). Around 75% percent of the strikers were Afrikaners.

According to Giliomee (2004:283) there were two broad currents, split along language lines, that could be discerned within the striking body. On the one hand were English labourers associated with the Labour party who had communist and socialist sentiments. These ranged from only having a vague sense of transforming the status quo to obliterating the 'capitalist order'. Amongst the Afrikaner strikers a call for the lost republics resurfaced and the strike became one against Imperial power and British capital in one. For van Jaarsveld, (1969:278) even amongst the Afrikaner leaders of the strike there was a tendency to think in terms of a red workers republic. A major theme among Afrikaner strikers, naturally, were the maintenance of a white man's country and the dominance of white labour (Giliomee, 2004:283). This was echoed by the Labour party whose one, by now famous, slogan read 'Workers of the world unite for a white South Africa'. The strike had to be violently suppressed by the state and once again the heavy-handedness of the Smuts government's reaction only fuelled the fire on which a new consensus was simmering.

It is these sentiments that got consolidated in the formation of the PACT agreement, a coalition agreement signed between the Labour Party (LP) and the National Party in April 1923. The various stakeholders were able to work together for a number of reasons. The mineworkers in the ranks of both the LP and the NP resisted the SAP for differencing reasons besides the way

in which the strike was handled. Labour because it was too capitalistic, the NP because it became too pro-British and Imperial (van Jaarsveld, 1969:278). Merged with the 'nation' was the upliftment of the poor and the interests of the worker, a worker that often held republican interests at heart. Furthermore both parties were characterised by a strong intervention in the social, as opposed to the more *laizes faire* approach that characterised the SAP government mentioned earlier. This coalition came into power in 1924 (van Jaarsveld, 1969:278). As the dominant section of this strange consensus the aspirations of the young aspiring Afrikaner nation was in a position of political power for the first time.

Giliomee (2004:289) notes that the Afrikaners were no socialists in the inclusive sense of the word; protection of the worker meant protection of white interests and the maintenance of South Africa as a white man's country. To uplift the 'poor whites', and particularly the Afrikaner, was a formative force in relations between Black and White. Hertzog was quoted as saying that it was exactly because he wanted to solve the problem of the poor whites that he lobbied for the segregation policy (Giliomee, 2004:286).

Politically the PACT consensus worked to provide a base for the English and Afrikaans speakers. The Afrikaner NP and English-speaking LP worked on a compromise; The NP was willing to drop their strident calls for secession, something which increasingly became a force in NP party dynamics (Moodie, 1975:86) often heard in cries for a republic, to placate the English speakers. The LP was willing to posit, in name, the idea of full self-rule with nominal ties to empire. A thorough political middle ground was found (van Jaarsveld, 1969:278). Between the two white language communities the possibility of a broader identification emerged.

A new identity? South Africa and the Afrikaner

With political power for the first time, in a multi-lingual society, came a repositioning of what it could mean to be South African and Afrikaner at the same time. Political power for the Nationalist meant that they had to engage with sentiments of republican secession from empire (Giliomee, 2004:350). Freedom was a key theme in Afrikaner mythologies of the Great Trek and fit well with calls for secession. Republicanism had always been articulated to freedom for the Afrikaner (van Jaarsveld, 1969 277) and in lieu of the origin of the PACT government freedom now became freedom from British cultural dominance and oppression, freedom from empire, freedom from capital, and freedom from poverty and marginalisation.

There was, however, no republic. The Balfour declaration in 1926 put South Africa on equal footing with all the other members of the commonwealth and this mediated any resentment against the fact that South Africa was still a British dominion. The declaration was ratified in 1931 and adopted by the South African parliament in 1934. This effectively made South African a sovereign independent state but still part of the British Empire (Giliomee, 2004:350). In 1928 a new South African flag was hoisted alongside the British one (van Jaarsveld, 1969:280). The flag had to represent a diversity of interests and its origin and make up reflected the political situation of the time. The end result was considered a compromise, it contained a completely new flag with both the Union Jack and the two flags of the old Boer republics represented. To represent the empire the British flag was flown at certain key points (Giliomee, 2004:350).

The compromise must be read against the backdrop of the need to promote unity and consolidate a white community consisting of English and Afrikaans speakers. There were still vastly different ideas of how this might be achieved (Giliomee, 2004:351). For the English-speaking community this was often achievable through being part of a greater commonwealth, through the universality offered by the English language, individual rights and middle-class values (Giliomee, 2004:351). The Afrikaners emphasised the 'local' and 'ownness'. Much was made of South Africa being their only 'Fatherland'. The Boers were 'shaped' by the land, a myth often propagated at the time (Coetzee, 1988; Foster, 2008). There was also an emphasis on community, nationalism and social intervention (Giliomee, 2004:351). This was exemplified by the slogan 'South Africa First' which became Hertzog's rallying cry.

This does not mean that elements of the South Africanism (Foster, 2008:32) associated with the SAP eschewed the 'local'. The Afrikaners, however, were able to tie the local to that which grew from the land, and that which was not tied to something foreign to itself. This became inextricable from 'culture' and will be discussed in a subsequent section. At the end of the day a cultural nationalism and a sentiment of 'South Africa First' got the upper hand (Giliomee, 2004:351). On the one hand there was a broader identification and appreciation with what was deemed 'local' and 'own', and on the other hand also greater acceptance of Hertzog's vision of White unity – which in opposition to assimilation stressed ethnic apartness with the same visions of South Africa First (Giliomee, 2004:352). In 1929 the NP won the election again, this time without any formal coalition (Giliomee, 2004: 351). For one source South Africa has

“Culturally ... for all practical purposes seceded” (Giliomee, 2004:351). This is also the year the statue of M.T Steyn is erected on the campus of the University of the Free State.

Culture

With the NP in power the cultural awakening of the Afrikaner went from strength to strength. In 1925 the Afrikaans language was recognised as one of the official languages of South Africa (Huigen, 2011:131). In 1929 the *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings* (FAK) was established (Giliomee, 2004:352). The FAK was a federation of different cultural organisations into one overarching body that tasked itself with the promotion of Afrikaans culture and language. With the recognition of Afrikaans as an official language a stream of literature started making the rounds. In the 1930s Afrikaner culture flourished and the output became more self-reflexive and self-conscious. A range of *volksdigters* (translated: poets of the nation) known as *The dertigers* started to publish widely. These included figures such as NP van Wyk Louw and Elizabeth Eybers. In 1929 the first historical work was published in Afrikaans and in 1932 the five parts of the Carnegie report on poor whites was also published (Giliomee, 2004:380). A key moment was when, in 1933, the Bible was translated into Afrikaans.

In accordance with the cultivation of a local, 'own' identity discussed earlier went the FAK's formulation of their cultural developmental goals. For the FAK in their official mission statement of 1934, a broad cultural resilience had to be cultivated. To do this the 'culture' had to be rid of any foreign influences and a sense of aesthetic appreciation or taste for the own had to be developed (Giliomee, 204:354). This was not limited to the aesthetic only. What the FAK had in mind was that “our whole point of view, the thread of our very thoughts, our entire spiritual disposition should embody an own indigenous Afrikaner spirit, so that the stranger that comes to visit should have no doubt in his mind that he is confronted with an *Afrikaner*” (Giliomee, 2004:354) – [Researcher's Translation].

The sentiments around cultural awakening were best embodied by the figure of NP van Wyk Louw, a poet and essayist who was the leading Afrikaner intellectual figure for much of the 20th century (Renders, 2011:148). Van Wyk Louw maintained that the cause of Afrikaans was to loosen itself from any form of colonial mentality, from that which always seeks intellectual and cultural leadership in Europe or Britain. The cause of the Afrikaner was to move from a colony to a nation (*van kolonie na volk*). For him a colony never could carry its own essence and could only express the essence, in a roundabout way, of the exogenous Empire. A *volk* or Nation on the other hand had the ability stand for something greater, to articulate its own

essence and to consolidate many different classes and standing under its wing (Giliomee, 2004:381). A *volk* was thus able to articulate its own universals (Renders, 2011:148). Once again there was an emphasis on Afrikaans loosening itself from the strictures of a foreign, dominant culture and promoting that which ‘comes from the self’.

The past

With the cultural flourish came a gaze back into the past. The bond between a sense of ownness, that found a political home, that had nationalist aspirations, led to the specific languaging of the past. For Giliomee (2004:383) history ‘returned’ from a silence that had prevailed regarding the Anglo-Boer War, a silence stretching from roughly 1902 to 1934, where little to nothing was written and recorded about the war. It was as if it was too painful to talk and language a bitter past. Foster (2008:31) concurs: “Although the aftermath of the South African war offered a rich potential for exploitation along nationalistic lines, much of this only remained alive in folk memory and was not converted into writing until it suited the needs of the nationalist movement in the 1930s”.

In the beginning of the 1930s there was a sudden proliferation of popular books and newspaper articles dealing with the heroism and suffering of the war. Themes of heroic resistance of the *bittereinders* and the suffering of the woman and children in the concentration camps were the most prominent (Giliomee, 2004:383). On other historical fronts Van Wyk Louw once again took a lead – writing books about the Voortrekkers that stressed the call of the blood (Giliomee, 2004:383). Identity became an inherent quality, passed on from generation to generation and supported by rising up to its call at those events that formed part of the history of the people.

For Nasson (2000:115) between the 1920s and 1930s, in children's literature, the *burghers* were depicted as “heroic and lionhearted” outwitting their British counterparts; and in reference to Preller, Nasson writes that its purpose was to “awaken the Afrikaner to the truth of their war of freedom and their national mission”. Furthermore, ideas of bravery, resilience, resourcefulness, were attributed to the *bittereinder* generals who now became *volkshelde* (heroes of the nation) whose characteristics were tied to the nationalist struggle (Nasson, 2000:116). These “tenacious men of the soil” were only defeated because of those that betrayed the struggle for independence. For the nationalist minded writers these represented the undiminished spirit of independence (Nasson, 200:116). This independence was tied to an

egalitarian cause that cast the leaders as being on equal footing with the *burghers* who fought alongside them. In this view all who were loyal took part in the struggle for independence.

Conclusion

In the late 1920s and early 1930s the Afrikaner as a cultural community was fairly secure. The National Party was in power and a flourishing cultural output found broad traction. On a broad scale the cultural and national ideal had settled within the Afrikaner community. This ideal, that of the 'local' and 'own' culture that found a home in a nation stood on firm ground. On the social and political front there were, however, factors that still required the building of a broader consensus. According to Giliomee (2004:355) these included socio-economic and cultural factors. Economically it was the time of the great depression, culturally there were still antagonism between English and Afrikaans speakers, and lastly a rising Black population precipitated fears for 'white civilisation'. Calls for the building of a new political consensus were heard.

In 1934 the National Party merged with the SAP to form the United Party (Beinart, 1978:57). On both sides of the spectrum there was a need to build a broader base that could on the one hand consolidate all the different interests (economic investments, farmers, mine owners, labour representatives etc.) into one; and on the other would be able to make the structural adjustments that would guarantee the maintenance of a white South Africa (Giliomee, 2004:259). The drive for a United Party thus lay in the common fears of the white community coupled with the economic straits of the Great Depression (Giliomee, 2004:359). For Hertzog, the leader of the NP, the Afrikaner was now in a position for the two language streams to flow into one (van Jaarsveld, 1969:286), albeit in two distinct cultural communities, that could privilege South Africa as an independent unit within a commonwealth. Initially the merger was supported by most NP leaders across the provinces. Smuts, leader of the SAP, saw the formation of the UP as the triumph of universalism. Van Jaarsveld (1969:286) concurs and describes the UP as a triumph for Smuts' holistic philosophy. Everybody was willing to work together and for Smuts the consensus meant that "no morbid fears and sickly obsessions but an inner urge towards wholesome integration and co-operation" would be at the order of the day (Giliomee, 2004:360).

These sentiments found broad currency among the South African population and perhaps constituted a consensus between the 'South Africa First' of Hertzog and the 'South Africanism'

of Smuts. Not, however, for some of the more hard-line Afrikaner nationalists. In 1934 the NP split after a coalition with the SAP was approved by its federal council and D.F. Malan, who was at first resistant, became the leader of the *Herstigte Nasionale Party* or HNP. The HNP differed from Hertzog in accepting that the Afrikaner was now strong enough to hold its own. For them a thorough cultural nationalism as well as a bigger stake in the urban economy was necessary (Giliomee, 2004:380). To do this the cultural and spiritual attraction of the British empire had still to be resisted (Giliomee, 2004:380).

The nationalism of first Hertzog and now Malan were the party that articulated the cultural struggle the clearest (Giliomee, 2004:349). Although the UP represented a new powerful consensus, the struggle for a nation and culture tied to a more hardline nationalism persisted. For them a struggle still had to be fought: “Ethnic identification occurs most strongly where a collection of individuals come to consider themselves communally deprived and believe the mobilisation as a group would improve their position or where persons seek to protect their privileges they share with others against those who do not have them or whom they are exploiting collectively” (Giliomee, 1978: 151). If this is true, the HNP straddled both lines – they still believed they were in a weaker position, still deprived and still inferior. On the other hand, they were also protecting what they had attained through a very successful cultural and political struggle. This was a struggle considered to be won in 1948 when the HNP, now the NP again, won the national election.

LITERATURE REVIEW PART TWO – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HERITAGE LANDSCAPE

Introduction

In Part Two of the literature review I will cover contemporary matters around ‘heritage’ by tracing a trajectory from a more recent South African past. To do so two things need to be noted. Firstly, in line with the times, emphasis will shift from transformations in the Afrikaner political and cultural landscape to that which includes a 'reforming South African nation in the late 1980s as well as the new, inclusive democratic South Africa after the end of formal apartheid in 1994. There is thus an explicit shift from what were movements largely determined by political and cultural dynamics between two language communities i.e. Afrikaans and English speakers in the early 20th century, to what was in a more recent context a cultural and political dynamic between a black majority and a white minority. Secondly, the scope of the coverage will be narrowed to movement within specifically the heritage landscape of the newly constituted nation. The question ‘*what is heritage?*’ as unpacked in the theory chapter will now directly inform the appraisal of a more recent and contemporary understanding of the past and how it relates to culture, identity and nationhood.

The shift to matters of ‘heritage’ is made for a number of reasons. As noted in the theory chapter, in a multi-cultural society the abstract imagined nation will come into conflict with its particular constituencies, their different formulations of identities and nationhood, culture and the past, and their struggle for recognition.

The heritage terrain becomes a terrain of struggle over the meaning/s that give expression and embody these struggles. This would be what constitutes the heritage discourse and would be enclosed in the questions, explored in the theory chapter, as derived by Hall (1995) ‘*What heritage belongs to who?*’ and ‘*What past is deemed worthy of celebration?*’. In a country where a radical social, political and cultural change takes place, as it did in 1994, the past is bound to become problematic (Tomaselli *et al*, 1996; Rassool, 2000; Marschall, 2018). The problematics around the construction of a nation, an identity, a culture and its past thus finds explicit voice in the heritage discourse, one that encompasses many sites and practices: the tourist industry; the official ‘Arts and Culture’ landscape; the popular and local production of culture and the practice of official and popular history (Rassool, 2000). All these articulate a relation between identity, nation, culture and in most cases, a past.

For Sheperd (2008:124) “Since 1994 heritage discourse has emerged as one of the principal sites for negotiating issues of culture, identity and citizenship, suggesting what is authentic, what constitutes the deep roots of cultural identity and the essence of nationality”. Furthermore, the heritage landscape became a key site where the past itself is made and unmade. Writing on the relation between history and heritage (Rassool, 2000) maintained that the heritage discourse increasingly became *the* site of history-making, and that history was no longer the domain of academia or the state archives. In heritage, history thus acquired a popular dimension. For Rassool (2000:1) “the domain of heritage and public history requires serious examination, for it is here that attempts are being made to fashion the categories and images of the post-apartheid nation. It is also in the domain of historical production [through the heritage industries] that important *contests* are unfolding over the South African past”.

This brings one to an important shift on a more historically specific note; identity discourses themselves have changed to notions of constructedness and fluidity. Thus, conceptualising culture, identity and the past as a discourse, where meaning is produced through practice, fits well with a contemporary understanding that implies that identities, nations and the past are to an extent open to being constructed and no longer perceived to be seated in necessity or fixed by given, inherent characteristics tied indefinitely to a specific nation, culture or place (Foster, 2008:15). The heritage landscape has thus become a platform through which this is practiced. Identity, nation and culture today is not the identity, nation and culture of yesteryear.

Transformations in the heritage discourse of South Africa pre- and post-Apartheid will be traced in the following way. Coverage of the 1996 *White Paper on Arts and Culture* (RSA, 1996) with reference to some of its genealogical ‘moments’ notably the conference on the Conservation of Culture held in 1988. Thereafter the #RMF movement and its impacts as evidenced by a revised *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* in 2017 (RSA, 2017) and a *Report on the Transformation of the Heritage Landscape* (RSA, 2017b) will be discussed. Interspersed with this academic literature engaging with the South African heritage landscape will be covered.

The Immediate Post-Apartheid Heritage Landscape

Genesis of post-Apartheid heritage policy

The New South Africa officially came into being on the 10th of May 1994 with the swearing in of Nelson Mandela as the first democratically elected president of the Republic of South Africa,

marking the end of white minority rule under the National Party (NP) and the transfer of power to an African National Congress (ANC) led black majority. The successful transfer of power was a result of prolonged negotiations between the ruling NP and the ANC that had started in all earnest when the latter was unbanned on 2 February 1990. The unbanning of the ANC and associated liberation movements had in turn been the result of increased sanctions that accompanied the mounting pressure on Apartheid policy from the international community, local movements for democratic reform, an intensified, armed liberation struggle from within and finally an increasing inability to morally justify institutional segregation on the part of the ruling NP (Grundlingh, 2009:99-100).

To ensure a peaceful transition to democracy racial antagonism had to be attenuated and the question of ethnicity and nationalism had to be addressed. Afrikaner and Zulu secessionist movements threatened to upset the precariously positioned transition process. The ideology of non-racialism promoted by the ANC was key in trying to suppress these antagonistic forces and to try and 'glue' the newly created nation together. A new nation had, once again, to be 'nurtured'. Thomas Blaser (2004:185), in reference to Moodley and Adam (2000), notes that "in a divided, plural society, the ideologies of non-racialism and 'rainbowism' are designed to create a common loyalty to the state" and that "reconciliation at the expense of justice and retribution was part of a political compromise on which a new order and a society in transformation was based". Although the 'rainbow nation' was criticised for holding the *status quo* in place, it was a necessary symbolic construct to ensure that an attachment could be formed to a fragile, newly formed state by a diverse population (Blaser, 2004). The notion of reconciliation and the 'rainbow nation' were thus two cornerstones of an important nation building project.

This project was consequently reflected and reinforced in the official position taken by the new curator of the national heritage landscape, the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST). The heritage landscape was seen as a key terrain where symbolic antagonisms could be attenuated and 'building the nation' could be affected (Rasool, 2000; Marschall, 2019, RSA, 1996:12). Thus, identified as a key terrain of social cohesion (gluing the nation together), the heritage sector had to be guided by policy and frameworks. As any good government does, it started to 'administer'. This eventually came in the form of the *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* of 1996. The 1996 White paper was the result of a long consultation process. Amongst others the framework was laid down by research contracted to

the Human Science research Council (HSRC) and a report drafted by the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG). Viewpoints on cultural heritage were also informed by shifts in the heritage landscape in the late 1980's that formed part of a reforming pre-1994 South Africa.

The Conservation of Culture Conference 1988

A key moment concerning matters of heritage was a conference held in Cape Town in 1988 that resulted in a marked shift of emphasis relating to matters of heritage and cultural preservation being taken up by the participating stakeholders. This shift precipitated some of the tenets of the later 1996 White Paper. The conference consisted of a wide range of participants, organised by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), The South African Museum Association, The Department of Environmental Affairs, The National Monuments Council and South African Society for Cultural History. In the 'Introduction' of the published proceedings the origin of the conference was noted as coming from a need to both address the general antipathy the cultural and heritage sector held in the eyes of the public and officialdom and its inability to adapt to the contemporary context (Coetzee *et al*, 1988). A divergence of stakeholders attended the conference ranging from academia, heritage practitioners, government officials and state department representatives, cultural organisations and leaders and community leaders (Coetzee *et al*, 1988). Observers noted that a key motivation of the conference was the discussion of the unpragmatic attempts at reform by the South African government and how its attempt to promote cultural development along separate development deepened the division and problematics of the heritage sector (Vergunst, 1988:36). The conference was aptly named the *Conservation of Culture Changing Contexts and Challenges*. Starting with a draft 'manifesto' the conference concluded with the composition of a statement that ultimately were to be adapted into an official manifesto.

The conference proved a lively one and antipathy towards questions of culture and heritage identified in the public was not shared by the participants (Vergunst, 1988:36). A central issue was the maintenance of separate development in the cultural and heritage landscape and the relation between politics and culture. A key contribution was delivered by F.A van Jaarsveld who identified a crises in identity regarding the different cultures in South Africa, each with their own 'historical consciousness'. For the FAK culture and politics had to be kept separate. Especially Afrikaner cultural custodians were concerned about the preservation of Afrikaner heritage in light of the changing context. Contributions by Willem Landman, Keyan Tomaselli and Mewa Ramgobin changed the tone of the conference and entrenched a consensus among

participants that the only way to have a discussion about conservation was in the context of democracy and the dismantling of Apartheid (Vergunst, 1988:36).

The conference was remarkable in so far as, at its conclusion, the official conference statement rejected the maintenance of cultural development and policy on the lines of “an insistent separate development” (Vergunst, 1988:36) propagated by the reforming South African government. This was done in favour of developments in line with the Freedom Charter proposed by the three above mentioned participants (Vergunst, 1988:36). The Freedom Charter called for a democratic state, emphasised human rights, equality before the law, freedom from oppression based on race and gender and eschewed any form of racialism. At the same time, it emphasised language and cultural rights and protected the ‘own’ – what was, in the Charter, referred to as folk culture and customs (Freedom Charter, 1955).

Also notable was the unambiguous rejection of Apartheid, notable for the amount of state representatives present (Vergunst, 1988). Although, in the statement, emphasis fell on preservation there was an obvious recognition that in preservation, be it state sanctioned or ‘popular’, lay the potential for the promotion of cultural exchange and the promotion of democratic societal values. Stressing the importance of culture in the hands of the public the statement noted the need to integrate the ‘conservation’ into the everyday life. Also noted was the necessity to protect the heritage of individual communities that they regarded as valuable (Coetzee *et al*: 1988)

The calls for inclusivity was considered an unexpected result that went against the grain of dominant conceptions around culture and heritage, especially from Government structures. The counter-intuitive outcome of the conference is evident in the sentence: “the statement embodied in this document accords with the spirit of a harmonious, non-racist and democratic South Africa” (Coetzee *et al*, 1988:499). The outcome of the conference was thus thoroughly aligned with central tenets of the Freedom Charter. Notable was the insistence that policy be drafted and additional research conducted to formulate a framework in which the above could be enacted. The conference marked an early re-imagining of a past that looked further than only one particular group or which stressed a separate development. With this new conceptualisation what could constitute a new nation and how culture and identity might be conceived of in a multi-cultural set-up became possible. As such it precipitated some of the developments taken up in the 1996 White Paper.

More Developments Toward Democracy

As South Africa steered towards the 'New South Africa' a number of things happened in the heritage and cultural domain. Before the elections in 1994 a strong arts lobby group that concerned itself with the formulation of arts and culture policy, the National Arts Coalition (NAC), was formed to represent a wide array of stakeholders characterised by a non-racial outlook. By the time of the election this coalition of artists had already formulated a set of recommendations. (Zegeye & Krigler, 2001:3). In the aftermath of the elections the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology formed the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG), a task group consisting of 23 publicly nominated arts and culture practitioners and stakeholders that were tasked with drafting policy in consultation with the arts community (Zegeye & Krigler, 2001:3). The ACTAG was responsible for drafting a proposal which in turn was presented and accepted by a panel of art and culture practitioners and institutions. Some of these recommendations were taken up in the 1996 White Paper (Zegeye & Krigler, 2001:3).

Both recommendation from the NAC and ACTAG concerned itself with developing policy in line with non-racialism and inclusivity. The recommendation in the ACTAG report were not without their stumbling blocks however. For some the open-endedness regarding definitions and attempts at including different theoretical and methodological viewpoints and processes were made at the expense of conceptual clarity (Williams, 1996:108). Other issues included disregarding or collapsing the historical dynamic or dialectic that underpinned the development of 'arts and culture' in South Africa (Williams, 1996:109). Furthermore, issue was taken with the possibility that the specific recommendations might lead to a commodification of culture, that would privilege the 'use' of the arts and culture landscape by the wealthy only (Williams, 1996:111).

Apart from the ACTAG report, cultural policy research was commissioned by the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) via the HSRC to cover some of the problematics and offer recommendations for the drafting of heritage policy. In one of the articles that resulted from research commissioned by the HSRC Tomaselli *et al* (1996:50), writing about the status of national symbols, and building on work by Khan (1989), framed their analysis with three questions; a. what heritage belongs to whom, b. what should be preserved and c. who decides this. The framing of these questions once again resonates with Hall's appraisal of the 'heritage question' as discussed in the theory chapter. Questions of culture became questions of politics and shifts in political power had cultural and consequently historical implications. The authors noted some of the issues that characterised the heritage terrain as the "acknowledgement that

the present monument and heritage preservation structure tend to reflect a narrow interpretation of the country's history". Furthermore, that this one-sided history was "associated with conquest, dispossession, slavery, dominance and control" (Khan, 1989) cited in Tomaselli *et al* (1996:50). They argued that because of the strength of the associations this had the most potential to be re-articulated. Furthermore, note was made that "[t]here would be hostility against the selective historical record" and that there were "conflicting interpretations of what constitutes South African nationhood" (Tomaselli *et al*, 1996:50). In analysis the authors noted the potential of the heritage landscape to create a new terrain in which a past and nation could be constructed "that many of the old are being looked at in terms of the new, suggests that there is potential for a less portentous approach to nationhood emerging" (Tomaselli *et al*, 1996:53). There were still however many interests still attached to a restrictive ethnic nationalism (Tomaselli *et al*, 1996:53).

Consequently, not only was the heritage terrain powerful insofar as it could symbolically resolve issues of a pragmatic nature 'on the ground', like calls for ethnic secession or cries for recognition embodied in ideas such as the rainbow nation and a shared 'heritage', but there were also 'struggles for the sign' taking place that had to do with a daily appraisal of the past, nationhood, identity and culture. Thus, notions around preservation on the one hand posited a new nation and on the other made that nation open to contestation and interpretation. The above was some of the issues heritage policy had to address.

The White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage 1996

All of the above considerations informed the *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* of 1996, and this document became the cornerstone of South African heritage policy. It laid down the mandate of the DACST and acted as the framework in which the process of transforming the heritage landscape, reflecting the democratic, multi-racial ethos of a freshly established post-apartheid South Africa, could be instigated. It set out to establish a framework that would guide the funding arrangements and the institutional practices that govern the creation, promotion and protection of the South African cultural and heritage landscape. Emphasis was laid on an inclusive, non-racial and equal heritage landscape with transformation seeking to incorporate historically repressed expressions of culture into a landscape marked by diversity. A key outcome was to "encourage mutual respect and tolerance and inter-cultural exchange between the various cultures and forms of art to facilitate the emergence of a shared cultural identity constituted by diversity" (RSA, 1996:12).

Equal access to artistic, cultural, heritage and linguistic resources and opportunities were thus promoted to address the imbalances of a racially skewed past. Importantly, matters of cultural activity were seen as instrumental in transforming the broader social landscape and key in building a new post-apartheid South African identity.“ [T]he arts, culture and heritage have a vital role to play in development, nation building and sustaining our emerging democracy” (RSA, 1996:12). The spirit in which the White Paper had been written in is evident in the concluding remark (RSA, 1996:32):

The enthusiasm with which the new national flag was greeted tells us that it is possible to find common ground. This is the essence of national reconciliation and nation building, and it is to this sentiment that the draft White Paper addresses itself.

The official discourse around matters of Arts, Culture and Heritage thus aimed to promote both a new universal iconography around which the nation could rally and the cultural endeavours of a diversity of particular ethnicities. Celebrated in the heritage discourse of the day was the “heroic leaders and the liberation struggle, reconciliation and nation building, celebration of cultural diversity within the ‘rainbow nation ’and not least economic empowerment through tourism” (Marschall, 2019 in reference to Rasool, 2000). Although the focus was indeed on 'correcting' a skewed landscape and giving voice to expression of memory and the past previously unheard and repressed, the reappraisal of colonial and apartheid era statues were to be subjected to “careful reassessment and de-prioritisation” (Marschall, 2019, p. 1091), as well as keeping these markers as a way to serve “as a record of apartheid, and to set them in dialogue with newer, more inclusive sites” (Barnabas, 2016 in reference to Shepherd, 2008, p.122). The *White Paper on Arts and Culture* of 1996 was a widely respected policy document (Marschall, 2019:1091). The policy as set out in the 1996 White Paper corresponded with what was being said and practiced in public. According to Rasool (2000:1) “these discursive contours – of a society of 'many cultures' and a history of ‘great lives of resistance and reconciliation – ’have been emerging and taking shape within almost every sphere of heritage construction and public culture in South Africa”. It was thus a construct that found broad traction in South African society after Apartheid.

The Contemporary Heritage Landscape – Fast Forward 20 Years

The section below will explore recent shifts in the South African heritage landscape. The main focus will revolve around the #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) movement and some of the changes this precipitated in recent published policy documents. Notice is taken that identifying the effects the #RMF movement had on the cultural domain is not limited to exploring the heritage landscape and the ‘heritage discourse’. It is understood that the cultural exists in many places. However, insofar as the ‘heritage discourse’ is directly concerned with the past and its corollary culture, identity and nation and this is reflected in the policy documents that then represent these currents and sentiments in a concrete and tangible way open to exploration, it is argued that heritage is an excellent barometer to trace the changes in ‘spirit’ that the #RMF movement may have effected. The paragraphs that follow will thus aim to illuminate a relation between the protest movement as expressed in the #RMF mission statement and shifts and movements within the heritage landscape as embodied in two official policy documents, the 4th Draft of the *White Paper on Arts and Culture* published for comments in 2017 as well as the *Report on the Transformation of the Heritage Landscape* published in 2017. It must be noted here that in the analysis the Steyn statue will be ‘read’ against the background of #RMF and not necessarily the shifts it precipitated.

#RMF Mission Statement

If the spirit of reconciliation through the icons of the past still prevailed at the time that the #RMF movement started in 2015 it quickly dissipated with the student protests starting that year. What #RMF targeted as its central concerns engaged directly with the problematics of ‘heritage’ in a South African context, i.e. that which involves the past and that which symbolizes it, that which is open to contestation, that which involves power and politics and that which implicates ‘belonging’ and nationhood. The main concerns of the movement, as laid down in the #RMF manifesto published on social media platforms during the protests, revolved around a few key areas. Although the movement had different currents of thought and praxis pulling in different direction (Ahmed, 2017), the manifesto provided the researcher with a concrete document that ultimately drew the movement together under one identifiable policy. These can be summarised as follows:

1. Institutionalised racism and patriarchy. According to #RMF these concerns were not limited to elite institutions only. The situation at UCT reflected the broader dynamics of a racist and patriarchal society that had remained unchanged since the end of Apartheid. (#RMF, 2015).

2. The intersectionality of oppression. This referred to the fact that students felt marginalised not on the grounds of identifying or being identified as 'Black' only but also on other categories of identification or physical attributes like gender, sexual orientation, class etc. Referring to the intersectionality of the movement the #RMF manifesto read: "We all have certain oppressions and certain privileges and this must inform our organising so that we do not silence groups among us, and so that no one should have to choose between their struggles. Our movement endeavours to make this a reality in our struggle for decolonisation" (#RMF, 2015:1). What was referred to as an intersectional approach thus also formed part of what the movement would see as a 'decolonised' institution.

3. The statue of Cecil John Rhodes itself. Although the #RMF movement saw the removal of the statue as only the necessary start to the transformation of the university space as a whole, the statue itself was seen as a powerful symbolic figure. The presence of the Rhodes figure "erases black history and is an act of violence against black students" (#RMF, 2015:1) and represented the "dispossession and exploitation of black people". For the Black student body, in the mind of #RMF it was a perfect embodiment of black alienation. There was thus a strong reaction to what a certain material artefact represented. In a later passage, reference was again made to the iconography of the institution when some of the demands were that the university "[r]emove all statues and plaques on campus celebrating white supremacists", and to "rename buildings and roads from names commemorating only white people, to names of either black historical figures, or to names that contribute to this university taking seriously its African positionality" (#RMF, 2015:3).

4. Centring Black Pain. Under this specific heading the manifesto described what it felt had been at stake in the mounting tensions that grew on the UCT campus. At the root of the struggle lay what was considered the dehumanisation of black people by a system that privileges 'whiteness'. The notion of black pain and white privilege and the relation between these concepts came to be a prominent theme amongst the protesters as well as writers who subsequently wrote about the movement (Nyamnjoh, 2016; Mbembe, 2015). In the eyes of the protesters 'centring Black pain' referred to the question of white involvement in the struggle of the movement. But although it seemed like a passing point the involvement of 'Whites' entailed questions of what 'whiteness' is, how such a category might have been internalised and how one's struggle is defined through the eyes of a perceived 'Other' (Nyamnjoh, 2016). For the #RMF protesters the struggle was about the liberation of the black student body and staff and was ultimately a liberation that needed to "flow from black voices". This point involved some of the more strident sections of the manifesto, a case in point being that "Our pain should

be the only factor taken into consideration, and therefore the statue's removal from UCT must be a non-negotiable, inevitable outcome" (#RMF, 2015:1), as well as "It is absurd that white people should have any say in whether the statue should stay or not, because they can never truly empathise with the profound violence exerted on the psyche of black students" (#RMF, 2015:1).

5. Decolonising the university. The calls for decolonisation were articulated differently in different sections of the mission statement. In the mission statement itself the idea of a 'decolonised' space was referred to as a potential or an ideal yet to be achieved mostly, with little indicating what such a space might look like besides implementing "a curriculum which critically centres Africa and the subaltern ... and treating African discourses as the point of departure" as well as to "re-evaluate the standards by which research areas are decided - from areas that are lucrative and centre whiteness, to areas that are relevant to the lives of black people locally and on the continent" (#RMF, 2015:3). Nevertheless, the term stood for that which would come to exist if the movement proved successful in transforming the 'status quo'. In other senses, and important for the focus of this study, the movement recognised the word 'decolonisation' as meaning the transformation of the past in envisioning a future where it would be necessary to "[r]ecognise that the history of those who built our university - enslaved and working class black people - has been erased through institutional culture".

Although the mission statement made explicit reference to some of the tenets of decoloniality, a clearly articulated expression was lacking. To provide some context, some of the central concerns of the broader decolonial project, articulated outside of the #RMF context, included the points below;

1. *Not* using the West as a model on which to base its own identity, and in the process 'loosening; itself from a colonial identity (Mbembe, 2015:13).
2. In terms of endogeneity emphasising a logic of self-affirmation (Mbembe, 2015:6)," not having to assimilate into what is not mine" (Mbembe, 2015:5).
3. The decolonial struggle included the politics of language where African languages had to be privileged over what was considered a monolingual colonialism (Mbembe, 2015:18).
4. Fighting for African self-representation (wa Thiong'o, 2009:72), i.e. what wa Thiong'o called Africa 'seeing itself clearly' (wa Thiong'o, 2009). What this meant was not simply that the *idea* of 'Africa' was a resistance against what was considered a European construction of African 'otherness' in an attempt to define itself; but a real attempt to *redefine* and rearticulate an Africa considered lost by way of colonial expansion and modernity (wa Thiong'o, 2009:72). This

meant that decoloniality was a moment of saying ‘this is us’; neither a product of someone else’s self-representation nor assimilated into a form of knowledge production that claims an absolute universality, in this case a Western one (Knudsen and Anderson, 2018:6).

5. Most importantly, this affirmative strategy was not to be done in opposition to other epistemic traditions but in a process of co-creation, on that constitute a “horizontal strategy of openness to dialogue between *different* epistemic traditions (Knudsen and Anderson, 2018:6). In that sense, decoloniality was not simply about de-Westernisation, but to develop a perspective in which co-determination between different epistemologies could be accepted (Mbembe, 2016:24).

In summary, with the above in mind, decoloniality was a process in which there is a creative and affirmative engagement with the ‘other’, in the creation of an ‘own’ universal; that eschews the racist legacies of the past, yet seeks to look beyond, to a common human destiny.

Whether #RMF truly embodied this struggle, which in essence concerned itself with an affirmative and progressive cultural transformation, is up for debate; in name, however, #RMF’s struggle was a decolonial one.

The shift

Two recent policy documents are indicative of a shift in the heritage landscape, indicating a different approach to all things cultural in the third decade after the political transition and the end of Apartheid. The shift was in a change of emphasis from what had been an inclusive, open-ended and outward looking approach to matters of heritage in the spirit of reconciliation (Tomaselli, 2020, Marschall, 2019, Barnabas, 2016), to one that increasingly made note of a disjuncture between the symbols of *the* past and the symbols of *a* past and the socio-economic disparities and general sentiments ‘on the ground’

The first document is the 3rd revised draft of the *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* published for comments in early 2017. It contained significant additions and revisions. It emphasised that much had been achieved in the heritage/cultural landscape since the original White Paper had been published but that transformation needed to be expedited and certain barriers retarding the transformation process needed to be removed. (RSA, 2017:7):

Flowing from the above, the revised White Paper carries forward the gains of the preceding two decades and addresses the challenges of inequality, poverty,

unemployment and persistent division based on, race, gender and other factors of exclusions.

A key addition was the alignment of policy to the National Development Plan (NDP), specifically aiming to integrate new policy into two aspects of the NDP namely, Nation Building/Social Cohesion and to promote Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS's) in the cultural domain. IKS's refer to the "recognition and potential reorientation of African value systems" (Marschall, 2008:246). This mimics a shift to a nation building narrative endorsed by the ANC under the presidency of Thabo Mbeki under the name of the 'African Renaissance' (Blaser,2004).

On the matter of integrating IKS's into the broader policy pertaining to the Arts, Culture and Heritage landscape, the revised White Paper notes a quest for a renewed orientation to transformation and list the following as means to that end (RSA, 2017:13):

- i. Integrating African culture and systems into the department's programmes.
- ii. Investing in African agency.
- iii. Increasing Pan-African partnerships and diversifying cultural systems, with African knowledge systems.
- iv. Reducing Western hegemony by reversing the marginalisation of African art, culture and heritage.

Furthermore, decolonisation in the context of the department's mandate is defined as "Placing African knowledge, epistemology, art, culture and heritage at the centre of policies, practices, institutions and programmes" (RSA, 2017:8).

The 2017 White paper thus contained significant revisions that stressed the privileging of systems other than 'Western' ones and calling for the decolonisation of the broader cultural sphere of the country, sketching the need for transformation against the background of socio-economic inequities.

Criticisms against the 2017 White Paper ranged from the unnecessary revision of the well-constructed cultural policy of the 1996 White Paper where the revision was based on an inability to successfully implement that policy in the first place (Marchall, 2019 in reference

to Van Graan, 2016) and the reduction of cultural policy to overt and undue political interference (Marschall, 2019:1092).

The second document, a report issued by the Ministerial Task Team on the *Transformation of the Heritage Landscape* in 2017 (RSA, 2017b) was the direct consequence of the nationwide student protests that swept through campuses in South Africa in 2015 that culminated in the #RMF campaign. The resultant defacement of statues across the country prompted the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) to establish a task team to investigate the renewed public outrage directed against primarily pre-1994 iconography. Thus the *Report on the Transformation of the Heritage Landscape* was one instance where a specific event and some of its central concerns, i.e. those concerning the past, were explicitly taken up in the official heritage discourse of the country.

In terms of national heritage, the broader social movement of the #RMF campaign was seen by the DAC as a call for an accelerated transformation of the heritage landscape (Khubeka, 2016). A report was commissioned and the resultant paper provided recommendations on a way forward in what had become a significant national debate. The nature of the report, that of acting as a barometer of the feelings ‘on the ground’ which would then be communicated, along with recommendations, to the DAC, makes it an exemplary document on the polemic surrounding the heritage landscape both from the perspective of the public and officialdom. The introduction of the report notes its genesis because of polarising protest actions surrounding items of heritage and as a first point of analysis concludes that the intensity of the animosity towards certain iconography, often accompanied by racial overtones, can be ascribed to the lack of transformation in the broader social sphere. “The answer is that the impatience at the rate of transformation has shone a spotlight at the dissonance between the symbolism of these statues and the present political order” (RSA, 2017b:2). What can be deduced from this conclusion is that an intensified gaze is cast on representative objects that do not correspond with the prevalent construction of a contemporary 'liberated' national identity. A second point to be deduced from the above quote is that an inclusive heritage landscape as propagated by the DAC White Paper (RSA, 2017:7) bears certain conditions; it only holds if the social landscape is sufficiently transformed (economically, epistemologically etc.) and if the act of reconciliation, so important in promoting social cohesion, is reciprocated by the white population: “Reconciliation, in other words, is fast losing its appeal, giving to a much stronger demand for meaningful transformation” (RSA, 2017b:2). The report goes on to state that it was

former president Nelson Mandela's personal status and insistence on reconciliatory politics that largely kept anger towards apartheid era statues in check and that it is indeed a persistent inequality that refocused the populations' attention to symbols of white privilege. The defacement of pre-1994 statues around the country that accompanied the #RhodesMustFall campaign are consequently summarised as both acts directed at symbols of white privilege as well as a cry for the creation of a new order in line with a broad decolonising project.

The report mentions three tenets of decolonisation that are relevant to the reformation of the heritage landscape; all three of which are appropriate to the scope of this project. The first is the rejection of "the centrality of the West in Africa's understanding of itself"; and the second is "confronting the phenomenon of whiteness or white supremacy and demythologising versions of history and heritage that advance white supremacy" (RSA, 2017b:7). The third mentioned the need for Africa to start seeing itself clearly, i.e. to re-appraise what it means to be African. These ideas follow scholars such as Achille Mbembe (2016) and Ngugi Wa Thiongo (2009).

There was thus an important shift in emphasis in officialdom's attitude toward the national heritage landscape that mimics the political context of the time. Little attention had been paid to certain iconography, representing a pre-1994 historical construction of the past, in an immediate post-apartheid narrative that pushed for a South African national identity of reconciliation through diversity. These 'representations of the past' had literally been left in place – if attention was paid to them it often leaned more towards "symbolic redress" – giving audience to those "previously written out of the official historical record" (Marschall, 2008:245) or completing the narrative as had happened at Blood River/Ncome when a new monument representing a Zulu side of the 'story' was unveiled opposite the Afrikaner Nationalist one in 1998 (Marschall, 2008). The merits of such an approach, however, came under increased scrutiny in the years surrounding the #RMF movement and once again exposed a tender relationship between how the past, and indeed matters of culture and identity, is remembered and the socio-political realities on the ground (Marschall, 2019:1088).

In the recent socio-political climate, as exemplified by the *Report on the Transformation of the Heritage Landscape* (2017b), contextualised by a re-evaluation of values in the form of renewed calls for transformation and decolonisation (RSA, 2017:13), emphasis is laid on the disjuncture between the need for a collective national identity and the iconography of a white

population that is perceived as still untransformed and economically dominant (RSA, 2017b). This disjuncture, according to the paper, stands in the way of building a unified nation.

This statement resonates with some of the key tenets of the #RMF. It is not argued that the #RMF movement determined the content of both the 2017 White Paper or as the *Report on the Transformation of the Heritage Landscape* in a linear way. It is also understood that policy documents cannot be taken as an unmediated reflection of what the sentiments are on the ground. Rather, the two reports and the #RMF movement come out of the same milieu and it is argued that as a social movement geared towards transformation of the cultural landscape and as deliberately constructed documents whose purpose is to administer the official cultural sphere that include statues and monuments, the two documents and the voice of #RMF movement as heard in the manifesto is an appropriate contextual block in which to read the *removal* of the M.T Steyn statue.

The contemporary problematic thus revolved around two poles. On the one hand was the issues associated with the heritage discourse as a site of struggle for the sign (Tomaselli *et al*, 1995). Immediately pre- and post-apartheid South Africa as a multi-cultural country with a diversity of particular ethnicities was celebrated. This quickly led to what Barnabas (2016:13) pointed out, in reference to Coombes (2004:2) as a risk for “a more fundamentalist ethnic absolutism” where it became contested who had the right to be recognised as what. Rassool (2000:4) in reference to Carruthers also notes the same problematic when asking how history is to cope “with the fact that there are as many heritages as there are ‘publics’ and ‘identities’”. These problematics, initially kept at bay by the strength of nation building narratives in the immediate post-apartheid period resurfaced in the contemporary context of #RMF (Barnabas, 2016:113). On the other hand, the very notion that a construction of nationhood, especially one stressing inclusivity and nation building can mediate tensions that originate from inequalities on the ground became contested. In this view symbolic redress and symbolic recognition represented the ways of the status quo and became superfluous in light of material suffering and destitution (Marschall, 2019). These critiques both resonated with the decolonial, in name at least, character of the #RMF movement.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter I will describe a process in which I can use my ‘theory’ to answer the central and ancillary research questions by analyzing my object of analysis, the statue of M.T. Steyn. The process is derived from what is implicit in the theory of representation and articulation as delineated in the theory chapter. This theoretical approach suggested two broad approaches to representation, the discursive and the semiotic, and articulation was a way to think both of these together. Both the discursive and the semiotic suggest a way to ‘deal’ with the cultural ‘text’, in this case the statue of M.T. Steyn, and how to ‘read’ it. The theory of articulation provided a convenient way to express the two approaches’ appraisal of the text into one process which ended up consisting of three discrete steps.

It is important to note that the proposed process is a combination of existing frameworks, in the first instance the tracing and identifying of articulation as described by Hall (1996) and in the second the application of semiotics as a methodology with specific reference to a process outlined by Daniel Chandler (2017) and Gillian Rose (2017).

In the passages below I will briefly describe how a ‘reading’ of the text is implicit in the theoretical co-ordinates. I will re-iterate the theoretical components that have relevance, develop an understanding of the text and propose a process in which such an understanding can be brought to bear on the chosen object of analysis.

The Methodology Implicit in the Theory

The study follows a structuralist and post-structuralist understanding of the way in which the world is mediated by language. This is expressed through an engagement with the work of representation outlined by Stuart Hall in *The Work of Representation*. The work of representation covers approaches of how the world is *constructed*, within limits, through language. On the one hand was the *discursive approach* which conceptualized the social as historically specific, made up of discursive formations or constellations of language tied to specific practices, that implied a particular epistemology, forms of knowledge and power (Hall, 2007:32). This approach involves investigating the practices, meanings, epistemologies and the links (or articulations) between these elements that sustain certain discourses or that implies

a *changed* discursive formation. On the other hand, was the *semiotic approach* that was delineated as the study of *signs* i.e. how a specific arrangement of signifiers and signifieds create meaning through arranging itself in a particular way (Hall, 2007:20). Whereas the discursive approach is primarily *diachronic*, i.e., explored broader epistemological movements and figurations of language as it changes over time, the semiotic one is a *synchronic* approach and focuses on how meaning is made through a particular arrangement of signs at a particular time.

These two approaches do not necessarily exclude or supersede one another (Hall, 2007:46) and they often share the same mode of expression, turn of phrases and jargon. It is the aim of this methodology to use them in combination to arrive at a holistic view of representation i.e. use two methodological lenses to answer the research questions. This was considered an appropriate approach for cultural studies considering that cultural and media studies not only “examines processes and conditions out of which texts arise” but “does both this and the close reading of texts” (Tomaselli, 2012:17).

Added to the two approaches was the notion of articulation, which in the way that Hall (1996) used it, suggested a way of thinking both approached to representation together and provide the means to holistically appraise the text. In this way it provided a means of describing how discourses perpetuate, by the linking or un-linking of disparate elements together into unities (articulating them) across many sites (or texts), but within the same ‘moment’ speak (once again *articulate*) within a specific text. The idea of expressing links as articulations, as links that are both structured and, at the same moment, can ‘speak’ thus opened itself up to both a synchronic and diachronic, a discursive as well as a semiotic understanding of language.

In this particular study articulation was thus a means of thinking, within one expression, the broader social movement that surrounds a cultural artefact (the discourses) as well as the very specific figuration of language ‘within’ that cultural artefact (the arrangement of signs). Applied to *this specific study* it allowed the researcher to think of heritage, as a terrain that ‘works’ or inscribes culture, identity and the past, as firstly a discursive terrain in which meanings are made and unmade. The heritage discourse represented a framework in which certain articulation can be traced and extricated, both in a historical context and in a contemporary framework. These articulations would then constitute a social context which could point to cultural transformations (see theory chapter) that might or might not be taking place. These would be transformations, and more specifically cultural transformation, taking place in the broader social fabric, with respect to culture, identity and the past – embodied by, and taking place at, many different sites and practices i.e., *represented* at many different sites.

At the same time as the social movement of discourse (articulations) progresses through time, through representation, each of these articulation ‘speaks’ at the same time through its own specific arrangement of signifiers (the semiotic). In this way the notion of articulation provided a way to think the moment where the discursive and semiotic intersect and where ‘structure’ got ‘spoken’.

The Text

Taking the above into account, the text or cultural artefact, becomes a site at which two modalities, the discursive and the semiotic, can be investigated.

Modality 1 (the text as part of a discourse).

In the *discursive* modality the specific text would be one site amongst many, where a constellation of various social forces, meanings and practices are articulated. As such, cultural texts form part of the proliferation of discourse, of the movement of culture, of the changing social structure over time. As mentioned in both the theoretical chapter and above, it is partly through the text, as representation, that articulations are sustained, re-imagined, re-articulated or completely severed. The text thus becomes a site of representation that perpetuate discourses.

In this view the text becomes a site at which various elements are articulated into unities. Grossberg (1993:3) concurs when he writes that “the cultural text is neither a microcosmic representation of, nor the embodiment of a meaning which is related to, some social other (whether a totality or a specific set of relations). It is a place at which a multiplicity of forces (determinations and effects) are articulated”. Hall (2005:22) provides a good summary of the text as something through which the movement of discourse gets perpetuated, in this case the discourse around the ‘nation’ suggested by heritage; “what the nation ‘means’ is an ongoing project, under constant reconstruction. We come to know its meaning partly *through* the objects and artefacts which have been made to stand for and symbolize its essential values. Its meaning is constructed *within...representation.*” [emphasis mine].

What Grossberg and Hall have in common is that various forces become articulated *through* the text. In our specific case, for example, articulations of culture and identity associated with nationalism become linked in certain texts.

At the same time a text can become part of a specific articulation in a different way, by being linked to a very specific practice. To re-iterate a quote used in the theory chapter Lawrence Grossberg (1992:54) noted;

Articulation is the production of identity on top of differences, of unities out of fragments, of structures across practices. Articulation links this practice to that effect, this text to that meaning, this meaning to that reality, this experience to that politics. And these links are themselves articulated into larger structure, etc.

In this way a specific text can also, as a whole become part of a specific articulation – As was, for example, the Voortrekker monument, which became linked to a very specific practice, *Geloftedag* (the Day of the Covenant) celebrations, see Grundlingh (1989).

Modality 2 (The text as semiotic process).

But on the other, the text itself ‘bind’ things together at a specific time and place, by the arrangement of elements within the text. As explored previously the text also ‘tries’ to speak, to *articulate*. It is thus the site of ‘speaking’ of articulating something in a new way that might be against the grain, against the set-up of meanings prevalent at a time. This view of the text stresses the specificity of the arrangement of signifiers within the ‘site’ at a particular time.

A summary

This brings us back to a diachronic and synchronic analysis of the text. **Modality 1** envisions the text as being part of broader structures that move through time. These structures have a history, an accumulated weight and force that builds up, dissipates and transform over time. This represents the movement of discourse and is articulated through many different texts that all form part of the same milieu. In this way it is possible to extrapolate what ‘spirit’ prevailed at a given time by exploring the texts, the practices, the isolated statements, and the academic literature that give voice to it.

Once a **trajectory** of certain formations are traced in such a way. i.e there is a map of the prevalent formation and articulations of, in this case, heritage, that is fully historied and product of its progression, then the specificity of a particular arrangement of signifiers embodied in a particular text, the **modality 2** (semiotics), can be explored. That is, a synchronic analysis,

where the chosen signifiers are analysed against the prevalent structures, the context proper, can be conducted.

Consequently, when the language of semiotics is then used, it is done with the backing of a progression of articulations ‘lifted’ out of its context. The power of articulation is that it allows for flexibility – an arrangement can be an arrangement of connotations, of practices, of texts as long as we can trace a trajectory, maintain structure and then use a specific text to investigate a statement, or an attempt to speak within the contextual scope of the time.

Once both modalities have been explored it can be ascertained, **and this is the most important part of the process**, whether the chosen text, in this case the statue of M.T. Steyn, was in any way able to re-articulate structure, or was simply an articulation of the dominant discourse by the way that the discourse ‘took’ hold of the specific signifiers of the ‘text’. This will then constitute the second layer – of re-contextualising the context that comes **out of** the object of analysis. The new holistic appraisal of the space called ‘heritage’ that is the province of the third research question.

The Process

The study deals with two contextual blocks; on the one hand there’s the historic section, Block A, that proceeds from the Anglo-Boer War to the 1929’s which is the time of the statue’s unveiling; On the other there’s Block B, that deals with the contemporary heritage landscape, stretching from the late 1980’s to the #RMF protest movement in 2015. The same methodological process is applied to both blocks as broken down below.

BLOCK A

Step 1 – Modality 1: A focus on the discursive

The purpose of the first section is to build contextual weight; to extricate and trace a trajectory of articulations, that would represent the movement of discourse, that constitute cultural transformation with respect to **identity, culture and the past**. The process is thus to *identify* the key articulations of culture, identity and past in *each period* discussed in the literature review Part 1.

Why: because if an articulation is “not something totally new, nor something which has a straight unbroken line of continuity from the past” (Hall, 1996:143) to know where our first

contextual key point comes from, the erection of the statue in 1929, one has to know what articulations preceded it and what articulations came after it. This will be done with the following points in mind:

1. Key assumption and guiding question: The key assumption was as follows; that what is called heritage today is a discourse, that that discourse is made up of articulations of culture, identity and the past, that these categories are both ‘spoken’ and linked together, that is, articulated, and that that is how discourses change over time: by the transformation of these articulations. The process is always guided by the question ‘what belongs to us’ – a question that subsumes the entire deconstruction of heritage as a discourse consisting of articulations of culture, identity and the past.

2. Periodisation: I will explore the same periods explored in the literature chapter – beginning with the period shortly prior to the Anglo-Boer War, the war itself, the time around Unification, nascent Afrikaner nationalism between 1910 and 1920, the early 1920s and finally the period immediately around the time of the statue’s unveiling in 1929. This is to extricate a trajectory of articulations.

3. How to find these: Cultural histories, texts and scholarship – something that can indicate that the past, identity and culture were linked and expressed in a specific way.

Tools: Meanings, practices, lines of tendential force, embeddedness, unities across differences.

This then concludes **step 1**. With the isolated articulations, a discursive ‘snapshot’ can now be used as a specific context, a specific context to be used in **step 3**.

Step 2 - Modality 2: The Semiotic

The aim in Step 2 is to examine the specificity of the ‘text’ by identifying the signs that constitute the statue of M.T. Steyn. The key assumption is that any text articulates *something* (as explored at the start of the chapter), and that *what* it articulates is the result of how elements are arranged ‘within the text’ and how these elements then engage with larger structures of meanings, in this case discourses. Step 2 will explore the former, ‘how elements are arranged within the text’, by referring to semiotic concepts like denotation, connotation, myth, paradigms and syntagms. The full semiotic toolkit and process can be found at the end of the chapter.

Tools: Semiotic concepts described in the ‘toolkit’.

Step 3 - A combination of the two Modalities

In this step the aim is to bring the work done in **steps 1 and 2** together and make the isolated articulations of culture, identity and the past engage with the specificity of the statue's signs. Specifically, this is done by sequentially running through each isolated sign in the *syntagma* (identified in step 2 – see semiotic toolkit) and 'reading' it in the terms of the prevalent articulation at the time. In this way it is possible to see whether the combination of signifiers resisted, corresponded, or were irrelevant, in the dominant discourse of the day.

This is done to:

- Explore what the statue, with its specific arrangement of signs, now contextualised by what were the key articulations of culture, identity and the past at that specific time, articulated.
- To get to the 'holistic' meaning of the text i.e. view the text through the two different lenses, the discursive and the semiotic, straddled by the concept of articulation.
- By letting the object of analysis, the statue of M.T. Steyn and its signs, engage with a prevalent articulation of the time to ascertain if, in the words of Hall (2005:22), the statue of Steyn is in this case an "artefact which have been made to stand for and symbolize its [a particular discourse's] essential values. Its meaning constructed *within...representation.*" [emphasis mine]. And as such, it is through representation that a discourse gets perpetuated, or disrupted. Thus, we get to know the discourse's 'meaning' through investigating a text. In this way the study uses the specific object or text, the chosen sample of M.T. Steyn, to further contextualise the context and attempt to answer the 1st research question: *What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of its unveiling?* That would conclude **Step 3** Block A – the next step is to 'rinse and repeat' the process in a contemporary context.

BLOCK B

Step 1 – Modality 1: A focus on the discursive

The aim of **step 1** is exactly the same as the Block A step 1. The only differences are that the period in question changes to a more recent past and, like Part 2 of the literature review, reference is explicitly made to 'heritage'. This will be done with the following points in mind:

1. Key assumption and guiding question: The key assumption as follows; that what we call heritage today is a discourse, that that discourse is made up of articulations of culture, identity and the past, that these categories are both 'spoken' and linked together, articulated and that that is how discourses change over time: by the transformation of these articulations. The

process is always guided by the question ‘what belongs to us’ – a question that subsumes the entire deconstruction of heritage as a discourse consisting of articulations of culture, identity and the past.

2. Periodisation: I will explore the same periods explored in the literature chapter – beginning with the reform period in the late 1980s, then move to a post-Apartheid heritage landscape embodied by the 1996 *White Paper on Art Culture and Heritage*. The last period is ‘heritage’ as formulated and expressed by the #RMF movement.

3. How to find these: Cultural histories, texts and scholarship – something that can indicate that the past, identity and culture were linked and expressed in a specific way. In this block government papers, academic literature, and the #RMF manifesto is used to extricate key articulations in the heritage discourse.

Tools: Meanings, practices, lines of tendential force, embeddedness, unities across differences.

Step 2 – Modality 2: The Semiotic

The aim in Step 2 is, to once again, examine the specificity of the ‘text’, the statue of M.T. Steyn. The signs have already been identified in Block A and I will make reference to exactly the same ones. However, with changed times come changed ‘readings’ and connotations and ‘what the signs signify in themselves’ (see semiotic process in toolkit) would’ve changed. Reference will thus be made to the immediate changed circumstances of the statue in the analysis.

Tools: Semiotic concepts described in the ‘toolkit’.

Step 3 - A combination of the two Modalities

In this step the aim is, again, to bring the work done in **steps 1 and 2** together and make the isolated articulations of culture, identity and the past engage with the specificity of the statue’s signs.

Specifically, this is done by sequentially running through each isolated sign in the *syntagm* (identified in step 2 – see semiotic toolkit) and ‘reading’ it in the terms of the prevalent articulation at the time. In this way it is possible to see whether the combination of signifiers resisted, corresponded, or were irrelevant, in the dominant discourse of the day.

This is done to:

-Explore what the statue, with its specific arrangement of signs, now contextualised by what were key articulations of culture, identity and the past at that specific time, articulated.

-To get to the ‘holistic’ meaning of the text i.e. view the text through the two different lenses, the discursive and the semiotic, straddled by the concept of articulation.

-By letting the object of analysis, the statue of M.T. Steyn and its signs, engage with a prevalent articulation of the time to ascertain if, in the words of Hall (2005:22), the statue of Steyn is in this case an “artefact which have been made to stand for and symbolize its [a particular discourse’s] essential values. Its meaning constructed *within*...representation.” [emphasis mine]. And as such, it is through representation that a discourse gets perpetuated, or disrupted. Thus, the researcher can get to know the discourse’s ‘meaning’ through investigating a text. In this way the study uses the specific object or text, the chosen sample of M.T. Steyn, to further contextualise the context, and offer an answer to the second research question: *What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of the #RMF protests, in the context of the movement’s calls for transformation and decolonisation?*

Semiotic Toolkit

Process:

I will follow the process as outlined by Rose (2016:132) as discussed in the methodology section.

To re-iterate for convenience:

1. Decide what the signs are
2. Decide what they signify in themselves
3. Think about the relation between the signs and others – i.e., refer to semiological concepts.
4. Explore their connection with wider systems of meaning
5. Finally return to the sign, now contextualized, to explore the precise articulation of ideology and mythology.

The following needs to be noted:

- I collapse steps 1 and 2 into one section i.e., identify the signs and apply the semiotic toolkit.
- To cover Rose’s step 3 I break the isolated signs into syntagms at the end of each section.

- Steps 4 and 5 in Rose's process will form part of my step 3 i.e., exploring how the specific signifiers of the text engage with a prevalent articulation of identity, culture and past at the specific time in question.

The 'Tools'

Syntagms and Paradigms

Syntagms and paradigms are concepts that can be used to break a text down into a pattern that can be analysed for its meaning/s. Structuralists, according to Chandler (2017:98) use these concepts to break down a text into units that are differential and interchangeable on the one hand, and on the other can be combined into specific sequences which together create the 'meaning' of the text. In a structuralist understanding of language these concepts are applicable on any given language system.

Paradigms are units that belong, within a given context, to the same category but defined by a differential relationship to other units within the same category (Chandler, 2017:98) Using Barthes' example of clothing garments worn around the neck, such as a scarf or a tie, would be within the same paradigm. They are defined by *not being* that which is of the same type, a similarity dictated by a context and convention. Paradigms function on both the level of the signifier and the signified (Chandler, 2017: 98). As they are defined by what they are not they are often referred to as an *absence* that is meaningful (Chandler, 2017:102).

Syntagms on the other hand are the combination of different paradigms into a sequence. Units in a syntagm also create meaning through difference but does so through the *presence* of discrete elements in combination (Chandler, 2017:100). Thus, using a grammatical sentence as an example, a sentence creates meaning by using different words in combination, word that on their own are defined by what they are not (the paradigms).

The graph out of Chandler (1997:99) illustrates this relationship graphically:

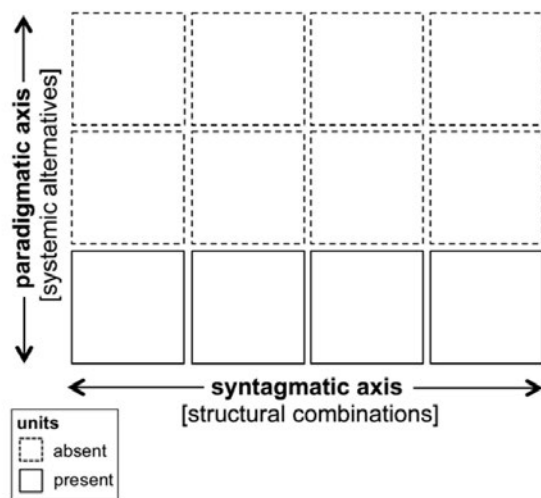


Figure 4.1
Syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes. Source: Chandler (2017:99).

Conventionality, motivatedness, and the 'iconic' sign.

Conventionality and arbitrariness had already been discussed in the theory chapter. Related to these concepts is the notion of motivatedness. Motivatedness refers to how closely a signifier can be related to its signified i.e. whether there is an analogous relationship between them Chandler (2017:173). A highly motivated sign would refer to a sign where there is an evident relation between signifier and signified. One such an example would be a sketch of a person; the signifier (the lines on the paper resembling a face) corresponds to the signified, the concept, or the mental image (a human face). An unmotivated sign would be a highly arbitrary sign where there is no correspondence between signifier and signified and the meaning of the sign relies on convention. One such an example would be the writing system. There is no necessary correspondence between the word 'tree' and the mental image or concept of that tree. Motivatedness thus goes hand in hand with conventionality. In general, the less arbitrary the sign is the less it relies on convention. A highly motivated sign is sometimes referred to as *iconic* where "the signifier represents the signified by apparently having a likeness to it" (Rose, 2017:120).

Commutation as used by Roland Barthes

One way in which the meaning of a sign or a sequence of signs can be guessed at is by using the commutation test. The commutation test was first developed by Roland Barthes in his seminal text *Elements of Semiology* written in 1964 (Chandler, 2017:103). The test works by substitution, adding, subtracting or transposing signs to see how this affects the perceived

meaning of a sign or a set of signs. This we can replace one sign with another similar one to see how this affects the meaning or value of the sign. We can add a sign into a sequence or syntagm, we can remove a specific sign, to see how this might affect the whole, and so on and so forth. In this way the value of sign can become apparent – what it means in relation to that which it is not. Commutation can be applied on all levels of semiosis (it is in a way already done when describing and listing the *paradigms* of a specific sign) and, for example substitution, can be done across individual ‘signs’ as well as their combination in smaller or larger syntagmatic sequences (Chandler, 2017:103).

Denotation and Connotation

Signs can be broken down into their denotative and connotative modalities. At the denotative level signifiers directly point to the object it represents and there is a strict analogy between the signifier and signified. At this level the sign is what Barthes (1977:17) refers to as “a message without a code”. What you see is what you get; a picture of a car, as a representation at the first level, points to the mental image of that or a car as its signified.

Over and above this first immediate level a second becomes apparent – that of connotation. This supplementary message is a second inscription of meaning where the signifier is “a certain treatment of the image (results of the action of the creator) and whose signified, whether aesthetic or ideological, refers to a certain culture of the society receiving the message” (Barthes, 1977:17). Using the previous example, the picture of a certain car invokes “a whole range of cultural meanings that derive not from the sign itself, but from the way the society uses and values both the signifier and the signified” (Fiske and Hartley, 1977:25).

In other words a sign operates on two levels; On the one hand you have the immediate literal meaning, the *denotative* meaning, and on the other one has the way in which a given society and culture inscribes, uses and value the sign, the *connotative* meaning (Barthes, 1997:17). The connotative meaning is not, however, simply the culturally situated signified of the literal denotative signifier. The connotation implies the way in which meaning is represented in the first place and comprises both its own signifier and a signified. This is not always evident as explicated by Barthes (1977:18); In the highly analogous photographic image the denotative level seems to fill the entire substance of the message – there is no room for the development of a second order within the image itself and the connotative meaning is derived from a code or language that belongs to a broader symbolic network (Barthes (1977:18). It is exactly this that makes the ‘imitative arts’ the playground of myth. It immediately presents itself as representing something completely natural and self-evident even though the meaning is already languaged.

In Barthes' *myth* meaning becomes naturalized through the reworking of the signifier-signified relationship into signifying processes of different orders, first through the order of denotation (the literal meaning) and then through the order of connotation (the meaning situated in a cultural context). The sign in the first signifying process becomes the signifier in the second and generates a meaning that is both obscured and which appears completely natural. Barthes suggested that the function of myth is exactly this; to make cultural norms and values appear as completely natural and self-evident (Chandler, 2017).

Anchorage

Anchorage is an element within the 'text' that ties together the meaning of a sign, a meaning that would otherwise vacillate between a multiplicity of interpretations. It is most often a piece of text, for example a caption on a press photograph, that tells the reader what the photo is depicting (Chandler, 2017:258).

Studium and Punctum

The *Studium* is a "culturally informed reading of the image" (Rose, 2017:122) that is the standard connotative meaning of a text as it would be appraised in a specific cultural context. The *punctum* is an element within the constellation of signs that "disturbs a particular viewer out of their usual viewing habits" (Rose, 2017:122).

Metonymy

A metonym is a sign in which the form of the signifier forms a part, or is associated with, the signified (Rose, 2017:121). A linguistic example would be referring to a capital city, like Pretoria, as the seat of power of an entire country.

Chapter Conclusion

The next chapter, the analysis, will apply the process proposed above in the attempt to answer the research question. Note that the analysis proceeds in two parts as per the process. I start with Block A and then proceed to Block B. Because of the nature of the analysis, I split it up into two separate mini-chapters.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

Chapter Intro

The following two chapters will constitute the final part of the research process, where all the different components of the thesis are drawn together to answer the research questions. This is where the methodology will be ‘applied’ on the object of analysis, the statue of M.T. Steyn, by firstly, drawing on the literature to ‘isolate’ the various articulations, secondly, on the theory to understand representation as a key component in the ‘social’, and thirdly, guided by the research questions and problem statement to find out how, ‘heritage’ has been constructed through the two periods in question.

Following the methodology, the analysis will be conducted in two parts. BLOCK A will represent the first contextual block and the methodology will be applied on the historical component of the study, i.e. to analyse what the statue ‘meant’ at the time of its construction and what ‘heritage’ it articulated at the time. BLOCK B, contained in a subsequent chapter, will ‘rinse and repeat’ the process in a contemporary context and aim to understand what the statue could have meant in the context of #RMF. BLOCK A thus aims to answer the first research question, BLOCK B the second. Answering the third research question will entail exploring the interaction of the two blocks. This will be discussed in the conclusion.

For convenience, the research questions are repeated below;

1. What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of its unveiling?
2. What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of the #RMF protests, in the context of its calls for transformation and decolonisation?
3. What can an analysis of the ‘meaning’ of the M.T. Steyn statue tell us about how heritage is constructed today

ANALYSIS PART 1: BLOCK A

Block A Introduction

As per the methodological breakdown, in this step articulations of ‘culture’, ‘identity’ and the ‘past’, different enough to represent a cultural transformation, as described in the theory chapter, are isolated. In the literature chapter historical descriptions were already, when possible, structured by organizing them into three categories: ‘culture’, ‘identity’, and the ‘past’. In this way it was possible to identify the material that spoke to all three categories and then ‘guess at’ key articulations between these categories that existed at a specific time.

Below, I will extricate and refine these articulations and ‘convert’ them into the language of theory, i.e., speak of cultural formations as articulations that change over time, become embedded, and represent lines of tendential force that indicate cultural transformation regarding the three categories, namely of culture, identity and the past – whose articulation, assuming a discursive approach, would constitute the ‘heritage’ in the contemporary heritage discourse.

To contextualise and ‘place’ the hero of the story, the figure of M.T. Steyn will, separately, be threaded through the various articulation where it is considered relevant. This is done for a number of reasons: one ‘placing him’, i.e., to make mention of his role in, or relationship to, some of the isolated articulations. Two, to trace a trajectory of the figure of Steyn in such a way that he can be interpreted later. For example, in **step 2** the mythical Steyn is considered a key *sign* in the *syntagm* the statue strings together. In **step 3** this *syntagm* is read in combination with nationalist discourse. To complete these two steps, it is necessary to know how the subject of the statue might have come to be *mythologised* in the way he was. When considering the articulation the portions referring to Steyn will be in indented paragraphs and the text in *italics*.

Step 1

Pre Anglo-Boer War articulations

When the Voortrekkers started trekking inland in search of metaphorical greener pastures they left behind a colony that represented, for them, undue government meddling in their affairs, a

lack of support and what they saw as a repressive British administration and government in the Cape Colony, that did not understand the challenges on the ground and which was in every way 'foreign' to their interests. The group of Trekkers was culturally yet unformed but bounded by, on the one hand resentment against government influence and on the other British rule, two notions that became collapsed into one. A third driving force was that of Calvinist Protestantism (Moodie, 1975). Also influential at the time were the tenets of the French revolution and the American struggle for Independence of the previous century (Moodie, 1975:31). These included notions of equality, brotherhood (solidarity) and most importantly freedom.

In the language of articulation it can be said that revolutionary notions of freedom, equality and solidarity were articulated to an anti-Britishness and anti-foreignness where freedom became freedom from the British/foreignness, equality a state of self-determination and solidarity the solidarity in the struggle to achieve the former. This freedom and search for a promised land by the Voortrekker was guided by doctrines of the elect and divine right, underpinned by strict Calvinist practice and, in contemporary terms, racial discrimination (Moodie, 1975:31). This articulation became embedded and embodied in the eventual consequence of the Trek, the two independent Boer republics of the Free State and the Transvaal.

As president of the Orange Free State prior to the war

As president of the Republic of the Orange Free State Steyn implored all residents, regardless of language, to become 'true republicans' and citizens of the Orange Free State. Many from the English-speaking community were part of his cabinet and 'culturally' at this time, he was said to align himself more with the dual language Cape colony than the Transvaal Republic. He was seen as someone who de-emphasised ethnicity in the build up to the war and rather construed the growing tensions as ideological: imperialism vs. republicanism and capitalism vs. individualism (Giliomee, 2004:202).

If one had to construe a sentence in terms of culture, identity and the past, guided by the heritage question 'what [culture and past] belongs to us [identity]' then it could read; Freedom from oppression and foreign influence belongs to us who are a divinely elect but an as yet undefined *volk*, who share a past of trials and tribulations. It is exactly such an embedded articulation that came into conflict with the Imperialism, naturally, at the first Boer War in 1881 and then the second Boer War – colloquially known as the first and second wars of *freedom*.

Steyn's resistance against the war and his struggle for freedom. Steyn had become known as a figure that opposed the growing hostilities prior to the Second Boer War and who tried everything within his means to arrive at a diplomatic solution. It was Steyn who organized and agitated for meetings between Milner and Kruger to take place to avert war (Giliomee, 2004:204; Pakenham, 1979:60-67). Once the war commenced Steyn became infamous as one of the bittereinders who fought until the very end. When the Transvaal leaders wanted to sue for peace in early 1900 it was Steyn who convinced them to continue fighting. One of his most famous statements was that he would rather retain his honour and in fighting lose the independence of the Free State than keep independence with dishonour. To this day these were the words most people knowledgeable about the subject that the researcher spoke to about the topic recalled. In this struggle for independence and honour Steyn became the heart of the Boer resistance (Giliomee, 2004:208) and was uncompromising, to a fault, regarding the call to fight to the end (Strauss, 2018:1).

After the war

With the end of the Second Anglo-Boer War and the loss of the republics such an articulation was ruptured and in need of transformation. No longer was it possible to speak of the Boers as a people within their own republic. A new civic unity, as colonies within the British empire, had to be considered. This was represented by Milnerism that attempted to articulate a South Africa that possessed an Anglicized culture (Britishness), already articulated with an understanding of British history and a colonial past that underpinned Imperial expansion, supported by practices and projects of enlightenment values, modernization and capitalist endeavor (Giliomee, 2004:221). Alfred Milner, governor of the now-colonies, of the Free State and Transvaal, thus embodied the post-war oppression, both economically and culturally, exerted on the Boers by the Imperial government.

Peace

Steyn was not a proponent of the peace talks during the war and insisted that for the Boers to keep self-respect requests for peace should not come from them. Steyn was already too weak and sickly to attend the peace talks at Vereeniging and was represented by fellow bittereinders Generals C. de Wet and J.B.M Hertzog.

Milner attempted to draw everything and everyone under such an expression of a civic unity, an articulation that drew resistance from various sites. From a Boer perspective the loss of the

republics proved to be traumatic. That is, to once again be under the ‘yoke’ of foreign influence, to be unfree, to be assimilated into a culture and history the breaking free from which was the very *raison d’être* of their existence.

***Language and upliftment** - Steyn’s emphasis on an ‘own’ language to uplift the population became well known. According to most sources (Meintjies, 1969; Giliomee, 2004; Strauss;2018) it was always about maintaining the self-respect of a group, for one language group not to feel and become inferior to another (Giliomee, 2004:227). In this sense he was a contradiction – he was married to an English-speaking wife of Scottish decent and grew up in a house that spoke English as their home language. Under his presidency the Free State cabinet included many English speakers. Yet he referred to the Afrikaans speakers and English speakers as two distinct races and was a cultural activist in the modern sense of the word. In this way he pre-empted the two Stream policy of Hertzog in later years with South Africa First.*

Union

However, at the same time resistance against the ‘us’ articulated by Milnerism did not articulate its opposite. When it came to the two language communities (Afrikaans and English), a shared trauma, the idea of reconciliation and importantly the promise of rapid self-government and the potential this offered in rebuilding the country, led to an articulation of culture, identity and the past that eventually came to represent the broad consensus of Union. The Union was able, temporarily at least, to bring different articulation of identity, nation and past into its own expression. As such it represented a new formulation that re-articulated the South Africa as a unity and a nation, with its own identity, culture and past.

Two articulations represented by two positions were so consolidated. The Little South Africa or Two Stream position (Foster, 2008, Giliomee, 2004), politically represented by Hertzog and the hero of the dissertation, M.T. Steyn, articulated cultural distinctness and separateness, language and cultural equality, a past in which separate language communities had struggled amongst each other, but who were nonetheless local insofar as they were *not* empire minded, in this view equal to a jingoistic, capitalist, imperial outsider who *exploited* South Africa for their own benefit (Moodie, 1975:76).

On the other was the Greater South Africa or One Stream position politically represented by Jan Smuts, Louis Botha and John X. Merriman who articulated a culturally assimilated South Africa, that de-emphasised difference but which was still tied to the ‘local’. What characterised this position was a more *laissez faire* approach, not only economically but culturally too, i.e.

the system would balance itself out. Fears about cultural dominance and homogeneity were absent in general, and the local self within empire was not a problematic construct. The past was expressed as silence and a need to 'move on'.

Union

Steyn was, together with J.B.M Hertzog, co-founder of the Orangia-Unie in 1906, the political party that eventually merged into the SAP after Union. The party won an overwhelming majority (31 of the 38 seats) in 1907 (Giliomee, 2004:226). The party's key concerns were language and upliftment and, according to Giliomee (2004:227), won support from all class and factions. By this time Steyn gradually moved into the background because of ill health. With regards to the fragile consensus of Union, Giliomee (2004:311) describes Steyn as probably the only person that would have been able to hold this consensus together. In this way the enigma of Steyn once again becomes apparent. He was a key cog in the formation of Union, stressing reconciliation and 'working together; but at the same time understood the struggle for language rights and the upliftment of the Afrikaner as the single most important issues.

The union managed to present as a re-articulation of nationhood, culture and a past by articulating some of the discourses of the two positions into its own discourse. It did so, in one case at least, by articulating the idea of '*patriotism*' to '*building the nation*' to the '*local*' in a way vague enough to address and incorporate the concerns of 'ownness' expressed by the Two Stream outlook, but which was benign enough to not affront those within the One Stream position that still had strong ties to empire. In another way, the Union's essentially liberal articulation of group rights did not oppose those that saw the Afrikaans language as a force linked to a specific and particular identity and ethnicity (Moodie, 1975, 48). Thus, for those that stressed cultural distinctness, the language movement, even under the Union's articulation of a new South African nation, became a new site of freedom, a new site of self-determination and solidarity that had been lost with the demise of the republics. Between de-emphasising difference, the patriotism of self-rule, the spirit of reconciliation that did not want to affront, and the allowance of language rights, Union was able to keep the consensus going for the next four years. Union was thus an articulation of nation that was vague enough to be inclusive. The *patriotism* posited created subject positions that afforded many opportunities for identification and political power that were not tied to cultural or ethnic distinctness. Silence on matters of the past did not affront anyone. As a balancing act, however, it was a *fragile* consensus.

Within this liberal consensus language and ethnicity was allowed to build into a force that perhaps would not have been possible, at that particular time, under a dispensation that only

articulated language rights to republicanism. Language, in this way, became a force that could unite Afrikaners across the political spectrum, what Moodie (1975:39) called the Pan-Afrikaner effect, and which pre-empted the cultural struggle that was to come. It was exactly this force that was underestimated by Smuts and the other leaders of the SAP in later years and which eventually contributed to the SAP losing political power in 1924 (Giliomee, 2004:351, Moodie, 1975:88).

Education and 'ownness' - Shortly before the war Steyn made a strong appeal to the Free State parliament for the formation of an institution that could teach children in Dutch. At that time the only tertiary education other than the seminary was in Cape Town, both with English as language of instruction only. There was a strong emphasis amongst the Free State leaders for an 'own' university (Fourie, 2006:9). The war interrupted this drive, but the seeds were sown. Steyn played a pivotal role in the general pedagogical landscape of the Free State and prior to the war had publicly advocated for a South African University (meaning for both the Free State, Transvaal and Cape Colony) to be situated in Bloemfontein (Fourie, 2006:9). Fourie (2006:92), in describing the reasoning behind why the studentebond chose the statue mentions three tenets used as motivation; "because he had worked so diligently for an indigenous Free State university ... had been the 'soul' of the war ... and because of what he meant for the Afrikaner". Consequently, Steyn's struggle for an 'own' language and culture to 'uplift', expressed itself through advocating for, and establishing, the institutional opportunities for a vernacular education.

1910 -1920 – Rising nationalism and the breaking of political consensus

The early part of the second decade of the twentieth century saw the rise of an early Afrikaner nationalism. A force that was left to flourish under Union, namely the Afrikaans language, gathered momentum, became articulated into the cultivation of an 'own'; an 'own' which encompassed a culture and a past, and which in the literature become indissociable from a rising nationalism. In turn this nationalism became articulated with social upliftment that drove the political agenda for much of the decade (Giliomee, 2004:321).

In terms of identity, an 'ownness' resisting assimilation was articulated. The 'culture' was not necessarily anti-English but a distinct, undefined, yet developing culture that was expressed as having a past in which the Afrikaner sought a place of their own, free from oppression. Exemplified by Gustav Preller, a prominent Afrikaner cultural activist and lay historian, the past and culture became imbricated, and expressed in a *volksgeskiedenis*, a people's history.

***Free State Local** - Steyn was known as a 'son of the Free State' throughout his life. He was the first President of the Free State to be born in the republic and represented the OVS as president and as general in the war. Steyn was one of the 'people'.*

This *past* was the past of the Great Trek, the 'nation' were those that underwent the trials and tribulations in search of greener pastures who developed a culture which now had to be nurtured, poignantly embodied by the mythical 'mother of the nation' (du Toit, 2003:158). As discussed in the literature review, these articulations were to be found in numerous texts in early nationalist discourse and found broad currency among the population. Thus, when reference was made to a past, for example the Great Trek, an identity and a culture was immediately assumed. In this way 'culture', 'identity' and the 'past' were articulated together. These were expressed and practiced in monumentalising, filmmaking and cultural festivals.

***Steyn's involvement with the plight of women before and after the war** - Steyn became strongly associated to the plight of the women and children in the Anglo-Boer War and was seen as the main progenitor of the Vrouemonument in Bloemfontein (Strauss, 2018:2). He himself was buried at the monument. Steyn had a special relationship with particularly woman from the Free State and was often a special guest at the Oranjevrouevereeniging, a local Free State woman's organization (Meintjies, 1969:253). His close association with the plight of woman and children has been well covered and it can be assumed that Steyn's association with the two most prominent female individuals in his life must've had an enduring effect on his worldview and consequent 'activism'. These two were his wife Tibbie Fraser and Emily Hobhouse, both English speaking and of British descent. His association with Emily Hobhouse in particular has been noted. Emily Hobhouse was a well-known, liberally minded, welfare campaigner who rose to fame for bringing the destitution and devastation of Boer women and children during, and after the war, to the British public's awareness. She was often a guest at the Steyn household, and was invited, by Steyn, to the inauguration of the Vrouemonument,. Her ashes were buried alongside Steyn and his wife at the very same monument. All this indicates the strong interconnection between Steyn, the plight of the Boer women, Steyn's wife, and an Englishwomen of Hobhouse's' stature (Van Reenen, 1984). The friendship and political connection with Hobhouse, being married to an English-speaking woman, an absolute dedication to the idea that woman bore the 'brunt of the war', all contributes to the enigmatic figure Steyn was, who was all of the previous and yet a fierce defender of language rights and the 'ownness' of an Afrikaner culture.*

These articulations of culture, identity and past echoed formations present in the pre-war republics. The difference was that culture and language now became the site of freedom, solidarity (a peoples' history) and the past more explicitly foregrounded. But freedom also became freedom *from* poverty and the struggle for an 'own' identity became a gateway to the road to upliftment. As such it constituted a cultural transformation which in turn became articulated to the social process of upliftment.

Republicanism - *The rebels had Steyn's sympathy and his family continued to correspond with de Wet, an old bittereinder and leader of the rebellion (Meintjie;1969:247).*

Politically, these sentiments were either shared or actively employed by the breakaway National Party whose Two Stream outlook and emphasis on South Africa First provided a natural home for an articulation of culture and identity that stressed distinctness within a patriotic civic unity. In this way nationalism was not necessarily exclusive and reactionary. Nationalist intellectuals described the struggle as moving from a reactive one to a more proactive and affirmative one. Insistence on a past could be celebratory and reconciliatory as in the case of *De Voortrekkers* where the film sought to pacify tensions between English and Afrikaans communities (Tomaselli, 1985:17).

Labour Strike and PACT

In the early 1920s the National Party (NP) succeeded in articulating the concerns of both Afrikaans and English labour into its own discourse. For Afrikaner labourers the NP's articulation of culture as a locus of freedom and upliftment resonated very clearly. As a space that resisted foreign influence and assimilation, which bound together regardless of class and status, and which protected the 'own' before the 'other', it could assuage the key fears of Afrikaner Labour, namely, resentment against 'big capital', feelings of alienation in an 'English' industry and competition from Black labour. Furthermore, the NP was the most apt in articulating the struggle of those in need of upliftment. These sentiments were poignantly expressed by the well-known newspaper cartoon *Hoggenheimer*, a caricature of the Empire - minded capitalist that frequented the pages of *Die Burger* for many years.

Anti-capitalism and labour - *Steyn was well known for both his anti-capitalist sentiments and his relationship to labour (Giliomee, 2004: 195); "Capital has made its appearance in South Africa and Capital, the enemy of labour, has spread its tentacles around all forms of labour" he was noted as saying prior to the war. Milner's agitation for war was described by Steyn as a capitalist assault on the republics, whose exploitation has made the struggle for survival*

harder and harder. (Giliomee, 2004:195). On other occasions he spoke about the need for the youth to learn the evangelism of labour (a good Calvinist) as a necessary tool in the path of growth.

The anti-capitalist sentiments and strong emphasis on social intervention allowed for a coalition with the predominantly English-speaking Labour party. This drew in English speakers into the Nationalist fold: *Die Burger* in 1925 and in 1927, commenting on Day of the Vow celebrations, explicitly “classes English settlers with the Afrikaner Voortrekkers as fellow sufferers under imperial policy and Black depredation” (Moodie, 1975:97). In this way those that ‘belonged’ became broader, and there was room for inclusion for anyone that supported the struggle for upliftment, in name at least. But at the same time segregation became more pronounced – the upliftment of the one came at the expense of the non-white.

1929 and Beyond

When the NP came to power, without the need to form a coalition, in 1929, Afrikaner culture was flourishing and the past was seen as a powerful site of identification. ‘Afrikanerness’, in the way it was language, increasingly became an inherited quality that answered the call of the blood, and which represented an endogenous and indigenous culture that was able to express its own identity without reference to an exterior ‘Other’. Gone were strident references to the ‘imperialists’ and the ‘capitalists’, and the cultural struggle became more refined. In a nationalist articulation of identity, culture and the past freedom was still a cultural one, and more than ever one of language. The strategy was focused on Afrikaners freeing themselves not only from any colonial ties but not taking cultural leadership from Europe or Britain. The past became a history of a people that moved from a colony to a *volk*, who were now able to formulate their *own* universals and to define *themselves*. Those that assisted in this struggle, that in retrospect led the way to the *volk*, and perhaps nurtured them as in the case with the oft romanticized Afrikaner woman, were cast in bronze.

Decolonisation

“De taal van de veroveraar is in de mond van de veroverde de taal van slaven” reads a telegram from Steyn to Hertzog. It can be translated as ‘the language of the conqueror spoken by the conquered is the language of slaves’. At a cultural festival in 1913 Hertzog used these very words as a call to action in promoting an own language and culture. M.E. Rothman, a leading Afrikaner cultural activist, associated with the upliftment of poor Afrikaner women, noted that this particular statement caused a massive ripple in Afrikaner cultural circles

(Giliomee, 2004:322). Thus, at this early stage of a rising nationalism Steyn already became a 'figure' employed in the struggle, in the language of later years, from colony to *volk*.

Politically, with the nationalist agenda come to fruition, an antagonism emerged. There was still the civic unity, the fact that South Africa consisted of a diversity of *ethnicities*, to think about. For the NP of Hertzog the aim was always to bring the Afrikaner onto an equal standing with the English-speaking community, and by 1929 this was mostly achieved. The power, strength and solidity that came with a flourishing Afrikaner cultural life, however, and the ability, in name at least, to express their own universals, lent force to old yearnings for a republic, a place of their own, in which the Afrikaner could come to their own. Hertzog was ready to assimilate, together with Smuts, into the United Party (UP), but the force of nationalism had become a potent one and he ended up a pariah amongst the nationalists (Giliomee, 2004:392; Moodie, 1975, 209-210).

The force of an increasingly rigid nationalism, which eventually triumphed in 1948, at this time attempted to articulate a universal nation that sought to become the *entire* nation, or the whole of the civic unity that was South Africa. As discussed, the category of 'Afrikaner' was often used in an inclusive way by the NP, to include English speakers and others. However, by virtue of the specificity of its articulation, of what the **nation** or *volk* was construed, for instance, the **past** they shared, the **culture** the *volk* possessed, the language 'we' spoke, the articulation of culture, identity and past tried to draw in others but pushed 'those that didn't belong', away at the same time. This specificity would stress endogeneity in terms of identity, foregrounding the call of the blood, which assumed an inherited identity. In terms of culture, indigeneity and *volk* were the key concepts. In terms of the past, the struggle to determine their own course, to rid themselves of colonial ties and the struggle for freedom. It was against this exact background, that on the 28th of September 1929, the statue of M.T. Steyn is unveiled on the campus of the then Grey University College.

Step 2

In the step below, the *specifics* and the materiality of the statue will be explored as outlined in the methodology. This will constitute the *semiotic* component of the analysis. It is assumed that there is an eventual interrelation between the articulation discussed above and the *signification* of the statue. This will be fully explored in **step 3**. In **step 2** below, a layout of the signs and their immediate contextual significance is explored.

As a text that was deliberately constructed at the time, commissioned and paid for by the *studentebond* of Grey University College, later (1950) the University of the Orange Free State. Designed by Anton van Wouw, it is assumed that the visual elements that made up the ‘object’ were deliberately chosen and arranged. The benefit of hindsight, of doing a historical study, lies in the fact that it offers the opportunity to analyse the signifiers as already wrapped up and ‘decoded’ by history. The assumption in this step is that any text articulates and would engage with the key articulations of the time. This step will follow the process as outlined by Gillian Rose (2016:132) as discussed in the methodology section.

To re-iterate for convenience:

1. Decide what the signs are
2. Decide what they signify in themselves
3. Think about the relation between the signs and others – i.e., refer to semiological concepts.
4. Explore their connection with wider systems of meaning
5. Finally return to the sign, now contextualized, to explore the precise articulation of ideology and mythology.

The following needs to be noted:

- I collapse steps 1 and 2 into one section i.e., identify the signs and apply the semiotic toolkit.
- To cover Rose’s step 3 I break the isolated signs into syntagms at the end of each section.
- Steps 4 and 5 in Rose’s process forms part of my step 3 i.e., exploring how the specific signifiers of the text engage with a prevalent articulation of identity, culture and past at the time of the statue’s construction.

What are the signs and what do they signify

In the tables below I break up each identified sign down into its denotative and connotative elements. Each sign is then be discussed in terms of its *paradigms* in which it is situated i.e., that which they are *not*, to see what they would ‘signify in themselves’ within a particular historical period. After that, a syntagm or a sequence of all the different elements together is

proposed. This will be done firstly, with the statue in its broader surrounds i.e., its position within the university. Then, the same process is followed on the statue itself. When completed the result should be a string of signs, of historied signifiers and their signifieds, on both a denotative and connotative level. This string of specific signs, a *syntagm*, would then, in **step 3**, be engaged with the dominant articulation of the day, that of nationalism extricated in **step 1**.

THE STATUE AND ITS LOCALITY

A brief intro to the Grey University College

The statue was unveiled on the main square of the University of the Free State on the 28 September 1929. The University of the Free State originated from a commission by the Cape Governor Sir George Grey in 1855 for the construction of a seminary north of the Orange River for the training of *Nederduitse Gereformeerde* (NG) church preachers. The seminary eventually became an institution of higher learning in 1906, renamed the Grey University College, with the language of instruction in English. The institution was known as the GUC until the 1950s when it became the University of the Free State.

After the war the university was an institution that had to attend to diverse language communities and it was commonly understood that education and pedagogy had to be privileged above anything else (Fourie, 2006:6). English, however, remained the language of instruction for the first decades of the College's life. The drive towards the inclusion of Dutch (the seeds of which were sown before the Boer War) was present from the start. In 1911 the first course was offered in Dutch (a course in education) and by 1918 the College was considered a completely dual language (Dutch and English) medium institution. In 1929 intense language politics commenced at the college that corresponded with the intensification of Afrikaner nationalism between the 1920s and 1930s (Fourie, 2006:15). In 1929 powerful individuals on the board, notably the chancellor of the University D.F. Malherbe, began advocating for an Afrikaans-only university but was resisted by the University Senate who insisted on equal treatment of the two language communities (Fourie, 2006:127). The Senate was, at that time and in the following decade, often recriminated for being anti-nationalist and later on in the hands of the SAP government. The University of Pretoria, in contrast, had already become an exclusively Afrikaner establishment in 1932 (Fourie, 2006). In this way the University of the Free State was an institution that in name promoted reconciliation. This changed, however, in 1944 when the Grey University College too became an exclusively

Afrikaner institution (Fourie, 2006:128). The university was also a completely white institution in its first 80 years in existence (Fourie, 2006:5).

The Semiotics of Space - The statue in its space

1. The main building

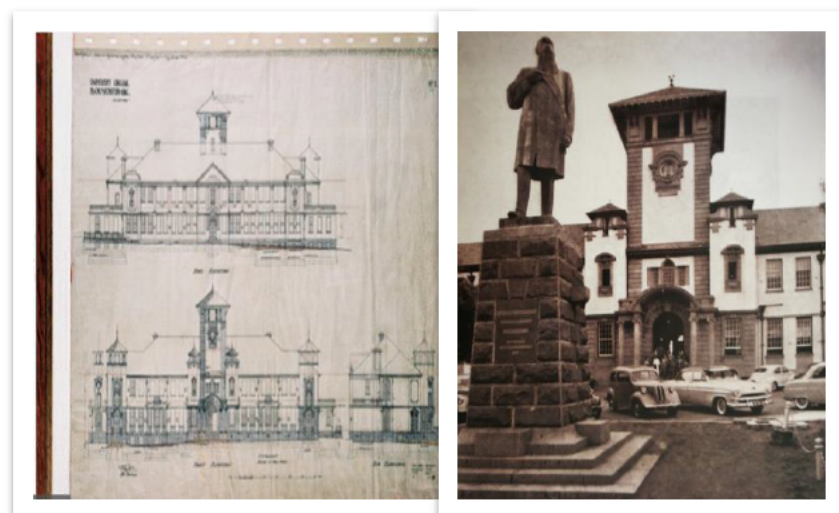


Figure 5.1.

Left: Original architectural drawing of the main building. Source: (Fourie, 2006:50);

Right: The statue and the main building in the 1950s. Source: (Fourie, 2006:92).

	Denotation		Connotation	
Main Building	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	A building	At that time the only big building on the campus (Fourie, 2006).	A neo classical building dominating its surrounds (Roodt, 2018:18)	The institution as such. Seat of power, of learning, of knowledge. The epistemological and historical archive.

In 1929 the main building of the College was exactly that, the main building. It was the biggest building on campus that housed most of the lecture rooms as well as the administration of the campus (Fourie, 2006:47). The building constituted the institutional centre of the campus, the loci of power and knowledge. As such it could be construed as a powerful symbol of the epistemological and historical archive.

Possible Paradigms

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	A neo classical building dominating its surrounds (Roodt, 2018:18) housing the university administration and most of its lecture rooms	The institution as such. Seat of power, of learning, of knowledge. The epistemological and historical archive.
Absence	The 'Intersaal', the first student recreational building on Campus (Fourie, 2006:47).	Student life
Absence	The M.T.Steyn Hostel for Women on Campus	The female student body

2. The Red Square (Die Rooiplein)



Figure 5.2.
Left: Aerial view of the UFS, undated. Source: (Fourie, 2006:64);
Right: The unveiling of the M.T. Steyn statue. Source: (Fourie, 2006:92).

	Denotation		Connotation	
The Square (Die Rooiplein)	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	An open space	An open space with gardens, lawns, forecourt.	A typical University open space i.e. a spatial arrangement that invite relaxation.	Community.

The statue was erected on the open space, or forecourt, of the main building. At that time the forecourt terminated into the university gardens which itself formed part of what was colloquially known as *Die Rooiplein* or the Red Square, the broader open space that stretched out in front of the main building (Fourie, 2006). This space was an open area where students and lecturers could pass their time in between classes and constituted the main shared or ‘communal’ space on campus. The term ‘Red Square’ is a tongue in the cheek reference to the Red Square in Moscow, Russia (The Soviet Union at that time). The forecourt of the main building is what is architecturally referred to as a threshold space or a liminal space (Thloaele, 2018:148), a space that lays in between two different, discrete spaces and which is a cross-over between the one and the next. The statue of Steyn was located in this liminal space that mediated between the seat of knowledge/power and the community.

3. The broader Landscape

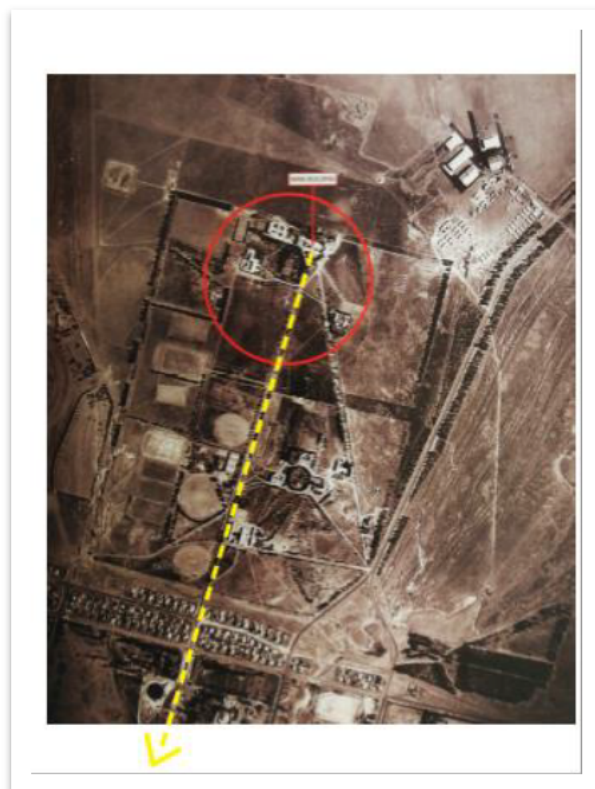


Figure 5.3.
An aerial view of the UFS campus in 1941. The yellow dotted line traces the axis between the statue, circled in red, and the greater Bloemfontein. Source: (Roodt et al, 2018:13).

Concluding the spatial location of the statue was the broader landscape in which the statue was situated. The statue was designed as part of a broader landscape and had a presence within the

greater Bloemfontein. The city was not built up and the University formed a central part of the ‘shape’ of the town. The statue “looked into what was then a sparsely populated townscape” (Tlhaoele, 2018:146) and lay on the main axis that ran past Grey College into the city (Roodt *et al*, 2018:13).

The statue and its space as syntagm

1. Mythical Steyn	Signifier:	Signified:	SYNTAGM
	The statue as signifier	The statue as signified	Mythical Steyn oversees, guards, mediates
2. Main Building	Signifier:	Signified:	
	A neo classical building dominating its surrounds (Roodt, 2018:18)	Seat of power, of learning, of knowledge. The epistemological and historical archive.	Repository of knowledge and power. The archive
3. The Square (<i>Die Rooiplein</i>)	Signifier:	Signified:	
	A typical University open space i.e., a spatial arrangement that invite relaxation.	The Community.	The Community

When construing this second syntagm together the relationship the statue had with its surroundings becomes evident; Steyn as myth become the mediator and guardian between and of the students and staff body, the broader university community, and the repository of knowledge and power, in other terms the epistemological archive and seat of power. With the locality and the statue statue’s significance within it being established attention will now be focused on the specifics of the statue itself.

THE STATUE AND ITS SIGNIFIERS

1. The Likeness



Figure 5.4.

Left: A close-up of the M.T. Steyn statue showing likeness. Source: (Fourie, 2006:296).

Middle: M.T. Steyn photographed as state president in 1896. Source: (Meintjies, 1969).

Right: The Steyn statue from below, source: Source: JJ Pretorius.

	Denotation		Connotation	
1. Likeness	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	A likeness	M.T. Steyn	Elevated Aestheticised Steyn (A likeness worthy of casting in Bronze)	Steyn as Afrikaner myth, legend, the associated mythological meanings

A first semiotic reference would be to the notion of *motivatedness*. Anton van Wouw (1862 – 1945) the sculptor of the statue, was known for sculpting in the naturalistic, romantic style and tradition where there was very little reference to heroism and the subject was usually depicted in an ordinary, lifelike way (Roodt et al, 2018:25). Therefore, there would be a high level of correspondence between the likeness of the person depicted and the actual representation. In semiotic terms the sign would be highly motivated or *iconic*. Little convention would thus be necessary at the denotative level for anyone familiar with the likeness of Steyn to recognize that this is indeed a representation of him as a person. At the connotative level, the recognition that this *is* Steyn, being represented in the form of a statue, a *conventional* treatment of notable figures at the time, would signify Steyn as a mythological figure worthy of celebration. With a Steyn signified in this way it would immediately draw upon a broader cultural understanding of who Steyn was and what he represented in the psyche of the Afrikaner people at the time. The signifier/signified both have histories: the signifier as medium of expression and the

signified as myth. Furthermore, the particular depiction of Steyn is at an age and likeness often depicted in photographs and with which many were familiar, that is shortly before the commencement of the Boer War. This is confirmed by Roodt *et al* (2018:25). The *motivatedness* of the representation thus provides a smooth transition from the denotative signifier to the connotative signified – Steyn as mythical figure.

Break up in paradigms

If one considers that the signified is the myth of Steyn then as a signified he could be interchangeable with another Afrikaner leader, a war hero, a local ‘hero’ from the Free State, that is, a persona within the same *paradigm* as himself. If one had to use General Christiaan de Wet or General Jan Smuts for example, a whole range of different mythologies and connotation would be brought to bear. This simply illustrates the obvious but necessary point that there were many other ‘heroes’ to celebrate at the time and that the choice of Steyn is significant by *not* being those in the same class as himself.

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	Elevated aestheticised Steyn	Steyn as Afrikaner myth, the associated mythological meanings
Absence	Elevated aestheticised De Wet	De Wet as Afrikaner myth the associated mythological meanings
Absence	Elevated aestheticised Smuts	Smuts as Afrikaner myth, the associated mythological meanings

2. General demeanour



Figure 5.5.

Left: The Steyn statue from below. Source: JJ Pretorius.

Right: A close-up of the M.T. Steyn statue. Source: (Fourie, 2006:296).

	Denotation		Connotation	
2.a Stance	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a human form in bronze	The likeness of a standing figure	Upright Stance, foot extended.	Good citizen, Leader, Ownership
2.b Positioning of Head	Signifier	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a human form in bronze	The likeness of a standing figure	Slightly raised head	Elevated, far-seeing
2.c Expression	Signifier	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a human form in bronze	The likeness of a standing figure	Neutral, composed expression	Comfort, composed, contemplative, stoic

Taking the stance, stature and expression into the general class of demeanor or poise, a potential **syntagm** would read: *A person of status, custodian of the space, a perceptive and far-seeing individual in role willingly bequeathed upon him by others and comfortable in that position.* In this way the poise and stature of the statue is very similar to that of Paul Kruger on Church Square in Pretoria, a statue also sculpted by Anton van Wouw.



Figure 5.6.
Statue of Paul Kruger on Church Square, Pretoria. Source: JJ Pretorius.

This is confirmed by Roodt *et al* (2018:24) who notes that the Steyn statue was a typical statue of the time where the intention was to represent and celebrate figures as powerful, purposeful, commanding respect. The way in which Steyn is depicted is therefore highly typical of a van Wouw statue and *rhetorically* presented nothing special regarding the demeanour represented.

Break up in Paradigms

If one had to compare it to alternative figurations in the paradigms *stance, head position and expression* respectively a representation that was *crouched down*, with a *down turned-head* and an *animated expression* would have expressed something completely different and would not align with the conventional representations of a state president, by van Wouw, at this particular time in history.

	Connotation		Paradigm	
Stance	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Upright Stance, foot extended.	Good citizen, Leader, Ownership	Hunched Down, unfirm feet	A broken citizen
Positioning of Head	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Slightly raised head	Elevated, far seeing,	Looking Down	Myopic
Expression	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Neutral, composed Expression	Comfort, composed, contemplative, stoic	Agitated Expression	Moment of tribulation

3. Dress



Figure 5.7.

Left: The M.T. Steyn statue from the rear. Source: JJ Pretorius

Right: The M.T. Steyn statue from the front. Source: JJ Pretorius

	Denotation		Connotation	
Dress	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a clothed figure	A Coat, Pants, Shoes.	A long tailcoat or tunic, long pants, shoes. A simple assembly.	Minimal, functional wear. Simple, bar the presidential ribbon. A Calvinist <i>bareness</i> . Unpretentious. Dependable. One of the nation.

Steyn as statue is shown wearing a simple assembly of garments very similar to Steyn in the photo from 1896 below:



Figure 5.8.
M.T. Steyn photographed as state president in 1896. Source: (Meintjies, 1969).

The photo shows Steyn in a coat with almost no flourish or ornamentation. The presentation is almost clerical and is similar to what the statue of Kruger wears. The lack of flourish brings the word *bare* and *stripped* to mind – concepts often associated with a Calvinist aesthetic. There is very little that would distinguish this person as a *president*, bar the presidential ribbon, from another person of at status i.e., able to afford official, staged, photograph and decent clothes.

Break up in Paradigms

The description of an assembly of clothes as a syntagmatic sequence is a well-known example in semiotics made popular by Roland Barthes. Here the assembly, as a syntagm, would read something like: A full bodied coat, which is *not* a dress, which is *not* a suit, which is *not* a jacket in assembly with the absence of any headwear, neckwear etc.

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	A long tailcoat or tunic, long pants, shoes. A simple assembly.	Minimal, functional wear of office. Simple, bar the presidential ribbon. Gravity in simplicity.
Absence	Military uniform with medals	Steyn as fighting general, as soldier. Pomp.

4. Detail: Presidential Band and Gesture



Figure 5.9.
Detail Of M.T. Steyn Statue. Source: (UFS, 2021).

	Denotation		Connotation	
4.a. Presidential Sash	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a band with insignia	A band with insignia	Presidential sash with the Insignia of the Orange Free State	Symbol of office and power
4.b. Gesture	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a hand touching an emblem.	A hand touching the insignia.	Steyn lightly touching the insignia of the Free State.	Relationship between the person and the nation state, here the republic of the Free State and its subjects. Fidelity to the <i>nation</i> .

The ribbon worn around the shoulder was worn by the President of the Free State on official occasions and acted as a marker of presidential office. It thus signified exactly that – power, responsibility and station and is present in many other official representations of the state president. The picture below, from a photolithograph dated 1900, shows both Kruger and Steyn as highly idealised leaders wearing the presidential sashes of their respective republics.



Figure 5.10.
Colour photolithograph of presidents Kruger and Steyn dated 1899 or 1900, artist unknown. Source: (Invaluable, 2019).

The gesture where two fingers are laid on the band, which then becomes *Steyn* laying two fingers on the presidential band points to an explicit relation between the person and office; that the person as an individual is associated with the state. The manner in which the touch takes place is gentle on the one hand, suggesting veneration or a person looking for reassurance in a symbolic emblem. On the other, when looked at from below, the compilation becomes a little more forceful; the gesture implies that the state is Steyn and Steyn is the state. It becomes an expression of personal power.

Break up in Paradigms

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	Steyn lightly touching the insignia of the Free State.	Relationship between the person and the nation state, here the Free State and its subjects. Fidelity to the <i>nation</i>
Absence	Steyn Crunching the Presidential Band	Disappointment in the Nation
Absence	De Wet Crunching the Presidential Band	Rebellion

5. The Plaque

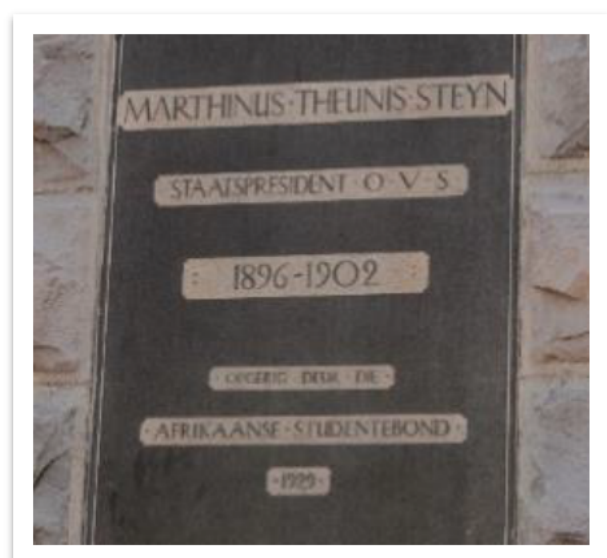


Figure 5.11.
Detail of plaque on M.T. Steyn statue. Source: JJ Pretorius.

	Denotation		Connotation	
5. The plaque	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Text.	Text elaborating on who the statue represents, the construction of the statue, contributors etc.	The <i>studentebond</i> contribution in honoring M.T. Steyn. Reference to Steyn is made in his role as President from 1896 – 1902.	Future generation honoring their leaders.

The plaque provides important additional context regarding *who* commissioned the statue and who it represents. The reference to the *studentebond*'s contribution was considered to be the most important element in *anchoring* the meaning of the statue. The *studentebond* was a student representative organization, roughly equivalent to the SRC on modern campuses and represented the student body (Fourie, 2006:141). In this way the *studentebond* honouring Steyn suggests the young honouring their elders. Furthermore, the young are also the *future*, so an immediate sense of continuity is invoked.

Possible Paradigms

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	The studentebond contribution in honoring M.T. Steyn. Reference to Steyn is made in his role as President from 1896 - 1902	Future generation honoring their leaders
Absence	A military Society honouring M.T. Steyn	An institution honouring a <i>fighting</i> president
Absence	The Bowling Club honouring M.T. Steyn	A laughing matter

6. The Plinth

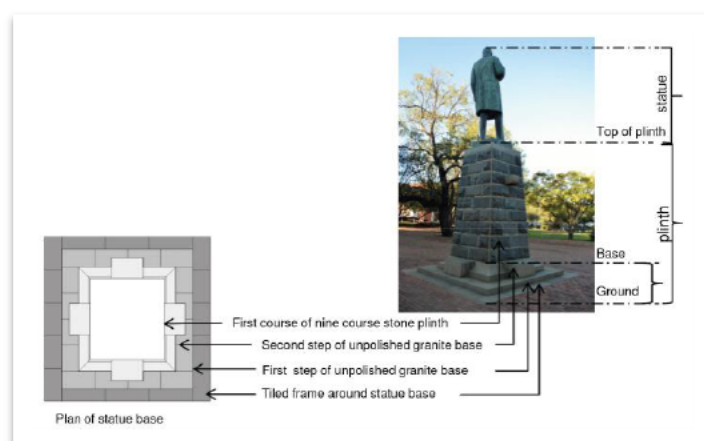


Figure 5.12.
Description of plinth. Source: (Thloaele, 2018:143).

	Denotation		Connotation	
The Plinth	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Multi-leveled built-up structure.	A support structure.	A structure consisting of a 1. Tiled platform, 2. a base of unpolished granite, 3. an aesthetised second base of unpolished granite followed by 4. a nine-course stone plinth.	Very little ornamentation. A progression to refinement. Stretching to a considerable height.

The plinth construes its own sentence or syntagm:

Connotation	
Signifier:	Signified:
1. Tiled Base - A paving tile flush with the surface	Separation from environment.
2. First step of unpolished granite. Rectangular	Strength – thoroughly grounded.
3. Second step of unpolished granite base. Ornamented	Strength – Reminiscent of a fort's battlements.
4. Nine-course stone plinth	Bare, minimal stone support. High.
5. The statue	As discussed.

In its progression upwards, the plinth speaks of strength with minimal ornamentation. In general, it proceeds from roughly hewn strength (unpolished granite) to more natural stone (the 9-course stone plinth), to the statue itself. A key element is the height the plinth contributes: It is around 6.5 meters tall and together with the actual statue being twice life size, gives the whole assembly a commanding presence (Roodt *et al*, 2018:24).

The Statue as Syntagm

Since in the sections above paradigmatic absences were already isolated for each sign, I will forego mentioning them again. Secondly, since it is assumed that the denotated signifier and signified is already subsumed into the connotative signifier, only the connotative level will be construed into a syntagmatic sequence. The column on the right, noting the syntagm is a redacted version of the signified. This was done for brevity's sake.

	Connotation		SYNTAGM
1. Likeness	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Elevated Aestheticised Steyn.	Steyn as Afrikaner myth, legend, the associated mythological meanings.	Mythical Steyn.
2.a. Stance	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Upright Stance, foot extended.	Good citizen, Leader, Ownership.	As leader, as citizen, with a stake in that which surrounds him.

2.b. Head Position	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Slightly raised head	Elevated, far seeing,	Far seeing and elevated
2.c. Expression	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Neutral, composed Expression	Comfort, composed, contemplative, stoic	Comfortable in the face of what may come.
3. Dress	Signifier:	Signified:	
	A long tailcoat or tunic, long pants, shoes. A simple assembly.	The minimal, functional wear of office. Stripped and bare, without ornamentation.	Without artifice. Calvinist.
4.a. Presidential Sash	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Presidential sash with the Insignia of the Orange Free State.	Symbol of office and power.	Representing the nation.
4.b. Gesture	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Steyn lightly touching the insignia of the Free State.	Relationship between the person and the nation state, here the Free State and its subjects. Fidelity to the <i>nation</i> .	One of the <i>nation</i> .
5. The plaque	Signifier:	Signified:	
	The student bond contribution in honoring M.T. Steyn.	Future generation honoring their leaders.	Represents future and past generations.
6. The Plinth	Signifier:	Signified:	
	A structure consisting of various discrete levels.	A progression to refinement, stretching to a considerable height.	Is worthy of elevating.

As a compilation of signifiers that can be construed into a sentence, the syntagm as proposed in the table above would read:

Mythical Steyn, as leader, as citizen, with a stake in that which surrounds him, far seeing and elevated and comfortable in the face of what may come, a Calvinist without artifice, representing the nation, in fact, one of the nation, represents future and past generations, and is worthy of elevating.

The sentence proceeds from the *myth* of Steyn i.e. the commonly understood idea and assumptions of who Steyn was and what he stood for as it existed in the mind and psyche of the Afrikaner people at the time. This *myth* was not yet treated as substantial i.e. not yet discursively contextualised. This will be done in **step 3**. The rest of the signifying elements engages with this myth in a way that will be explored in **step 3** below where the signs just identified and strewn into a syntagm will be read and finally contextualised in the prevalent articulation of culture, identity and the past at the time of the statue's unveiling.

Step 3

In the section below I will bring what was in **step 1** a *discursive* approach i.e. the isolation of broader systems of meanings in the form of different articulation that represented different transformation in terms of how culture, identity and the past were linked together with a *semiotic* one i.e. the attempt by the 'text' to speak, to articulate something in its specific arrangement of signifiers. Together this would constitute a dual perspective on the work of representation that Hall referred to as delineated in the theory chapter. Also, in line with the methodological blueprint, it is the hope of the researcher that the **specific** object of analysis, the 'text', the statue of M.T. Steyn, when brought forward to engage with the key articulations, within, in this case, the discourse of nationalism, would indicate how the past, identity and culture was constructed at that particular moment in history through a specific text.

The Steyn statue was unveiled on the 28 September 1929 as part of the proceedings celebrating the university's 25th anniversary (van Tonder, 1974). It thus happened in the same year as the NP victory in 1929 and will be read against that isolated articulation. In line with Hall's approach to cultural transformations, this articulation was not a solid break from the past, nor a simple continuation, but preceded by what existed at the time of PACT and followed by the formation of the UP and the creation of the HNP.

It is useful to re-iterate the constellation of articulations constituting the nationalist discourse in 1929 as the specific, disparate elements that were articulated together around the time of the statue's unveiling. When referring to the articulation of **identity** within a nationalist discourse, one spoke about indigeneity insofar as Afrikaners were constructed as *local*, endogeneity insofar as identity was constructed as proceeding from the self, that is, a group defining *themselves*, and identity as an inherent quality insofar as it was something passed from generation to generation, 'in the blood'. When this is then connected with an articulation of **culture** which was focused primarily on language, one spoke of an 'ownness', also indigenous insofar as it belonged and arrived from a locality, freedom insofar it was the drive to rid oneself from foreign cultural influence i.e. decolonial, from a *kolonie* tot *volk* (a colony to a nation). When one spoke of a nationalist articulation of the **past** it meant that, when one spoke about the past one spoke of the struggle for freedom and the trials and tribulation underwent to achieve that very freedom. Lastly, and most importantly one spoke about the history of a *people* that progressed from a colony to a nation.

The core components of **step 3** is represented in the table below. In the left-hand column are the articulations extricated in **step 1**. In the right-hand column is the different signs as well as the syntagm developed in **step 2**. The aim is now to read them against each other.

ARTICULATION (a discursive snapshot of linked, articulated discrete elements)	SIGNS
Identity Indigenous/local Endogenous Inherited, Inherent Identity From Colony to Nation Culture/Language Own Indigenous Rid of foreign influence Locus of Freedom The Past Of a bitter struggle for freedom and nationhood. From colony to <i>volk</i> .	a. Likeness - Steyn as Myth b. Poise and Demeanour c. Dress d. Sash, Insignia, Gesture e. The Plaque f. The Plinth g. The Locality Syntagm of signifieds <i>Mythical Steyn., as leader, as citizen, with a stake in that which surrounds him, far seeing and elevated and comfortable in the face of what may come, a Calvinist without artifice, representing the nation, in fact, one of the nation, represents future and past generations and is worthy of elevating.</i>

a. Steyn as myth

M.T. Steyn was a well-respected persona, across the board, and in the various isolated periods played a significant role to bridge the political divide. There was thus a certain amount of ambiguity about his person that allowed him to be appropriated by different discourses through the ages. In the time of Union, he was a reconciliatory figure (Giliomee (2004:311) but at the same time the ‘talisman’ of the language struggle. Regardless of this ambiguity it was time and again the nationalist fold in which Steyn was ‘expressed’ the clearest, from him being someone who fought till the end as a *bittereinder*, to someone who stood for ‘ownness’ and language rights, to someone who tacitly supported the rebellion of 1915. Thus in 1929, the argument below suggests, it was without much resistance that the figure or *myth* of Steyn could become articulated by nationalist discourse at the time of the statue’s erection.

Identity

- *Endogenous* – As someone who fought for an ‘own’ language and culture, the mythological Steyn could easily stand for the endogenous.
Indigenous and local – The first president to be born in came to be known as the Orange Free State would not resist any attempt to be articulated as indigenous, as *local*.
- *From ‘colony to nation’* – As a mentor to Hertzog and as the key early voice of using culture and language to uplift the nation, Steyn would represent the newly formed Afrikaner nation which had to be *nurtured*. He was often called the Afrikaner of Afrikaners at the time (Meintjies, 1969) and, in every sense of the word, represented an Afrikaner icon (Giliomee, 2004:202).

Culture and language

- *Language and the ‘own’* – An activist for the development of the Afrikaans language and the use of Dutch to educate after the war. An early campaigner for language rights i.e. the insistence on an ‘own’ language to resist anglicisation. As such a figure of the language struggle par excellence.
- *Locus of freedom* – Steyn’s fight for independence and the consequent emphasis on language to uplift expressed that which was linked in the discourse of the time i.e. culture as a gateway to liberation and independence.

The Past

- *Of a bitter struggle for freedom and nationhood* - As a war hero and *bittereinder* his struggle for the republics and for independence was unparalleled. As someone who had become an Afrikaner icon, who resisted foreign influence to the very end, he represented the progression from a Colony to a *volk* and in this way articulated the decolonial struggle of that particular time.

d. The Sash, insignia, and gesture

If it can be argued that Steyn as *myth*, expressed in the statue, would still display a certain amount of ambiguity, that a discourse like nationalism wouldn't be able to fully 'grab hold' of Steyn as signified i.e. his *myth* as expressed by the statue. If Steyn had been depicted as an old man shaking hand with a prominent figure from the English community Steyn might not be appraised as a 'nationalist' figure. The sash, insignia and gesture, however, would further skew an interpretation into a particular direction, as an articulation of *nationalist* discourse.

The Steyn depicted is a Steyn in a very particular role. He is presented as the leader of the *independent* republic of the Free State *before* becoming a British colony. This is confirmed by the insignia which is the insignia of the Republic of the Free State. Furthermore, Steyn stands in a specific relation to this republic. He represents it, and through the gesture shows that he is loyal, he is one of the *volk*, while representing the *volk* at the same time.

Consequently, in a nationalist articulation of culture, identity and the past this republic had a particular meaning; It stood for a freedom lost, a freedom which now found a new home in culture and language. In other words, referring to the 'old republics', at a time where a nationalist discourse was prominent, carried a special significance and, it can be argued, tied the meaning of the statue together.

e. The plaque

The plaque would further confirm this interpretation. At the time, the *studentebond* was a nationalist-minded organization with a leadership that was arguing for the institution of a single medium, Afrikaans-only institution (Fourie, 2006) Thus contextualised, the future generations would become those that hold the nationalist flame up high and the past those that kept it going through the years. This 'continuity' would be the continuation of nationalism.

b, c and f: the demeanour, dress and plinth

These elements are considered to be of less significance to *anchor* the meaning of the statue than what was discussed above and were highly *conventionalized* elements shared by many other statues of the same time. Once it became clear that the interpretation leaned toward a nationalist one, however, it became clear that these elements did, each in their own right, add significance to the statue. The demeanour, suggesting *ownership* would suggest that nationalism is here to stay and that the person *belongs* there. He is comfortable in the position of surveyor and owner of the landscape. The dress would tie in well with the core Calvinist tenets, or the dominant Civil religion of nationalism as Moodie (1975) describes it. The plinth, finally, would point to the cause as worth *elevating* and celebrating and give the entire assembly a dominating presence.

Chapter conclusion with a note on locality

In this way the meaning of the signifiers, in combination, become evident when read against the discourse of the time and it becomes clear that the statue of Steyn, with its specific signifiers, which starts off ambiguously but progressively became more apparent, under a prevalent discourse such as Afrikaner nationalism could articulate nothing else than a *nationalist discourse*

There is nothing in the text that alludes to a different interpretation. In Barthes' words there is no *punctum* (Rose, 2017:122) that would resist common reading practices, i.e., something that would goad one into a different interpretation. It is probable that a counter discourse, one perhaps more aligned with a SAP outlook, would have been able to appropriate someone like Steyn, with some imagination, to its own means. It is unlikely, however, that Steyn's myth combined with him represented in a *republican* position, and honours by a student body that was nationalist-minded, at that particular time could stand for anything else.

As such the 'text', the statue does not point to a re-articulation or a broader cultural transformation in Hall's sense of the word. The fact was that the sculptor 'drew' on nationalist symbols in fulfilling his commission. The *studentebond* wanted to honour Steyn; "because he had worked so diligently for an indigenous Free State university ... had been the 'soul' of the war ... and because of what he meant for the Afrikaner" Fourie (2006:92).

If the rhetoric of the statue was a nationalist rhetoric i.e. if the discourse of nationalism got hold of the signifiers in such a way that the text came to articulate nationalist discourse, it has

to be asked if the statue, as a consequence, imbued the landscape with meaning i.e whether if, the mediatory role the statue played in its positioning in a liminal space, as a gateway between the university community and the seat of power and epistemological archive, were affected by the conclusion reached above.

As a nationalist articulation the statue stood for an endogenous and indigenous culture and identity, a nation trying to define itself. It also stood for the need of a nation to express itself, to language its own history, to develop an ownness that would include its own epistemology and ontology. Therefore, if the statue *mediated* between the community (The Red Square) and the university (The Main Building) the community would become that indigenous and endogenous identity and culture, and the university would become that place where a nation could develop an 'ownness', its own epistemology and ontology, where it could 'language' itself.

In this way the discourse got 'hold' of the statue and its signifiers and fixed its meaning at the time. Being designed and commissioned by using signifiers that could signify nothing but Afrikaner nationalism at the time, there was seemingly no way that a counter-discourse could take hold of the same signifiers with the same effect and efficacy, and 'bring' it into its own discourse, as did an Afrikaner nationalist articulation of culture, identity and past. However, implicit in the theoretical point of departure of the thesis, is the notion that meaning as embodied in the text, is fundamentally open to re-articulation in different historical periods. With this in mind, I conclude the first part of the analysis and move to the next contextual block, the more recent South African heritage landscape.

ANALYSIS PART 2: BLOCK B

Block B Introduction

In the first contextual block the statue of M.T. Steyn was read against the dominant articulation of culture, identity and the past at the time of the statue's unveiling in 1929. This was done by first identifying the signifiers i.e. what each element in the statue's make up pointed to, its history and its first apparent 'meaning'. This isolated signifiers, strewn together in a syntagm were then brought to engage with the dominant articulation of culture, identity and the past, as articulated by Afrikaner nationalism in the late 1920s.

In 1929 the most important element of the statue was, the 'myth' of Steyn, a powerful figure in the Afrikaner psyche. However, what became evident in Block A was that the myth alone hinted at, but was ambiguous about 'nationalism', i.e. there was no real reason why Steyn had to necessarily be by a 'nationalist' myth although his history strongly suggested such an interpretation. However, the rest of the assembly of signifiers contributed to 'anchoring' the meaning of the statue as a nationalist articulation. The most important consideration was that this could not be known for sure until one brings the syntagm, the string of signifiers, in touch with the key articulations of the time.

With changing context comes changed meanings. The point of departure in this block, before moving through to **step 2** and **3**, is that the power of the myth of Steyn, as a signified, that was able to reach beyond his own community, the Afrikaner, was greatly reduced in the context that will be outline in **step 1** below. The figure of Steyn, among other items of pre-Apartheid cultural artefacts, as evidenced below, carried little or no currency among the broader South African population any longer. The same could be said *even* for the majority of Afrikaners, as noted in the section on the 1988 conference discussed below. With the #RMF protest however, the statue, as mentioned in the introduction, *regained* significance in the eyes of many Afrikaners exactly *because* it became contested. This last point will be picked up at a later stage.

Step 1

As outlined in the methodology, the steps in Block A will now be repeated in the contemporary heritage context. In iteration, **step 1** will deal with articulations of the key categories of heritage, namely ‘culture’, ‘identity’ and the ‘past’, first in an immediate post-Apartheid democratic consensus, the New South Africa, whose articulation of ‘heritage’ was embodied by the 1996 *White Paper on Art and Culture and Heritage*. Some of the articulation that immediately preceded it, namely those expressed by the 1988 conference on the Conservation of Culture manifesto, will also be explored. Thereafter the study will explore articulations of heritage as expressed by the #RMF movement, which would then be considered as a final contextual constellation in which to ‘read’ the statue. The transformation this eventually came to represent in the broader *official* heritage landscape as embodied by the 2017 *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* and the 2018 *Report on the Transformation of the Heritage Landscape* will be discussed in the conclusion.

Once again, I will extricate and refine these articulations and ‘convert’ them the language of theory, i.e. speak of cultural formations as articulations that change over time, become embedded and represent lines of tendential force that together would represent cultural transformation regarding the three categories, ‘identity’, ‘culture’ and the ‘past’ – whose articulation, assuming a discursive approach, would constitute the ‘heritage’ in the contemporary heritage discourse.

The 1988 Conservation of Culture Conference

In the late 1980s there was a major shift in what ‘heritage’, and its relationship with what was at that time a reforming South African ‘nation’, might look like. When questions of heritage were discussed and a manifesto adopted at the 1988 conference on the Conservation of Culture, the outcome broke with a specific articulation of ‘heritage’ that was still inflected with a conservative National Party (NP) point of view (Vergunst, 1988; Grundlingh:1989). In a NP articulation of heritage, the broader civic unity would still be a South Africa which consisted of discrete ethnicities, including South Africans of English descent, Coloureds and Indians but which as a *de facto* white nationalist state or nation privileged a white Afrikaner identity and culture, and a past that was an ‘Afrikaner’ past. In this way identity and culture was still equivalent to the nation, a *volkstaat*. Following such an articulation of heritage, each of the ‘Bantustans’ would constitute its own ‘nation’ and construed as having separate historical

consciousnesses i.e. each with its own history, customs and cultural endeavours (Vergunst, 1988:36).

Such an articulation of heritage was underpinned by the Apartheid policy of separate development with the institution of the Tricameral Parliament doing little to attenuate the growing dissent against *de facto* Nationalist rule. To counter the tide the nationalist articulation of heritage increasingly preempted the changing times by emphasizing the role of ‘blacks’ in the growth of the country and stressing the need to ‘remember’ without belittling other groups or nations (Grundlingh & Sapiro, 1989:32). Despite the attempts to ‘language’ heritage in a less antagonistic fashion and despite the attempts at pragmatic reform, ‘heritage’ in the NP’s articulation was still predicated on an ‘insistent separate development’ (Vergunst, 1988:36) and control over the land and economy in the hands of a white minority.

The transformation embodied by the manifesto of the 1988 conference expressed a resistance against Apartheid, and attempted to re-articulate heritage as including one democratic civic unity for all, a South African nation based on the tenets of the Freedom Charter, a new, inclusive national culture and a corresponding re-appraisal of the past (Vergunst, 1988). The Freedom Charter called for a democratic state, emphasised human rights, equality before the law, freedom from oppression based on race and gender and eschewed any form of racialism. At the same time, it emphasised language and cultural rights and protected the ‘own’ – what was, in the Charter, referred to as folk culture and customs (Freedom Charter, 1955).

The conference manifesto adopted the Freedom Charter and articulated a national identity that was made up of a plurality of cultures, each with their own ‘heritage’, yet part of a South Africa with a shared ‘national’ culture. In this ‘national’ culture the past and the conservation of culture had to be democratised and integrated into ‘everyday life’. In this way culture and the conservation thereof had to have a popular dimension, a people’s culture and past. In this particular articulation, when one spoke of identity, one spoke of both a specific cultural identity particular to a specific group, for example, the Afrikaner, but also of an identity that a common civic unity like South Africa shared (Coetzee, *et al*, 1988). If one had to ask the heritage question; ‘What [culture and past] belongs to us [the nation] an answer might be; a diverse past, each with their own struggles belongs to us who, each possess both our own as well as a shared national culture and history’. The manifesto was thus a thoroughly multi-cultural document.

In this way the conference hinted at what a multi-cultural, democratic heritage landscape might look like, and furthermore, how cultural artefacts might be appraised under the auspices of a progressive outlook on 'heritage'.

The immediate post-Apartheid heritage landscape

In the post-Apartheid heritage landscape, as embodied by the *1996 White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage*, heritage was largely a continuation of that articulated by the 1988 manifesto. Where the manifesto was an early 'feeler' document, the new democratic government was mandated to construct and administer a new post-Apartheid nation that now, had to be articulated. To do this a culture, identity and the past had to be arranged in such a way that a broad consensus regarding a new shared nationhood, i.e., one that would offer subject positions everyone could identify with, could be constructed.

This re-articulation of heritage entailed a balancing act that had to negotiate and traverse a space that was posited as a powerful force in effecting reconciliation and nation building (Rasool, 2000). 'Heritage' became a powerful organizing principle in the new society by being able to construct a shared identity, at the same time as being able to placate many different calls for recognition from the different communities that formed part of the new South Africa. In other words, a new democratic nation had to be articulated at the same time that the very same democratisation allowed for the many different communities to be articulated *into* that new nation, even if they were considered complicit in a 'disgraced' history, like the Afrikaner.

This 'moment' of democratic inclusivity where everyone had a voice, accompanied a global moment; where a 'politics of recognition' became more prominent, which Hall (1996:25) identified as a growing consciousness around the power of representation, by specifically the margins, and accompanied by a critique of Enlightenment idea of universal knowledge (that absolute value, knowledge exist regardless of culture, positioning, place (Hall, 1996), which drove heritage in the past, and the rise of a cultural relativism which formed part of the growing de-centring of the West. The 1994 'moment' was, however, not as concerned with the decentring of the 'West' (Marschall, 2008:245), but rather in generating an inclusive landscape that would renegotiate a narrow view of history and re-articulate a history associated with conquest, dispossession and control (Tomaselli *et al*, 1996:50).

This was where a real problematic emerged that constituted a balancing act; on the one hand histories that, for a majority of black people, stood for oppression had to be de-emphasised, but on the other hand the new policy had to recognise those calls for heritage preservation of these

same histories which from a specific cultural perspective, like the Afrikaner, would *not* represent a history of dispossession and oppression.

One way to solve this, to keep the balance, was by constructing a very strong collective identificatory construct, like the rainbow nation. The post-Apartheid heritage policy as exemplified by the white paper aimed for very much the same: It emphasised a multiculturalism where many different cultures, each with their own ‘reservoir’ of cultures and customs, and a past, existed in a new civic unity called ‘South Africa’ that subscribed to the fundamental tenets of the Freedom Charter, namely, non-racialism, democracy, equality and freedom from oppression, based on race, gender and other factors of exclusion and oppression. These tenets were supported by the 1996 *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage*.

At the level of a broader ‘nationhood’ the accompanying past had to ‘corrected’, even though cultural diversity was celebrated. Everyone who subscribed to the fundamental of the Freedom Charter would ‘belong’ to the nation. At the same time an ‘ownness’ was also articulated into the heritage discourse – everyone had the right to celebrate their ‘own’ heritage.

Once again, broadly, under such an articulation of heritage there was no real antagonism between **identifying with a nation** that implied a ‘new’ identity and went hand in hand with a problematic, to be corrected past, and identifying with a **particular ethnicity**, that celebrated a particular past as long as it wasn’t done in a way that promoted racialism. In the realm of **culture**; no one culture, except a plural one, was articulated to an identity equaled the civic unity, nation or state. There was no longer a *volkstaat* where the *volk* was a particular ethnic constituency.

In terms of the new national, collective **past**, the polemic centred around how a previously ‘skewed’ past could be corrected (Marschall, 2019). The first course of action was the inclusion of those heritages that were marginalized under NP rule and the inclusion of ‘new myths’ that celebrated and represented the new ‘liberated’ nation. For existing cultural artefacts such as statues the implication was de-emphasis or re-interpretation. In an abstract ‘corrective’ landscape white heritage would be de-emphasised, but were mostly left in place (Marschall, 2019).

This ‘balanced’ landscape had to be articulated as inclusive, non-racial, and one free from exclusion and oppression. The official national heritage landscape had to be able to stand in for everyone. In reality it became a story of freedom from oppression, i.e the celebration of the ANC’s liberation struggle. The corrective action itself, what it emphasised, challenged the

Apartheid government's narrow view of the past. It also became a story of reconciliation in same cases, as it did at Ncome/Blood River sites in KwaZulu-Natal (Marschall, 2008).

White heritage, especially that embodied in physical cultural artefacts, was publicly de-emphasised yet left in place, and the 'ownness', the celebration of diversity, articulated into the Freedom Charter guaranteed its existence. Its existence was also guaranteed by the fact that many communities, for whom the items in question carried significance, cared deeply for these 'artefacts'. However, on the level of the broader national construct figures from a bygone era certainly were not celebrated in public unless those mythologized, like Bram Fischer and Beyers Naude, fit in with official liberation narratives.

In the eyes of the broader national articulation of heritage, existing statues that did not mean much in the national story of struggles for freedom and reconciliation were tolerated and forgotten. And so too the myths associated with notable figures that accompanied these statues. These statues had mostly lost the privilege of being in the mainstream of a 'national' construction of identity, culture and the past.

All together the 'heritage' articulated by the documents such as the *White Paper* was an *inclusive* articulation that was vague enough in its formulation of 'nation' and specific enough in its formulation of particular language and cultural rights, to instigate a broad consensus, not without resistance (Rasool, 2000), but yet enjoying broad currency.

If one had to construct a sentence that articulated 'heritage' from a post-Apartheid heritage landscape perspective a possible answer would be; a plurality of cultures with a problematic but yet to be corrected past, belongs to US who subscribe to the central tenets of the Freedom Charter. From the perspective of a specific group like the Afrikaner within that plurality –an 'ownness' with an own past, one among many different other cultures, each with their own, belongs to whoever subscribes to the idea of a new South African nation.

#RMF

If the heritage articulated by the immediate post-Apartheid landscape was inclusive, multi-cultural and sufficiently vague to 'glue' the new nation together, the Rhodes Must Fall (#RMF) movement in many aspects represented its opposite. #RMF was a movement that articulated many different discourses into its own (Ahmed, 2017; Gibson, 2016; #RMF:2015). To begin with, #RMF was a resistance against the nation, its identity and its notion of the past as articulated by the post-94 heritage discourse (Ahmed, 2017; Tomaselli, 2021:) Secondly,

#RMF engaged with social justice discourses that drew on the intellectual history of intersectionality (Ahmed, 2017:8). Thirdly, #RMF engaged with Black Consciousness discourses (Gibson, 2016), and lastly characterized itself as in line with a decolonial movement (#RMF, 2015; Nyamnjoh, 2016; Mbembe, 2016). The passage below will explore how each of the above found expression in #RMF's articulation of 'culture', 'identity' and 'past'.

1. A critique of the 1994 'moment'

The #RMF movement challenged the idea that South Africa was a transformed society after 1994. In the movement's eyes the 'rainbow nation' was a construct that in its articulation of universal human rights with group rights with non-racialism, left the country untransformed and in the hand of an elite that protected the economic, cultural and epistemological privileges of the white minority. This untransformed society did not only privilege the 'elites' economically but the entire fabric of society was still skewed and organised along line that privileged white South Africans. What the 94 moment allowed was a continuation of injustice and exclusion. (#RMF, 2015).

This was the first point in which the **status quo was inflected**, as a continuation of that which was left unsolved by the 1994 moment. In the post-1994 heritage discourse freedom lay in equality, non-racialism, universal human rights, and a corrected past in which all could be recognised. #RMF contested this construct by claiming that what the post-1994 heritage landscape posited as a free, *transformed* society was not the case and that the articulation of 'nation' and culture had only served to keep the status quo in place. It tried to articulate freedom into its own, which then became freedom from a status quo which still, according to #RMF, excluded and alienated non-white students specifically. In this way the status quo became, in terms of **culture**: a culture predicated on 'whiteness', an unfixed, abstract category that refers to the power and privilege associated with 'being' white i.e. sharing a set of values, epistemologies and ways of being that is a product of a history of colonization and unequal relationships between people of different colour (Nyamnjoh, 2016:14-15); in terms of **identity or nationhood**: a 'false' construct in the form of the rainbow nation (Ahmed, 2017:8); and in terms of the **past**: a *present* that was simply a continuation of an Apartheid past.

2. Social justice discourses and intersectionality

A second aspect articulated into the #RMF discourse was that of social justice discourses, in turn associated with intersectional approaches and identity politics (Ahmed, 2017). In intersectional approaches, 'liberation' entails identifying the different levels in which a system

oppresses, alienates and excludes on basis of categories such as race, gender, able-bodiedness, sexuality etc (Ahmed, 2017:9). This was one of the ways in which the #RMF movement characterized a 'better' society: one free from 'silencing these voices from the margins'.

This aspect of #RMF was primarily concerned with **identity** and presented a hierarchy of exclusion; Those considered furthest on the margin were those in subject positions willingly identified with, or where certain identificatory markers, derived from a particular background or skin colour, placed them. In intersectional approaches identity is considered fluid and socially constructed. In this way dominant, normative constructions of identity had to be challenged (Gibson, 2016:10).

The prevailing circumstances on South African university campuses was construed as exclusionary and alienating based on these various levels of exclusion and some in the #RMF movement concerned itself with dispelling these structures (Gibson, 2016:13). A politics of liberation was tied to those from specific racial backgrounds. This would then represent a second way in which the **status quo was inflected**; no longer was it only pre-Apartheid structures that were left in place, but these structures became associated with various levels of oppression and exclusion where the centre, as opposed to the margins, in the mission statement, became articulated as predominantly white, male and heterosexual (#RMF, 2015:3).

3. Black Consciousness

The third aspect articulated into the #RMF discourse were some of the key tenets of the Black Consciousness (BC) movement (Ahmed, 2017). In the South African version of the BC tradition, largely informed by the writings of Steve Biko, the liberation of Black people from the alienation, exclusion and oppression that went along with 'living in a white society' needed to come from within, i.e., the black community themselves. In the #RMF's words it needed to "flow from Black voices" (#RMF, 2015:1). In this tradition 'Blackness' was predominantly a point of view, a set of beliefs and an understanding of the world as well as a psychological 'freeing' which in particular black people needed go through. The uptake of BC was different in the different student protest movements, but #RMF started off as explicitly aligned with the BC movement with a "deliberate [black] leadership structure" (Gibson, 2016:12).

In terms of **identity and culture** Black Consciousness articulated as an identity that needed to be expressed and determined from within a specific community, i.e. endogenous and outside what is referred to as 'Whiteness' (Sebambo, 2016 in Gibson, 2016:11) and in this case a 'black' identity (Gibson, 2016:11), a culture that could 'stand on its own two feet', and in terms

of the **past**, challenging the effects of alienation and elitism produced by a legacy of colonialism (Gibson, 2016:11).

Black consciousness, in Biko's formulation was not about 'pigmentation' but was an attitude of mind (Gibson, 2016:12). According to Gibson (2016:12) BC was not a movement that closed off communication with the 'other'. The development of a 'own' nation consciousness was, on the contrary, the only way to allow communication at what Biko refers to as a 'inter-national' level. In the #RMF's mission statement 'black' was, however, 'all students of colour' i.e non-white (#RMF, 2015:1).

4. The decolonial

Where both #RMF's critique of the 94 'moment', expressed in a critique on *rainbowism* or human rights discourse (Ahmed, 2017:8), and the critique of the status quo as expressed in a deconstruction of oppression in an intersectional approach, were aimed at positing political action against prevailing circumstances BC and the decolonial often stood for a state yet to be achieved through the transformative agenda of the movement.

In particular the decolonial proved to be the intellectual tradition, in name, that bonded much of the movement together and as such, #RMF brought the decolonial back onto the national agenda (Marschall, 2019). The mission statement, however, was not very clear about what it meant with the 'decolonial'. The most explicitly #RMF expressed the decolonial was, in terms of **identity**, as that which centres the subaltern and Africa, in re-imagining an epistemology and using African discourses as a point of departure in achieving a transformed society. In terms of a way of life, a **culture**, #RMF did not express it except that it's a state yet to be achieved. In terms of the **past** the struggle for a decolonized university was a struggle to remove that which erased Black history, through institutional culture, and that which represented a history of dispossession and exploitation (#RMF,2015:1). There was thus a tendency to talk of the decolonial in way that suggests that any change, as envisioned by the movement, embodied the *decolonial*, and there was little mention of, in the mission statement at least, of the decolonial as explored in Part 2 of the literature review.

In combination

If one has to find a way of combining the various articulations and their discourses above the following can be offered, in numbered headings that correspond with the breakdown above.

Identity

1. Resistance against: the 1994 consensus i.e. a *rainbow* nation predicated on aspects of the Freedom Charter. Resistance against Human Rights discourse (Ahmed, 2017).
2. Various levels of oppression: A system that privileges a *white, male, heteronormative* identity. Moving those marginalised to the centre. Fluidity.
3. A Black identity and consciousness. Endogenous, self-determining.
4. African, endogenous, Yet to become

Culture

1. A white status quo – ‘Whiteness’.
2. A persistent exclusionary culture based on race, gender, sexuality etc.
3. An ‘own’ non-elite culture. Determined ‘outside’ white culture. A new humanism
4. African epistemology and ontology. Centreing the Subaltern.

Past

1. Continuation of an Apartheid past. A history of oppression and exploitation.
2. NA.
3. A ‘Black’ history erased
- 4.. A legacy of colonialism.

In this way #RMF articulated many different elements into its own discourse. The decolonial was not simply *only* the decolonial. An **identity**, posited as endogenous in decolonial discourses, where articulated *with* an identity that is intersectional, fluid and marginal. The status quo in terms of a **culture** was not only structures carried over from the Apartheid years and one that privileged *whiteness* but one that was patriarchal, heteronormative and ‘elitist’. What was posited as a dominant culture was to be replaced with not only a culture that is equal and free, but one that is African and Black. #RMF thus drew strength from articulation of identity that were deeply embedded in South Africa’s history of segregation (in the case of Black Consciousness) and also more contemporary discourse such as social justice discourses.

Similarly, in terms of the **past**; not only was it an Apartheid past, grounded in particular local South African segregation policies of the past that continued into the present, it was an entire history associated with colonialism and empire and the eradication of ‘black’ history.

All of these discourses were transformative, some more radical than others, and although there were many disputes as to central tenets of the movement (Ahmed, 2017, Gibson, 2016) they

seemingly easily assimilated into a transformative force that presented as a ‘unity’. In this way the discourse of #RMF became a good example of an articulation which is nothing more than disparate element linked together that in combination presents as the unity of discourse.

Step 2

The signifiers that this ‘discursive snapshot’ will engage with will be taken as the specifics of the statue. Again, the assumption in this step is that any text articulates something through the specifics of its arrangement of signifiers, and that these would, as explored in in **step 3**, engage with the key articulations of the time, in this case #RMF.

In the steps below, the signifiers of the statue will once again be broken down as per the process delineated by Rose.

To re-iterate for convenience:

6. Decide what the signs are
7. Decide what they signify in themselves
8. Think about the relation between the signs and others – i.e., refer to semiological concepts.
9. Explore their connection with wider systems of meaning
10. Finally return to the sign, now contextualized, to explore the precise articulation of ideology and mythology.

The following needs to be noted:

- I collapse steps 1 and 2 into one section i.e., identify the signs and apply the semiotic toolkit.
- To cover Rose’s step 3 I break the isolated signs into syntagms at the end of each section.
- Steps 4 and 5 in Rose will form part of my step 3 i.e., exploring how the specific signifiers of the text engage with a prevalent articulation of identity, culture and past of the time, in this case as expressed by the #RMF movement.

What are the signs and what do they signify

In the sections below I will once again break each identified sign down into their denotative and connotative elements. Each sign will then be discussed in terms of their *paradigm* i.e. that which they are not to see what they would ‘signify in themselves’. After that, a syntagm or a sequence of all the different elements together will be proposed. This will, once again, be done firstly, on the statue *within* its surrounds i.e as part of a broader landscape and then on the statue *itself*.

THE STATUE AND ITS LOCALITY

A changed university

Because the study analyses the statue in and around the time of the #RMF protests in 2015, an outline of the circumstances at the UFS will be roughly centred around that period. Mention will, however, be made of more recent development to suggest a clearer trajectory. For the first 80 years of the University’s existence the institution was an exclusively white establishment (Fourie, 2006:5). With gradual reform permeating into a broader South African society in the 1980s the University also adapted. In 1978 the first black post-graduate students, and in 1988 the first black undergraduate students, were permitted to register at the University. In 1986 the University conferred its first PHD on a black student (UFS:2021). After the institution adopted Afrikaans as the only language of instruction in 1948 (UFS:2021) it took another 41 years for dual language instruction to return when English was re-introduced as a language of instruction in 1993. These developments were slow and not without much resistance from what was a largely historically politically conservative university community (Fourie, 2006:307) and in the period of transition in the early 1990s the university, like the rest of the country, became highly charged (Fourie, 2006:331).

With the transition to democracy in 1994 the university had to adapt to deal with the changing circumstances. The new ANC government, a changed society, and the pressures that accompanied its status as a modern, international university, that now formed part of the global community, exacted pressure and transformation became a driving force (Fourie, 2006: 331). Included in the drive for transformation was the drive for a multi-cultural environment and ethos (Fourie, 2006:347) that included the set-up of various committees and task teams that dealt with language policy, institution culture and staffing. By the early 2000s the ethos of the university, in name, was one of inclusivity, non-racism, non-sexism and multi-lingual diversity (Fourie, 2006:357). As such it was an institution that echoed much of the ‘language’ spoken by the new democratic South Africa. Transformation, in terms of demographics at least, was

effective; In 2011 the institution reflected a 63% African (black), a 30% white, 5% coloured and 2 % Indian demographic split (UFS, 2016). With the appointment of the first non-white Vice-Chancellor, Jonathan Jansen, in 2009 (UFS, 2021) the university was often cited as a benchmark of institutional transformation. In its strategic plan 2012 - 2016 the university re-committed itself to the transformative agenda with core values being cited as; working towards a more representative demographic, the transformation of symbols, the deracialisation and democratisation of campus, and fostering a culture of intellectual diversity and inclusivity (UFS, 2012:17). Transformation was sketched against the background of maintaining a proud tradition, while at the same time ‘building new ones upon the old’.

With the student protests in 2015 the university of the Free State, like almost all other tertiary institutions in South Africa, faced the calls for an intensified institutional transformation and decolonization. The UFS management responded swiftly; a three day public consultation sessions were organised where the role of statues, symbols and signs in the institution culture of the university were discussed between key university stakeholders (UFS, 2015). In 2016 a Statues, Signs and Symbols Committee (SSSC) was established to receive proposals on possible representational changes on campus. The SSSC was guided by the strategic plan and the UFS’s naming policy. In 2017 the Vice-Chancellor of the university initiated a Integrated Transformation Plan that set out to establish committees tasked with investigating the problematics on campus regarding matters of institutional culture and symbolic representation, and to arrive at “a radically accelerated transformation on campus” (McQueen, 2020:3). It is at this time that the statue of M.T. Steyn became topical (Roodt *et al*, 2018:137).

The Semiotics of Space – The Statue in its Space

1. The main building



Figure 5.13.

The University of the Free State Main Building after the statue's removal. Source: (UFS,2021).

	Denotation		Connotation	
Main Building	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	A building	One amongst many buildings.	A neo classical building (Roodt, 2018:18) at the centre of campus housing the university administration.	Speaks of the history of the institution today. A <i>metonym</i> of the institution as such. <i>Iconic</i> . Still the seat of power, and representative of the historical and epistemological archive.

In a changed university, the main building enjoys a different status than what it used to in the late 1920s. The campus has expanded in size dramatically, and the Main Building has, in terms of prominence, become almost ‘lost’ in the built-up environment. The building does not house the majority of the lecture rooms any longer as it did in the 1920s and in this particular way it might not signify the ‘entire epistemological archive any longer’. It does however house the University management and as such is still the administrative ‘heart’ of the university.

The building, a listed provincial heritage resource, is under the protection of the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 (Roodt *et al*, 2018:19) and is consequently deemed to have cultural and historical significance (Roodt *et al*, 2018:9).

As the traditional centre of campus, and because of its historical significance, in particular in the university's history, the Main Building has become iconic (Roodt *et al*, 2018:5) in the general usage of the term. As such the building features on most marketing material that the university issues, including prospectuses. In the language of semiotics, the Main Building has become a 'metonym' of the university- see methodology for a description of *metonymy*. In short, a part of the university, comes to stand for the university as a whole.

In this way it can be said that the Main Building, apart from being the seat of power, also represents the 'institution as such'. The 'institution as such' would be the epistemological reservoir or archive and everything that a modern university offer: knowledge, upliftment and social mobility. It would then also signify that which *this* specific university had become, an ethos, an institutional culture, and an approach to transformation. In this way the building still stands for what it did in the 1920s, and more. The statue was located in the forecourt of the building.

Possible Paradigms

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	A neo classical building (Roodt <i>et al</i> , 2018:18) at the centre of campus housing the university administration.	Speaks of the history of the institution today. Still the institutional seat of power and the epistemological and historical archive
Absence	The campus cafeteria	Student life

A paradigmatic distinction would involve contrasting the building with other buildings on campus – see above.

2. The Red Square (Die Rooiplein)

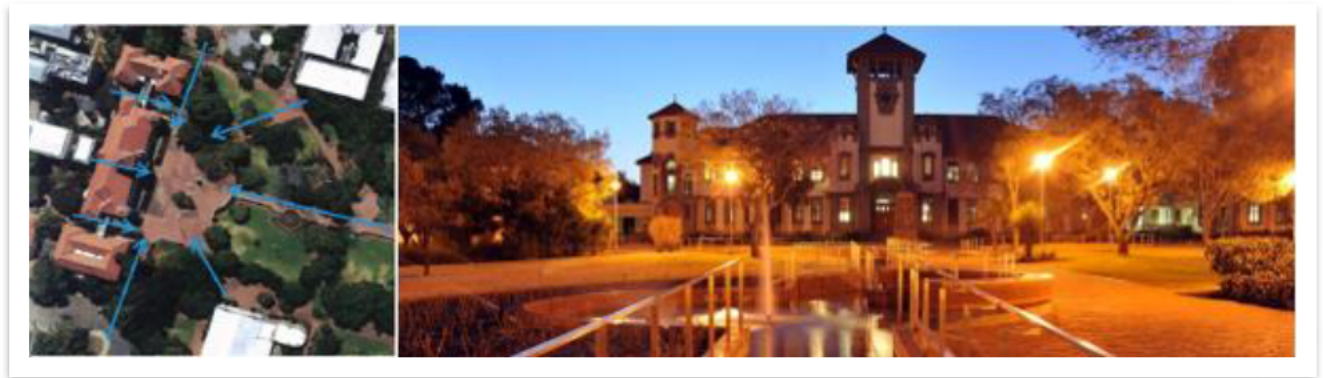


Figure 5.14.

Left: Aerial view of the Red Square. Source: (Thloaele, 2018:147).

Right: The University of the Free State Main Building circa 2017; with square in the foreground. Source: (UFS,2021).

	Denotation		Connotation	
<i>Die Rooiplein</i>	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	An open space	An open space with gardens, lawns, walkways etc. Lies immediately beyond the forecourt of the Main Building	A typical University open space i.e. a spatial arrangement that invite relaxation.	Community.

The ‘Red Square’, today, still occupies a principal status on the campus of the UFS. Thloaele (2018:156) notes that the space is used chiefly as a ‘social interaction space’ where the university community can relax in between lectures, and staff can take their lunch. The forecourt of the main building is what is architecturally referred to as a threshold space or a liminal space (Thloaele, 2018:148), a space that lays in between two different, discrete spaces and which is a cross-over between the one and the next. The statue of Steyn was located in this liminal space. The forecourt of the Main Building is, according to Thloaele (2018:150) is exactly that, a communal space where the student body and the university management could meet and interact. It was supposedly a ‘space for all’. As such it would still represent the university community at large.

3. The broader Landscape



Figure 5.15.
Aerial view of the University of the Free State, undated (Businessstech, 2021).

The statue was originally designed and situated as part of a broader landscape and ‘looked’ down into the rest of Bloemfontein. This has changed, and with the university being protected by security fencing and gates all around, and the statue being situated in a space that is heavily built up all around, the statue is now longer visible to nor accessible by the general public. The relationship that the statue specifically has with the broader Bloemfontein community has thus been greatly reduced. The university as an institution, however, still form a central part of the city’s life (UFS, 2021).

The Statue and Its Space as Syntagm

1. Mythical Steyn	Signifier:	Signified:	SYNTAGM
	The statue	The statue and its associated meanings	The statue and its associated meanings
2. Main Building	Signifier:	Signified:	
	A neo classical building (Roodt, 2018:18) at the centre of campus housing the university administration.	Speaks of the history of the institution today. A metonym of the institution as such. Iconic. Still the seat of power, and representative of the historical and epistemological archive.	The institution as such.

3. Die Rooiplein	Signifier:	Signified:	
	A typical University open space i.e., a spatial arrangement that invite relaxation.	Community.	The Community.

When construing this second syntagm together the relationship the statue had with its surroundings becomes evident once again; The statue becomes that which stands ‘between’, the broader university community, and the institution as such with all its associated connotations.

THE STATUE AND ITS SIGNIFIERS

1. The Likeness



Figure 5.16.

Left: A close-up of the M.T. Steyn statue showing likeness. Source: (Fourie, 2006:296).

Middle: M.T. Steyn photographed as state president in 1896. Source: (Meintjies, 1969).

Right: The Steyn statue from below, source: Source: JJ Pretorius.

	Denotation		Connotation	
1. Likeness	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	A likeness	A white man	An elevated aestheticised white man	An unknown, white persona, part of a cultural group's heritage.

The likeness of the statue has not been altered over the years and the signifier is still highly *motivated* i.e. there would be a high level of correspondence between the likeness of the person depicted and the actual representation. The style in which the likeness was depicted has been described as naturalistic and romantic (Roodt et al, 2018:25). At the time of the statue's unveiling, Steyn, being a well-known personage, would have been highly recognisable being a highly *motivated* representation. Today, however, in terms of recognisability the *motivatedness* has little impact. The likeness of Steyn, being virtually unknown outside those circles intimately involved with the aspects of South African history in which Steyn features prominently, *becomes* little more than the accurate depiction of an unknown white man (McQueen, 2020:3) which had been worthy of celebrating at a specific time, and who under the auspices of the post-Apartheid formulation of heritage would form part of a specific cultural group's *heritage*. The statue's specific appraisal under #RMF will be discussed in **Step 3**.

Thus, when the statue was constructed, the likeness was a critical point in the constellation of signifiers that made up the entirety of the statue. If Steyn had not been recognized as *Steyn* the meaning of the statue would've changed. At the other extreme, if the likeness changed to someone else's, the statue would represent someone else, and Steyn wouldn't be the subject of this study.

Break up in Paradigms

The recognizability of the statue is a prominent factor in the meaning the statue accrues. If one considers that the signified was the likeness of Steyn but who is now unrecognized, who simply did not feature in the 'psyche' of the broader population, one can ask what the effect would have been if someone more recognizable were depicted. Another Afrikaner leader, a war hero, a local Free Stater etc., that is, a persona within the same *paradigm* as himself. If one had to use General Christiaan de Wet for example, he would enjoy the same unrecognizedness. If one had to depict Jan Smuts, whose likeness is probably better known among the broader population, the meaning of the statue would be influenced in such a way that it became, in the dominant discourse of the time, about Smuts *specifically*, and not a generic, unrecognised persona from yesteryear.

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	An elevated aestheticised Steyn	One among many of the same. A white man part of a group's heritage

Absence	Elevated aestheticised De Wet	One among many of the same. A white man part of a group's heritage
Absence	Elevated aestheticised Smuts	Smuts as South African Myth, the associated mythological meanings

2. General demeanour



Figure 5.17.

Left: The Steyn statue from below. Source: JJ Pretorius,

Right: M.T. Steyn photographed as state president in 1896. Source: (Meintjies, 1969).

	Denotation		Connotation	
2.a Stance	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a human form in bronze	The likeness of a standing figure	Upright Stance, foot extended.	Good citizen, Leader, Ownership
2.b Positioning of Head	Signifier	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a human form in bronze	The likeness of a standing figure	Slightly raised head	Elevated, far-seeing

2.c Expression	Signifier	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a human form in bronze	The likeness of a standing figure	Neutral, composed expression	Comfort, composed, contemplative, stoic

Considering that a syntagm of stance, stature, and expression, into the general class of *demeanor* or *poise*, the *signifieds*, on a connotative level would read; a person of status, custodian of the space, a perceptive and far-seeing individual in role willingly bequeathed upon him by others, and comfortable in that position.

In an immediate post-Apartheid heritage context, the *demeanour* would be typical, conventional of the time, as a statue of a early 20th century statesman who forms part of an Afrikaner heritage. It is similar in poise to all the van Wouw's renditions, namely Paul Kruger on Church Square, Louis Botha in the Durban CBD and Jan Hofmeyr in Church Square, Cape Town (Roodt *et al*, 2018). Collapsed into this category of Apartheid era heritage it would simply be a demeanor associated with convention. Under a #RMF discourse this would be slightly differently appraised as described in step 3.

Break up in Paradigms

In this way, if one had to consider the paradigmatic dimension of the original sign, it becomes evident that the potential *absences* that defined the sign and which could be said to *still* define the sign under more recent context. The paradigms are re-iterated in the table below;

	Connotation		Paradigm	
Stance	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Upright Stance, foot extended.	Good citizen, Leader, Ownership	Hunched Down, unfirm feet	A broken citizen
Positioning of Head	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Slightly raised head	Elevated, far seeing,	Looking Down	Myopic
Expression	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:

	Neutral, composed Expression	Comfort, composed, contemplative, stoic	Agitated Expression	Moment of tribulation
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3. Dress



Figure 5.18.

Left: The M.T. Steyn statue from the rear. Source: JJ Pretorius.

Right: The M.T. Steyn statue from the front. Source: JJ Pretorius.

	Denotation		Connotation	
Dress	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a clothed figure	A Coat, Pants, Shoes	A long tailcoat or tunic, long pants, shoes. A simple assembly.	Minimal, functional wear. Simple, unpretentious.

The syntagm of ‘clothing’ seemingly becomes less important in a more contemporary context. Without the mythological backing of *Steyn* as a persona, the specific dress becomes nothing more than ‘the *bare* way people dressed in a bygone era’ and loses its specificity i.e. connotations of a Calvinism, modesty, and in opposition to pomp. However, the *bareness* would still contribute to an impression, evident when one considers an alternative assembly as per the table below.

Possible paradigms

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
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Presence	A long tailcoat or tunic, long pants, shoes. A simple assembly.	Nothing that strikes the modern eye.
Absence	Military uniform with medals and a sword	Steyn as fighting general, as soldier.

If one had to consider a paradigmatic *absence* on the level of the signified it becomes evident that the bareness of the assembly could still be considered meaningful in terms of what it is *not* i.e., the statue *not* representing a white man sporting a gun and wearing a recognisable military uniform. Such an assembly would, strewn into a syntagm of different *signifiers*, signify belligerence and perhaps, a battle not yet won.

4. Detail: Presidential Band and Gesture



Figure 5.19.
Detail Of M.T. Steyn Statue. Source (UFS, 2021).

	Denotation		Connotation	
4.a. Presidential Sash	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Representation of a band with insignia	A band with insignia	Presidential sash with the Insignia of the Orange Free State	Symbol of office and power
4.b. Gesture	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:

	Representation of a hand touching an emblem	A hand touching the insignia	Unknown white man lightly touching the insignia of the Free State (a symbol not recognized)	Relationship between the person and the nation state, here the Free State Republic, and its subjects. Fidelity of the individual to a superseded <i>nation</i>
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In the original context the sash with the insignia of the Free State Republic was worn around the shoulder by the President of the Free State on official occasions and acted as a marker of presidential office. It thus signified exactly that – power, responsibility, and station. In Block A the gesture was construed as the individual being implicated in a specific relationship with that office.

In a more contemporary context the specific insignia on the sash, which denotes the Republic of the Orange Free State, would have been much less recognisable than in the late 1920s, and if recognized, would represent a republic long forgotten or likely collapsed with any of the various white republics that existed across South Africa throughout history. Thus, at the *connotative* level the specific symbol would point to one of the republics that the new South African democratic government superseded and rendered obsolete.

The sash on its own is still a recognizable element that denotes high office, specifically the office of president in most Latin-American countries. It can therefore reasonably be assumed that the sash would be understood as standing for power.

The gesture of touching the insignia would still signify the same i.e., implicating the person depicted as standing in a specific relationship to whichever entity the sash and emblem signify on a *connotative* level, that is, as a superseded state.

Break up in Paradigms

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	White man touching the insignia of an unknown republic	In individual implicating himself in a superseded nation state
Absence	White patriarch crunching the band	Someone rebelling against the forgotten state

If one had to replace ‘White patriarch touching the insignia of an unknown republic’ ‘White patriarch crunching the band’ the ‘meaning’ of the syntagm would change from ‘an individual implicating himself in a superseded nation state’ to ‘someone rebelling against injustice.’ The proposed paradigmatic distinction above suggests that the gesture in specific *anchors* the meaning of the isolated syntagm i.e. the combination of sash, insignia, and gesture.

5. The Plaque

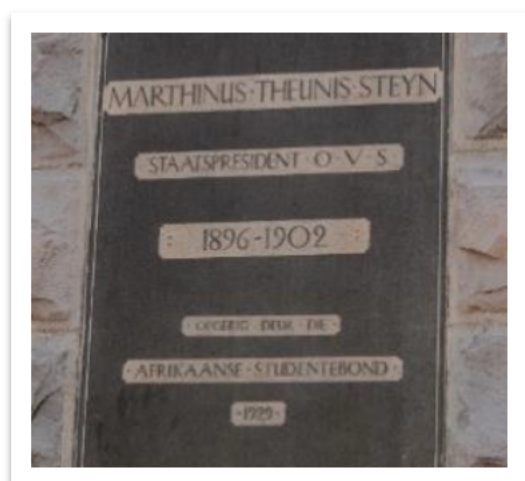


Figure 5.20.
Detail of plaque on M.T. Steyn statue. Source: JJ Pretorius.

	Denotation		Connotation	
5. The plaque	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Text	Text elaborating on who the statue represents, the construction of the statue, contributors etc.	The <i>studentebond</i> contribution in honoring M.T. Steyn. Reference to Steyn is made in his role as President from 1896 - 1902	Past future generation honoring their leaders. An indicator of heritage preservation. That at one time this figure held esteem and was commemorated for a particular reason.

The plaque does not offer much in the way of providing additional context except for the important element of noting those who commissioned the statue. As such, the plaque does *anchor* the meaning of the entire assembly by noting *who* it is that did the honouring. The *studentebond* was a student representative organization, roughly equivalent to the SRC on

modern campuses and represented the student body (Fourie, 2006:141). In this way it is the ‘young’ honouring their elders. The young, however, are also the future, so an immediate sense of continuity is invoked.

Within a more recent context the plaque either would signify that this *is* a heritage item insofar as at some time in history the figure was deemed worth celebrating and honouring by a particular group of people. The plaque would, in for example an immediate post-1994 appraisal of ‘heritage’, likely signify just that – that past generation had the opportunity to honour their leaders. In a new South Africa, it is now time to honour different heroes.

In a more stridently transformative discourse like #RMF the plaque would likely signify its opposite. This will be explored in **Step 3**.

Possible Paradigms

Paradigms	Signifier:	Signified:
Presence	The <i>studentebond</i> contribution in honoring M.T. Steyn. Reference to Steyn is made in his role as President from 1896 - 1902	Future generation honoring their leaders.
Absence	A military Society Honouring M.T. Steyn	An institution honouring a <i>fighting</i> president
Absence	The Bowling Club Honouring M.T. Steyn	A laughing matter

Considering the paradigmatic distinctions above it is still evident that if attention is paid to who did the honouring, it would indeed constitute a different *signified* and potentially alter the holistic ‘meaning’ of the statue.

6. The Plinth

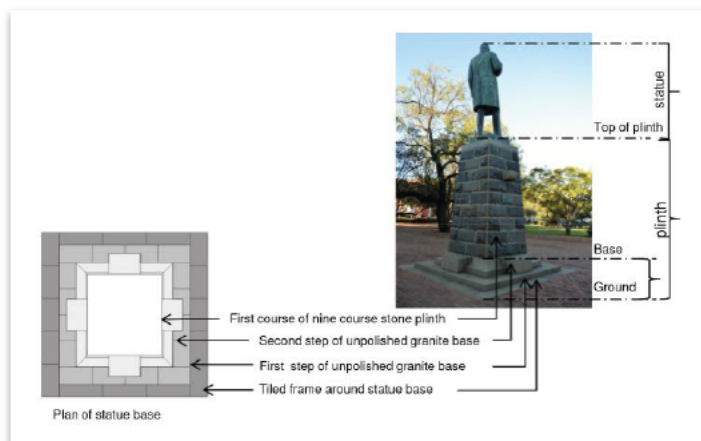


Figure 5.21.
Description of plinth. Source: (Thloaele, 2018:143).

	Denotation		Connotation	
The Plinth	Signifier:	Signified:	Signifier:	Signified:
	Multi-leveled built-up structure.	A support structure.	A structure consisting of a 1. Tiled platform, 2. a base of unpolished granite, 3. an aesthetised second base of unpolished granite followed by 4. a nine-course stone plinth.	Very little ornamentation. A progression to refinement. Stretching to a considerable height.

The plinth construes its own sentence or syntagm:

Connotation	
Signifier:	Signified:
1.Tiled Base - A pavig tile flush with the surface	Separation from environment
2.Fist step of unpolished granite. Rectangular	Strength – thoroughly grounded
3. Second step of unpolished granite base. Ornamented	Strength –Reminiscent of a fort’s battlements
4.Nine-course stone plinth	Bare, minimal stone support. High.
5. The statue	As discussed.

In a contemporary context the plinth serves very much the same function as it did in 1929, i.e. raising the statue to an impressive height and according it a commanding presence over its immediate surroundings. In its progression upwards, the plinth speaks of strength with minimal ornamentation. In general, it proceeds from roughly hewn strength (unpolished granite) to more natural stone (the 9-course stone plinth), to the statue itself.

The Statue as Syntagm

Since in the sections above paradigmatic absences were already isolated for each sign, I will forego mentioning them again. Secondly, since it is assumed that the denotated signifier and signified is already subsumed into the connotative signifier, only the connotative level will be construed into a syntagmatic sequence. The column on the right, noting the syntagm is a redacted version of the signified. This was done for brevity's sake.

	Connotation		SYNTAGM
1. Likeness	Signifier:	Signified:	
	An elevated aestheticised white man	An unknown white man. A persona, part of a cultural group's heritage, worth celebrating at some time in the past.	An unknown white man. A persona, part of a cultural group's heritage, worth celebrating at some time in the past.
2.a. Stance	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Upright Stance, foot extended.	A leader, ownership	A leader, ownership, a stake in that which surrounds him
2.b. Positioning of Head	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Slightly raised head	Elevated, far seeing,	Elevated, far seeing
2.c. Expression	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Neutral, composed Expression	Comfort, composed, unphased	Comfortable, composed and unphased
3. Dress	Signifier:	Signified:	

	A long tailcoat or tunic, long pants, shoes. A simple assembly.	Minimal, functional wear from yesteryear.	Bare
4.a. Presidential sash and insignia	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Presidential sash with the Insignia of the Orange Free State	Symbol of a superseded office and power.	Symbol of a superseded office and power.
4.b. Gesture	Signifier:	Signified:	
	Unknown white man lightly touching the insignia of the Free State (a symbol not recognized)	Relationship between the person and the nation state, here the Free State Republic, and its subjects. Fidelity of the individual to a superseded <i>nation</i>	One with the <i>nation</i> represented. Implicated in the superseded power/republic.
5. The plaque	Signifier:	Signified:	
	A plaque commemorating the represented figure, by a group of people who contributed to the construction of the statue.	Past future generation honoring their leaders. An indicator of heritage preservation. That at one time this figure held esteem and commemorated for a particular reason	Represents future and past generations. A continuity.
6. The Plinth	Signifier:	Signified:	
	A structure consisting of various discrete levels.	A progression to refinement, stretching to a considerable height.	Is worthy of elevating.

As a compilation of signifiers that can be construed into a sentence, the syntagm as proposed in the table above, the signification proceeds from the recognition of a persona that is assumed to *not have any specific mythological backing* any longer i.e. in the mind of the general populace the specific person depicted does not feature as a person with a specific history.

Where in 1929 the statue represented the myth of *Steyn* it now either represents the absence of a myth or a myth of another kind. This will be explored in **step 3**.

As a compilation of signifiers that can be construed into a sentence, the syntagm as proposed in the table above would read, as a sentence:

An unknown white man, owner of his space, elevated, comfortable, minimally dressed, implicated in power and honoured as such by previous generations, dominates his surroundings and mediates between the community and the university as such.

In line with the methodology; the various signifiers are arranged in such a way that they articulate *something*. Each sign has its own history, its signifier, its signified, its denotative meaning and its connotative meaning. Yet is only when such a compilation is ‘read’ against a prevalent discourse of the time that it can become evident what the deeper, holistic ‘meaning’ of the artefact is, what it itself articulates. The signifiers have been established and in **step 3** they will be brought to engage with ‘heritage’ as articulated by the #RMF movement.

Step 3

In the section below I will bring what was in step 1 a discursive approach i.e. the isolation of broader systems of meanings in the form of different articulation that represented different transformation i.t.o how culture, identity and the past were linked together with a *semiotic* one i.e. the attempt by the ‘text’ to speak, to articulate something in its specific arrangement of signifiers. Together this would constitute a dual perspective on the work of representation that Hall referred to as delineated in the theory chapter. Also, in line with the methodological blueprint, it is the hope of the researcher that the **specific** object of analysis, the ‘text’, the statue of M.T. Steyn, when brought forward to engage with the key articulations, within, in this case, the discourse of #RMF, would indicate how under such a discourse the past, identity and culture was constructed at that particular moment in time, *through* a specific text.

In the table below the left-hand column contain the articulation of identity, culture and the past i.e. ‘heritage’ as extricated in Step 1. In the right-hand column are the different signifieds that were strewn together in a syntagm in Step 2. The aim here, is to make these engage with each other to arrive at the properly contextualised meaning of the statue in the context of #RMF.

ARTICULATION (a discursive snapshot of linked, articulated discrete elements)	SIGNS
<p>1. Identity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resistance against: 1994 consensus i.e. a <i>rainbow</i> nation predicated on aspects of the Freedom Charter. 2. Various levels of oppression: A system that privileges a <i>white, male, heteronormative</i> identity. Moving those marginalised to the centre. Fluidity. 3. A Black identity and consciousness. Endogenous, self-determining. 4. African, endogenous, <i>becoming</i> <p>2. Culture/Language</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ‘Whiteness’. 2. A persistent exclusionary culture based on race, gender, sexuality etc. 3. An ‘own’ non-elite culture. Determined ‘outside’ white culture. A new humanism 4. African epistemology and ontology. Centring the Subaltern. <p>3. The Past</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuation of an Apartheid past. A history of oppression and exploitation. 2. N/A. 3. A ‘Black’ history erased 4. A legacy of colonialism and empire. 	<p>Signifieds</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Likeness – The absence of recognition. b. Poise and demeanour c. Dress d. Sash, Insignia, Gesture e. The Plaque f. The Plinth g. The Locality <p>Syntagm of signifieds</p> <p><i>An unknown white man, owner of his space, elevated, comfortable, minimally dressed, implicated in power and honoured as such by previous generations, dominates his surroundings and mediates between the community and the university.</i></p>

Before considering the statue as syntagm against #RMF one consideration needs to be reiterated. The ‘text’ in question is a statue from a bygone era. It is a conventionalised expression which in itself have certain consideration of the medium to take into account. One such a consideration is that statues very often depict notable figures a particular society at a particular time deemed worthy of celebration. Because of this particular point the *likeness* for example, would not simply be the representation of ‘a likeness’ but the representation of someone deemed worthy of elevating and celebrating. This also means that, as a statue, the text becomes comparable to others of its kind and its meaning is partly determined by this ‘intertextual’ relationship with other statues. Although that consideration lies outside the scope of this study

it is worth remembering that the statue of M.T. Steyn was a statue similar in general appearance, and from roughly the same time, as the statue of Cecil John Rhodes on the UCT campus, unveiled in 1934 (Ndebele, 2013), which was the catalyst for the #RMF movement in the first place.

a. Likeness – Who does the statue represent?

If one had to consider the signified of an *unknown*, *white male* being elevated and celebrated, the following becomes evident; that in a discourse that posited itself against a national **identity** and **culture** which, according to #RMF, still strived for white values i.e. that embodied ‘whiteness’, and which furthermore articulated this identity as patriarchal, racist and heteronormative, it doesn’t take much imagination to see how the figure of a old, white patriarch would ‘read’ under such a discourse as that which effects oppression, of that which represents the skeletons of the past carried over from Apartheid.

Under a post-Apartheid heritage landscape a statue representing an unknown, white man would become one of the forgotten statues that were de-emphasised in the pursuit of a more balanced heritage landscape. Under an #RMF articulation of heritage, it would become the presence of a white, paternal figure from *yesteryear*, an embodiment of the narrow, one-sided history, or a figure in a pre-1994 past, which was complicit in the erasure of ‘Black’ history and in a legacy of colonialism and empire.

This is not to say that all white, fatherly figures from a previous era would be read in this way but as one progresses through the syntagm it becomes evident that there is a strong case to be made that it does so here.

d. Sash, insignia, gesture

In a transfigured landscape the sash, insignia and gesture which originally pointed to presidential power, specifically in the republic of the Free State, and an individual associating him with that *republic*, would become a superseded power, over a superseded state associated to an individual that for all intents and purposes have become irrelevant.

Under #RMF, however, the sash would stand for power still persistently present, of what was an illegitimate republic or **nation**, that exploited and oppressed black people, and the person that implicates himself in that oppression would *become* the exploiter and oppressor of black people.

When this properly contextualised *signified* of the sash, insignia and gesture is read in combination with the a. the likeness it lends force to the argument that under a #RMF discourse the **identity** and **culture** was that of a persistent ‘whiteness’ complicit in a history of oppression, exploitation, and colonialism.

b. Demeanour

When considering the signified above in *combination* with the demeanour; the figure of a white patriarch *complicit* in exploitation and oppression presented as someone of status, in control of an environment and comfortable in his role as owner, the meaning would further be skewed towards an interpretation that renders the demeanour as the deameanour of an ‘oppressor’ that ‘owns’ a space he is not intitled to. In this way the representation of Steyn would become nothing other than hubristic and a sign of ‘white arrogance’, to use the language of the #RMF movement itself.

c. Dress

As mentioned previously the dress of the statue is only considered significant insofar as it is not a more elaborate depiction of a leader of state.

e. The Plaque

In a stridently transformative discourse like #RMF the plaque would signify a complicity of past generations in supporting and honouring an illegitimate and oppressive state and generating versions of history that erase or marginalise black history. If the original honouring suggested a continuity the contemporary context would suggest the same, namely a continuity of oppression and exclusion and past, future generations implicated in the perpetuation of repressive and exploitative regimes and histories.

f. The Plinth

The plinth ties together that the person depicted was indeed someone of power and status that was celebrated at some point in time. In combination with the above signifieds it would only serve to aggravate the prominence of someone who, in the eyes of #RMF, was a symbol of white power – ‘whiteness’

The analysis above would point to the *negative* articulation of heritage as expressed by #RMF. *Negative* in the sense that it articulated itself *against* a position posited as prevalent that was in need of transformation. What was then articulated as its opposite, as the desired state, was that which was a black, endogenous and African **identity** and **culture**, free from oppression and exclusion based on race, gender, sexuality etc. The struggle for a transformed identity and

culture was a struggle for the centring of those on the margins and an African epistemology and ontology. Furthermore, this had to happen through transforming a past that was a past of exploitation, a continuation of Apartheid and a legacy of colonialism and empire.

Conclusion and a note on the positioning of the statue

From the above it becomes evident that if the syntagm of the statue is read against the articulations of culture, identity and the past as articulated by #RMF, the result is that the statue of Steyn articulates the movement's anti-thesis, insofar as it would represent everything the movement posited itself 'against'. In that sense the statue would also stand for everything that is resisting the attainment of that which the movement sought to *become* i.e. an 'Black' identity and culture, an endogenous African epistemology and ontology and a more equal society free from oppression.

In other words when one describes the different signs comprising the statue as being taken hold of and re-arranged by the discourse of #RMF it became evident that it was not simply a case of the statue articulating 'this' under 'that' discourse and under 'this' discourse 'that', but, something which could articulate nothing else with *its specific arrangement* of signifiers under *such a dominant* discourse as #RMF.

That #RMF was a prevalent discourse is proven, in a way, by the above analysis being corroborated by a statement made by the SRC president Awive Dlanjwa at the time "Steyn must go as a matter of urgency. For us to keep Steyn is to preserve the heritage of Apartheid and it is because of that man that we are where we are now" and furthermore "a reminder of colonialism with no value for black students" (Roodt *et al*, 2018:138). This viewpoint is substantiated by numerous reports in the media of what the sentiments of the students were on campus (Roodt *et al*, 2018:135).

In a repetition of Block A; considering that the mediatory role the statue played in its positioning in a liminal space, as a gateway between the university community and the university as such, and everything this represented, it becomes evident that the 'meaning' of the statue in the eyes of #RMF could only be confirmed and strengthened. This would be that: considering that M.T. Steyn, the, under #RMF, became a figure of whiteness, of everything the movement posited itself against, still stands in a position that mediates between the community and the institution as such, it is understandable that the statue drew the ire of the students. Steyn as the figure of 'whiteness', of oppression, of historical exclusion that stands opposed to decolonisation, would literally be read as a barrier to institutional inclusion, one of the key

tenets of the #RMF movement. As such the Steyn statue, and everything he represented, became a sign of oppression and exclusion and that which bars an endogeneity, an indigeneity, a black, and African epistemology and ontology. As such, in the eyes of #RMF, the statue had to go.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Findings

From the analysis it became clear that the statue of M.T. Steyn articulated two distinct, vastly different discourses at the time of its unveiling in 1929 and then, at the beginning of its end at the UFS, under the #RMF movement. Thus, the first and second research questions were answered by concluding the analysis of Block A and B. In iteration these were:

1. What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of its unveiling?
2. What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of the #RMF protests, in the context of the movement's calls for transformation and decolonisation?

To answer the third research question it became necessary to draw conclusions from examining the two together. The two moments, that of 1929 and 2015, proved to be related in ways that gradually, as the research progressed, became apparent. Below I will provide a summary of the findings as it pertains to the first and second research questions. Thereafter I will conclude with a discussion on the third question, namely:

3. What can an analysis of the 'meaning' of the M.T. Steyn statue tell us about how **heritage** is constructed today?

In Block A of the analysis, it was found that the statue, at the time of its unveiling in 1929, articulated an Afrikaner nationalist discourse. This was done by taking into account the specific signifiers of the statue as well as the prevalent articulations of culture, identity and the past at the time, that was, in part, a culmination of a cultural struggle between the Afrikaner and English communities. This cultural struggle was described from the time before the Anglo-Boer War, up to time of Unification, a nascent Afrikaner nationalism on the early 1910s and finally the cultural consolidation of the Afrikaner, that accompanied the attainment of political power between 1920 and 1930. At the time of the statue's unveiling in 1929, it was found that there was no counter discourse that could 'take hold' of the same signifiers with the same efficacy and strength as Afrikaner nationalism. It was also found that the specific signifiers contained within the statue disposed the statue towards a nationalist interpretation, and indeed, drew on nationalist signs to construe its meaning. Therefore, the statue came to stand for a

discourse that in its articulation of culture, identity and past represented a nationalist articulation, i.e an endogenous, inherent *identity*, an indigenous and endogenous **culture** and a **past** that represented the struggle from *kolonie* tot *volk* (the struggle from a colony to a nation). This articulation, as discussed in step 1, Block A, did attempt to build a larger consensus in the late 1920s (as a discursive construction between Afrikaans and English speakers) but at the same time, by the specificity of its articulation, pushed away those who did not share an Afrikaner culture, identity and past. That the statue represented a drive towards endogeneity, indigeneity, language rights, and an ‘ownness’, however, had become evident and this ‘fixed’ the meaning of the statue, for the time being at least. This, consequently, answers the first research question; What culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of its unveiling?

In Block B, it was found that a #RMF discourse was an amalgamation of many different articulations brought together and articulated into its own discourse. This embodied resistance against the post 1994 articulation of a ‘inclusive’ heritage landscape, drew on traditions of black consciousness and social justice and posited a black, African and decolonised university as its objective. Thus, against the backdrop of a #RMF discourse, with its specific arrangement of signifiers, the statue of M.T. Steyn articulated everything the movement posited itself against, namely, a legacy of ‘whiteness’, of a culture foreign to the self, of alienation, of oppression, of exclusion, of heteronormativity, and of the marginalisation of black people. The statue was therefore articulated as an *obstacle* to that which the movement strove for. It was found that the signifiers of the statue, representing a white, male, patriarch, that furthermore, in its positioning, stood between the university community and the institution, and as such became an *obstacle* obstructing institutional inclusion, could, under a discourse like #RMF, not articulate anything but the antithesis of the movement. As such, with #RMF ‘taking hold’ of the signifiers in that way the statue came to articulate a **culture** of ‘whiteness’ that was exclusionary and elite, an **identity** that was one of oppression and exclusion and a **past** that was a past of colonialism, empire and the eradication of black history. In the eyes of #RMF the Steyn statue, and everything he represented, became a sign of oppression and exclusion. As such he was an obstacle to what the #RMF movement considered its decolonial struggle. This answers the second research question; what culture, identity and past (heritage) did the statue of M.T. Steyn articulate at the time of the #RMF protests, in the context of its calls for transformation and decolonisation?

With the first two research questions answered it became evident that an analysis of the meanings of the statue could reveal insight into the contemporary heritage landscape as formulated in the third research question; what can an analysis of the ‘meaning’ of the M.T. Steyn statue tell us about how heritage is constructed today? Below I will explore the main findings that *emerged* as the research progressed. Many of the findings below were vague suspicions, more in the realm of intuition than reasoned argument, that the researcher held at the start of the research process. Upon concluding the study some of these, however, became apparent and not simply a whim or fancy on the part of the researcher.

Considering the first two research question in combination illuminated an interesting relationship between what the statue articulated at the time of its unveiling, and what it articulated 85 years later in the time of #RMF. The analysis confirmed, on a deeper level than anticipated, that in both instances the statue reflected a drive towards endogeneity, indignity, and an ‘ownness’ extricating itself from foreign influence, and the use of culture to effect that freedom from what was considered an oppressive, alienating culture. At its unveiling the statue was a representation *of* such a drive, and in 2015 that which *opposed* such a drive. The biggest difference, was evidently, that when the statue articulated a drive towards endogeneity in the 1920s it was against the background of the tender history between English and Afrikaans language communities, imperialism, cultural domination, and the Anglo-Boer war. Under #RMF it was more explicitly between what was considered a history of oppression associated with coloniality, the imposition of a ‘white’ epistemology and ontology and what was considered a still excluded and marginalised black majority that still bore the effect of Apartheid. It can thus be argued that the difference pivoted around the discursive construction of ‘heritages’, that grounded a drive towards transformation in which culture, identity and the past became determining factors. In 1929 it was the affirmation of a prevalent Afrikaner nationalism that emphasised language, group identity, culture and a specific past of struggle, in 2015 it was to transform *into* a society that was decolonised, equal, ‘black’, African, and possessed an ‘ownness’ that comprised of an indigenous (local) culture, identity and a past *free* from that which is alien.

In this exact sense there was an obvious similarity in the way that culture, identity and a past was expressed to effect transformation in society. In 1929 this transformation had largely taken place, the Afrikaner was, in a sense, comfortably ‘in power’ and a cultural life was flourishing. With #RMF the feeling was that the society was *not* yet transformed and deploying culture, identity and a past was a gateway to such a transformed society.

What also became evident (see chapter 3 part 2) was that #RMF re-activated the heritage debate and generated the need to **reinscribe** many of the contested statues with meaning in the process, from both those that oppose the movement and those that supported its project. Consequently, when #RMF made the statue of Steyn articulate the antithesis of its own endeavour, it clashed with those who recognized themselves in the ‘mirror’ of the statue, for whom the statue stood for a particular heritage, and who consequently generated a counter discourse. The statue was, after all, a representation that *represented*, and as such articulated a heritage in which someone, and more importantly a group, can, or cannot recognise themselves.

This then came to embody a particular struggle over the sign. What the statue articulated under an #RMF discourse has been discussed at length but in the case of the counter discourse, mostly from Afrikaner cultural activists, explicit reference was not only made to the character of Steyn and him being an Afrikaner icon, but also that Steyn stood for the Afrikaner’s own decolonial struggle (Roodt *et al*, 2018). This became evident as the research progressed but considering the scope of the project could not be included – see limitations. In this way the counter discourse re-activated and re-articulated much of what the statue articulated in the late 1920s, bar the nationalism. Steyn was a man of integrity, exemplary statesmanship, a *fighter*, a *bittereinder*, and an Afrikaner icon. In this way the original context of the statue repeated in an unforeseen and interesting way. The counter discourse from the Afrikaner community recognized themselves in the figure of Steyn and articulated him as a figure of decoloniality themselves.

It can therefore be deduced that in the counter-discourse there was a *willingness* to articulate Steyn, similar to what he articulated in 1929, as part of a decolonial struggle for an ownness, an indigeneity and an endogeneity that, at the time, represented a cultural transformation. However, not only was there a willingness, but there was also a very real point of solidarity, evident from the similarity in a drive for an ‘own’ culture. As mentioned, at the start of the research it was evident that counter discourses often invoked the point that Steyn stood for an Afrikaner decolonial struggle. The deeper resemblance in the respective cultural struggles, which became more and more evident as the research progressed, however, *was there*, and if the statue had to be re-articulated, to affect a broader consensus, this was something that could be drawn on.

As such this represented a sign that could be taken as one of solidarity, of speaking the same language as those calling for the statue’s removal. Thus, in the heightened tensions around the

statue, this represented a potential for consensus. The potential to take everything that the figure of Steyn had come to mean in the Afrikaner psyche, that was re-activated by #RMF, i.e., integrity, an icon, a hero, a fighter, and articulate it, together with the decolonial, into a broader decolonial struggle that could, with some work, represent a new and broader consensus in which different cultural groups could recognise themselves.

What also became apparent as the research progressed was that the broader decolonial discourse was not necessarily equal to what #RMF articulated as the decolonial, even though it became a card carrier for the decolonial struggle. As evidenced in Step 1 Block B the #RMF movement was often vague or ambiguous when it came to express exactly what the decolonial entailed, and it often simply became a transformed society i.e., that which wasn't *this* one. The researcher became increasingly aware that the decolonial as expressed by writers such as Achille Mbembe (2016) or Ngugi wa Thiongo (2007) expressed the decolonial as transforming the essence of society in a way that would re-appraise the past in productive and affirmative ways. It was indeed about re-centring Africa, about endogeneity and indigeneity. It was also about being able to translate the world into your own discourse and not take your cue from something foreign to the self. So, in many ways the broader decolonial discourse resonated with what Steyn stood for in the late 1920s as well as some of the endeavours that #RMF strove for. As a consequence, it was in the spirit of this broader decoloniality that a solidarity could have been reached, or a consensus effected.

A 'willingness' was thus shown by a counter discourse that emerged as the polemic around the statue grew in scope. But the fact was that there was no way that in #RMF's articulation of the decolonial discourse anything that represented something white, male and from a particular time could be part of such a re-centring or affirmative expression. In that sense, by collapsing Steyn into a *white, male, relic from the past* no 'identity' postulated by the statue could be decolonial, and the 'specificity of the text' went to the movement antithesis – a sign of the oppressor, whiteness, alienation and patriarchy.

It was argued at the time that if the university chose to keep the statue it would have been vandalized (Roodt *et al*, 2018:77). The statue had to go because he ticked all the boxes of that was 'unwanted', as explicated in Block B of the analysis. As such something that had the potential to stand for decoloniality, instead got collapsed into the sign of the oppressor, could not be articulated into a broader decolonial discourse, and consequently had to be removed.

The statue was eventually removed and relocated to the War Museum of the Boer Republics. This comprised a compromise solution, recommended by the HIA, that relegated Steyn to a specific place and specific history where, it was maintained, the impact of the statue could be properly contextualised by Steyn's role in the war and his fight against empire and coloniality (see chapter 1). The opportunity to become articulated into a broader decolonial struggle though had become lost. Taken out of a problematic context on the campus of the UFS, which yet carried the potential to signify something productive as mentioned earlier, the statue was relocated to a place where what it could articulate was constrained by a *particular* history, a *particular* place and a *particular* struggle.

What the researcher is arguing is not that Steyn should've been, necessarily, left in place. What is being argued, however, is that the cathartic power of the 'moment', the history of the statue, the solidarity to be found in what Steyn stood for and what #RMF aimed to achieve, the esteem the figure of Steyn held in Afrikaner circles, the 'meaning' the moment imbued the statue with, offered an incredible potential for the statue and its space to be re-articulated in line with an affirmative decoloniality, which in theory, would embody a cultural transformation in the heritage discourse. Such a transformation, would, in any small way, represent a different articulation of culture, identity and past with which those Afrikaners willing, could identify. If a representation is for Hall (2005:22) the embodiment of a heritage discourse in which "those who cannot see themselves reflected in its mirror cannot properly 'belong'" then in #RMF's formulation of the decolonial, as articulated by the Steyn statue under an #RMF discourse, any Afrikaner could most definitely not 'belong'. But, if one could hold up a broader decolonial mirror by re-articulating the statue's meaning, in which Afrikaners could yet recognise themselves, by virtue of who Steyn was and the deeply 'embedded' power the figure came to carry, perhaps recognition would've been possible. Instead, the statue and its history were collapsed, by being removed, into a sign of oppression. That, according to the researcher, signaled an opportunity lost.

As such, relocation was perhaps *not* the best course of action *albeit* perhaps the easiest and safest one. One because removal is a sign in itself, of 'unwantedness', of not 'wholly' belonging, and two, articulating the decolonial, if this was indeed what it could do, does not mean the same at a museum as it does at a public university. For the most part only those that already care about Afrikaner heritage, or is interested in the Anglo-Boer War go to the museum, despite being an institution thoroughly committed to transformation. As such it is a fairly secure and secluded public space where symbols with any force of representation become

anodyne. A second implication was that for the Afrikaner to be decolonial they must be properly contextualised by a limited historical vantage point. The result was that not *even* M.T. Steyn could be appropriately re-articulated in a truly shared space, in the service of a transformational movement that, in its affirmative sense endeavours to look at a common humanity, that emphasizes epistemic co-creation and that aims to reappraise the past in productive and affirmative ways. The question then remains that, if M.T. Steyn could not be rearticulated in public, what Afrikaner icon of the same stature could.

With all the transformative catharsis and potential that #RMF had, a corresponding inward-lookingness and inability to really re-appraise the past in productive and affirmative ways also became apparent. The insistence by the SRC that the statue should go, despite many advocating for its retention or re-articulation, an option supported as the most desirable by the HIA, confirmed the observations made by some of the academic writers most involved in the movement at the time.

Mbembe (2015:2) identified a tendency towards solipsism in #RMF that prevented any sort of dialogue from taking place. The cries that “only our pain should be taken into account” (#RMF, 2015) became, for Mbembe (2015:2) the collapse of a focus on the ‘self’ and suffering in such a way that no one who didn’t share the path of suffering could partake in a transformative project. For Mbembe (2016) this belied the transformative potential of the broader decolonial project.

Francis Nyamnjoh (2021:10) directed a stern warning; “little will change unless both those who praise or denounce, admire or mock Cecil John Rhodes are ready to disabuse themselves of the zero-sum games of superiority, conquest and delusions of grandeur that made him possible, and have continued to activate and re-activate him even from beyond the grave” and further, that “only in the sense that Rhodes and his legacy, be this in the form of statues, monuments, material and consumer culture or institutions can be *recalibrated to speak meaningfully* [to what] constitutes an essential part of South Africa’s history which cannot be obliterated, however painful” (Nyamnjoh, 2021:10). For Tomaselli and Mpofu writing back in 1996 such an obliteration would entail killing the dialectic of history. “Monuments and all national symbols should sensitively reflect a fine dialectic between preservation and change, individual identities and collective destiny, differences and core commonality. These should be South Africa’s creative intentions ... where history is deployed as a tool for positive unity and reconciliation” (Tomaselli and Mpofu, 1996:28). And furthermore, that “the problem the

present monuments is that they tried to banish other South African historic actors. If they included them, it was as the 'other' - specifically the enemy 'other' whose aspirations were obviously in contradistinction to 'us'" (Tomaselli and Mpofu, 1996:27-28).

In this way, what happened to the Steyn statue, the 'meaning' it came to accrue under the #RMF discourse, a movement which found broad currency in the official, public heritage landscape of South Africa, (evidenced by chapter three, part two) and epistemologically punctuated and vindicated by the statue's removal, sheds light on the contemporary heritage landscape. What this illuminate is that regardless of the merits and potential of a statue's specificity, and potential there were, anything that carried a specific set of signifiers (see analysis part two, step 3) was considered 'other' to #RMF's own drive for a cultural 'ownness'.

In this sense the specific case study illuminated the 'worst' in drives for transformation like #RMF; drives that used the power of culture, identity and a past to effect transformation yet did so in a way that revealed an inward-lookingness that shut of the dialectic and nuance of history. This 'worst' eschewed the best of what the decolonial could be, namely a transformative movement predicated on co-creation and mutual recognition. In the late 1920s the Afrikaner did indeed reach the cusp of their own struggle for a cultural 'ownness' that contributed enormously to the group's social and economic upliftment. This struggle went from strength to strength until the Afrikaner Nationalists, once again, came into power in 1948, this time with a more rigid definition of what constitutes the *culture*, the *nation* and the *past* these implied; once the door was shut on the 'other' the rest was history.

This concludes the main argument of the thesis, and it is the hope of the researcher that the last and third research question appropriately addressed and answered. Namely, what can an analysis of the 'meaning' of the M.T. Steyn statue tell us about how heritage is constructed today.

Limitations of the Study

The use of #RMF

A key limitation of the study was identified as using specifically the #RMF discourse as contextual background to a read the statue's meaning prior to its removal, as opposed to the particularities of the discourse as they were expressed by the student movements at the UFS itself. The researcher is thus aware that a 'context' is superimposed upon a locality whose

particular protest, although inspired by events at UCT, had its own character. This was done, because considering the scope of the thesis, the #RMF provided the researcher with the clearest pathway in formulating a discursive ‘snapshot of what spirit prevailed at the time.

Counter discourses

The researcher is aware that insufficient attention was paid to the exact nature of the counter discourses that were activated by the #RMF movement. Although the counter discourse formed a central component in constructing a conclusion, this was something that only became evident once the analysis of the statue’s original ‘meaning’ and the similarity that it bore to resurgent call to ‘defend’ the statue became evident. Considering that the thesis was already at considerable length investigating the counter discourses at length became impossible and would be left to future studies to ‘pick up on’.

Generalisability

Similar to a concern raised by Sabine Marschall (2008:12) when referring to the discourse of ‘nationalism’ or the discourse of ‘#RMF’, or in fact the sentiments of ‘white’ people or ‘black’ people in homogenizing terms it is done with the understanding that these represented the dominant discourses of the time as derived from the literature. It is therefore not the aim of the researcher to obfuscate the “real complexities and divided allegiances” (Marschall, 2008:12) that often characterise the social, and *generalise* in a way that would render individuals or groups necessarily subject to these discourses.

Counter arguments

The argument presented in the thesis was presented in the hope that it can contribute, in any small way, to keep alive the debate about matters of heritage in a contemporary South Africa. If that entailed problematising what was considered the most logical course of action regarding the Steyn statue, then it is the hope of the researcher that this will not be considered in a vindictive or resentful spirit. The researcher is well aware that they were not privy to the exact sentiments ‘on the ground’, weren’t there in person to see the incredibly difficult terrain that had to be negotiated, and ‘experience’ the very real threat that the retention of the statue would simply have exacerbated racial tensions on campus. The researcher is aware that many counter-arguments can be made to what is argued in the thesis. However, the arguments made should also be considered as an attempt to re-articulate, in any small way, the history and ‘heritage’

of the Afrikaner in a way as to maintain legitimacy in public, to not be relegated to a specific context, and to be able to articulate transformation in its own terms.

The War Museum of the Boer Republics

If it seems that short shrift is given to the museum it is only insofar as the researcher truly believes that the ability for the statue to be re-articulated became diminished with its relocation. This specific museum, located next to the *vrouemonument* is a truly remarkable place, that has become a well-known example of how a museum can ‘transform’ in keeping with the times. Its successes and attempts at transformation and reconciliation are well documented in the media.

Contribution of the Study

It is hoped that the study contributed, in any small way, to the following; Firstly, the contribution of the research to the study of ‘*heritage*’ in South Africa was using the theory of articulation to understand shifts in the heritage landscape and doing so by exploring the ‘meaning’ of a statue that had not been extensively researched in an academic text. Secondly, the contribution, hopefully, also rests on the point made earlier – to re-articulate Steyn as someone who *can be* re-articulated into a broader decolonial discourse. Thirdly, it is also the hope of the researcher that the particular methodology utilized can be adapted and used in other visual anthropological studies of the same nature.

Where to From Here – Further Studies

If the line of inquiry would be picked up, or strengthened, in future academic studies either by the researcher himself or others, the caveats mentioned in the limitations, regarding the use of #RMF and a more in depth exploration of the counter discourses, would be an appropriate place to start.

Furthermore, deploying the methodology to extend to the statue’s current position at the War Museum of the Boer Republics would be able to provide a truly thorough trajectory on the statue’s lifetime – from unveiling, to removal, to ‘recontextualization.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE FORM



Mr Johannes Jacobus Pretorius (218085979)
School Of Applied Human Sc
Howard College

19 January 2021

Dear Mr Johannes Jacobus Pretorius,

Protocol reference number: 00009862

Project title: Remembering the de-colonial nation the M.T. Steyn statue on the University of the Free State campus as site of struggle/s.

Exemption from Ethics Review

In response to your application received on 01/11/2020, your school has indicated that the protocol has been granted EXEMPTION FROM ETHICS REVIEW.

Any alteration/s to the exempted research protocol, e.g., Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. The original exemption number must be cited.

For any changes that could result in potential risk, an ethics application including the proposed amendments must be submitted to the relevant UKZN Research Ethics Committee. The original exemption number must be cited.

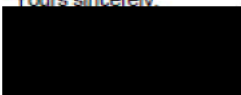
In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE:

Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours sincerely,



Prof Johannes John-Langba
Academic Leader Research
School Of Applied Human Sc

UKZN Research Ethics Office
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

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