WE ARE

Designing the South African Pavilion for
World Expo 2020, Dubai UAE

Taryn Val King

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[ WE ARE ]

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2016

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Designing the South African Pavilion for World Expo 2020, Dubai UAE

A distillation of an alternative multicultural South African nation brand to be spatially transcribed into the South African pavilion at the Expo 2020, Dubai UAE.

Taryn Val King

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree

Masters in Interior Architecture, MInt(Prof)

Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment & Information Technology
University of Pretoria | Department of Architecture | December 2016

Supervisor: Catherine Karusseit
Course Coordinator: Prof. Barbara Jekot
DECLARATION

Student number: 26100542

I declare that, [We Are] Designing the South African Pavilion for World Expo 2020, Dubai UAE, is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledge by means of complete references.

_________________________
Taryn King
05 December 2016

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Opinions expressed in this dissertation and conclusions arrived at are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the University of Pretoria.

I would like to thank Garth Walker of Mr Walker, formally Orange Juice Design for the access to and copies of the i-justi magazines, the seminal informants of this studies branding narrative.

Special thanks to Catherine Karusseit and Prof. Barbara Jekot for their guidance, contributions and patience as my supervisors.

A final word of thanks to friends and family for all their help and support.
SUMMARY

Title of dissertation: [We Are] Designing the South African Pavilion for World Expo 2020, Dubai UAE
Name of student: Taryn Val King
Supervisor: Catherine Karusseit
Course Coordinator: Prof. Barbara Jekot
Department: Architecture
Degree: Masters in Interior Architecture, MInt(Prof)

Summary:

The ‘Beyond’ as Bhabha (1994:1) conceives it, is “neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past”; rather it is the borders to the present.

These boundaries of the present are the “that from which something begins its essential unfolding”, according to Heidegger (1978:356). Unfolding as a consequence of the intersection of time and space, produces complex, as opposed to unitary or reductive, figures of difference and identity in Bhaba’s (1994:2) view.

It is with these ‘complex figure of difference and identity’ which enact ‘hindsight’ to re-describe our cultural contemporaneity; to re-inscribe our human, historic commonality, that this study is interested in. Within the context of nation branding, these figures offer an alternative to the archetypal western approach to identity construction.

The western approach to nation branding is based on two critical assumptions; firstly, that modern nations are composed of homogeneous societies, and secondly, that these societies share a common culture.

It is here that the problem lies, for at its essence, South Africa is pluralistic. We are a multicultural rainbow nation. We do not have typical shared myths, historical memories and a mass public culture due to historical and more recent political struggles within our country. Consequently, we do not follow the typical western approach to nation branding.

It is therefore the intention of this study to make use of Bhaba’s (1994) theory of the ‘Beyond’ and his notions of Interstices and Cultural Hybridity as adjectives and means of complex culture production, introduced above, to propose an alternative multicultural South African identity to be spatially transcribed into the South African pavilion at the Expo 2020, Dubai UAE.

To this end, the study conducted a Hermeneutical, Social Visual Semiotic and Lexical analysis of I-JUSI, the selected hybrid culture. The results of the examination produced seven brand indicators. These indicators in conjunction with a set of design principals; established via a precedent study of artifacts, interiors, buildings and landscapes that explored or expressed the nation’s new emerging collective national identity, will be used to spatially embody the design concept for the pavilion.

‘We are [in Full Colour]’

The ‘Moment’, that the concept intends to create for every visitor is the experience of themselves, as they would appear if they were a South African. As if they too were more complex and layered in character as a result of growing-up and living in a country as diverse as ours.

Key Terms

OPSOMMING

Titel van verhandeling: [Ons Is] Ontwerp die Suid-Afrikaanse paviljoen vir World Expo 2020, Dubai UAE

Naam van student: Taryn Val King

Promotor: Catherine Karusseit

Kursuskoördineerder: Prof. Barbara Jekot

Departement: Argitektuur

Graad: Meestengraad in Binne-argitektuur, MInt(Prof)

Opsomming:

Die "Anderkant" (1994:1) soos Bhaba dit verstaan, is nie "n "nuwe horizon" maar ook nie "n vergeet van die verlede" nie, dit is liever die grense van die huidige.

Hierdie grense van die huidige is "dit wat waarvan iets sy noodsaaklike ontplooing begin", volgens Heidegger (1978:356). Ontplooing, as 'n gevolg van die kruising van tyd en ruimte, skep komplekse beelde in kontras met die unitêre of reduiserende, beeld met verskille en identiteite uit Bhaba (1994:2) se oogpunt.

Dit is met hierdie "komplekse beeld van verskil en identiteit" wat "nawete" implementeer dat ons ons kulturele tydelikheid kan her-definieer; om ons menslike, historiese ooreenkomste te her-graveer, dit is die studie waarmee ons onselde bemoei. Binne die die begrip van handelsmerking bied hierdie beeld 'n alternatief tot die argitekpiese westerse benadering tot identiteits konstruksie.

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Part 01. Seeking a Cultural Identity

1. INTRODUCTION

The ‘Beyond’ as Bhaba 1 (1994:1) conceives it, is “neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past”; rather it is the borders to the present.

‘To dwell ‘in the beyond’ is...to be part of a revisionary time, a return to the present to re-describe our cultural contemporaneity; to re-inscribe our human, historic commonality; to touch the future on its hither side.

- Homi K. Bhaba (1994:10)

These boundaries of the present are the “that from which something begins its essential unfolding”, according to Heidegger (1978:356). Unfolding as a consequence of the intersection of time and space, produces complex, as opposed to unitary or reductive, figures of difference and identity in Bhaba’s (1994:2) view, (Figure 1).

It is with these ‘complex figures of difference and identity’ which enact ‘hindsight’ to re-describe our cultural contemporaneity; to re-inscribe our human, historic commonality, that this study is interested in. Within the context of nation branding, these figures offer an alternative to the archetypal western approach to identity construction.

The western approach to nation branding is based on two critical assumptions; firstly, that modern nations are composed of homogeneous societies, and secondly, that these societies share a common culture.

It is here that the problem lies, for at its essence, South Africa is pluralistic. We are a multicultural rainbow nation. We do not have typical shared myths, historical memories and a mass public culture due to historic and more recent political struggles within our country. Consequently, we do not follow the typical western approach to nation branding.

It is therefore the intention of this study to make use of Bhaba’s (1994) theory of the ‘Beyond’ and his notions of Interstices and Cultural Hybridity as adjectives and means of complex culture production, introduced above, to propose an alternative multicultural South African identity to be spatially transcribed into the South African pavilion at the Expo 2020, Dubai UAE.

Furthermore, this intent responds to the poor perception of South Africa by the global community and Brand South Africa’s current and persistent strategy’s failure to improve or alter this view.

---

1. Homi K. Bhaba’s book the Location of Culture (1994), rethinks questions of identity, social agency and national affiliation.

Homi K. Bhabha | Anne F. Rothenberg Professor of the Humanities

Education: BA 1970, University of Bombay | MPhil, MA, DPhil 1990, Christ Church, Oxford


Selected Works: On Art (forthcoming); A Global Measure (forthcoming); The Right to Narrate (forthcoming); Beyond Photography (2011); Our Neighbours, Ourselves (2011); Elusive Objects (2009); On Global Memory (2009); The Black Savant and the Dark Princess (2008); Framing Fanon (2005); The Location of Culture (2004, Routledge Classics); Still Life (2004); Adagio (2004).
1.1. BACKGROUND

In 2010 South Africa participated at the World Expo in Shanghai, China as part of its nation branding programme, (Figure 2-3), the success of these efforts were accessed according to the ideals outlined by seminal theorist and practitioners; Simon Anholt\(^2\) and Wally Olins\(^3\)

1.1.1. The role of brands and branding on modern nations

The following section serves as background to the problem for this thesis and is comprised of summaries of pertinent sections of the study: Examining the visual brand language used by Brand South Africa to communicate South African identity at the World Expo 2010, Shanghai China (hereafter Expo 2010) (2011), (MA Information Design) completed for the Department of Visual Arts of the University of Pretoria.

The study responded to the ubiquitous influence and expansion of brands and branding into more secular and political spheres (GfK Roper Public Affairs & Media 2008:3). The study focused on the role and influence of brands and branding on modern nations and their reputations via intentionally constructed national identities, with specific reference to South Africa.

The world exposition was chosen as the specific context for the examination of the South African national brand because world expositions function as platforms for cultural exchange and nation building. In addition, the 2010 world exposition Better City, Better Life (Expo 2010 Shanghai China 2010) was selected specifically, as it is the first world exposition in which South Africa has participated and exhibited in its own individual pavilion. Additionally, the South African pavilion was the largest stand-alone national pavilion among all the African countries at Expo 2010 (BrandSouthAfrica 2010).

The significance of this individual exhibit lies in its symbolic and physical breakaway from the stereotype of belonging to the homogeneous mass of Africa into which all the unique, collective national identities of individual nations in Africa are commonly subsumed, a consequence of the perpetuation of the imperial practice of Othering (King 2011:6).

Of world expositions themselves, World Expo is the official title given to internationally registered exhibitions\(^4\) with a six-month duration falling within the remit of the Bureau International des Expositions\(^5\) (BIE).

Bureau International des Expositions

The World Expo is defined in the BIE convention of 1928 (Official Site of the Bureau International des Expositions 2016) as an exhibit that has as its main purpose the education of the public; it is this point that differentiates it from trade fairs, whose aims are principally commercial in nature. On the other hand, Charles Pait, a former member of the French Delegation to the BIE, gives a more human account of world expositions. To Pait (2003:18), world expositions are “a non-recurring event, the aim of which is to compile an inventory of the means at human disposal for satisfying the needs of civilization while at the same time demonstrating the progress made in one or more branches of production since a given time and with an eye to improving public knowledge” (King 2011:35).

---

2. Simon Anholt, an independent policy advisor, author and researcher specializing in national identity and reputation, public diplomacy and the public perceptions of nations, cities and regions, first coined the term nation branding in 1996.

3. Wally Olins (2008:6), co-founder and Chairman of Saffron Brand Consultants and advisor to many of the world’s leading organizations including: 3i, Akzo Nobel, Repsol, Q8, Tata, The Portuguese Tourist Board, BT, Prudential, Renault and Volkswagen.

4. World Expos are historically known as ‘world’s fairs’ in America and ‘international exhibitions’ in Britain, although ‘exposition’ is also sometimes used. In France they are known as ‘expositions universelles’ or ‘expositions internationales’. Since the 1960s, the term ‘expo’ has become fairly standard. The BE prefers the term “exposition” (Swift 2006:17).

5. From this point on all references to the “Official Site of the Bureau International des Expositions” will be abbreviated with the organisations official abbreviation – BIE.
Figure 2: The South African pavilion, Expo 2010
Figure 3: Expo 2010, © University of Pretoria
1.1.2. Summary of the 2011 Study

The introduction to the 2011 study established the origins of modern nations and their collective national identities as proceeding from pre-modern ethnic states. Emphasis was placed on the nature and emergence of nation branding as a means of promoting the collective national identities in order to further desirable processes such as improving financial investment, changing user behaviours or generating political capital and goodwill. Globalisation, technological advancements in the field of mass media and communication and the ubiquity of commercial brands were cited as instigating factors in the development of the field of nation branding. Finally, the role that visual communication plays in the mass communication process and the manner in which it contributes to the construction of visual communiqués was elucidated (King 2011: 1-9).

Chapter Two outlined the development of the field of nation branding from its roots in corporate branding. Nation brands are intangible entities whose value is determined by external and internal perceptions and opinions of the brand (Kavaratzis 2005b:335). Consequently, nation branding helps to manage the reputation of a nation and its collective national identity by implementing an intentionally constructed national brand as a harmonised and strategically informed approach to promoting the nation (Anholt 2005a:118). This section concluded with an analytical framework, which was used in the analysis of the South African pavilion in Chapter Four (King 2011: 10-25).

Chapter Three contextualised the case study by outlining the historical emergence of South Africa as one of the modern world nations, the time-line in Figure 5 charts this process. Essential elements of the South African collective national identity identified include Afrocentric, Eurocentric and Asian influences that have subsequently contributed to the nation’s contemporary multicultural identity. Its intentionally constructed counterpart, It’s Possible, stems from this history.

In addition, this chapter explored the 150-year historical development of world expositions as platforms for economic, scientific, technological and cultural exchange, as well as stages for displaying historical experiences, demonstrating enthusiasm, exchanging ideas and looking to the future. The chapter concluded by detailing the character of the World Expo 2010 (King 2011: 26-41).

The fourth chapter applied the analytical framework developed in Chapter Two to the South African case study (King 2011: 42-81).

According to the main objectives of the 2011 study, focus was placed on the critical examination of South Africa’s nation brand; It’s Possible, in the light of the theoretical ideals for an intentional constructed national identity as proposed by Bartholmé and Melewar (2009), Anholt (2009) and Olins (2008). The examination centred on the analysis and interpretation of the individual communiqués (Figure 4) that constituted the South African pavilion at the World Expo 2010, as their content is the result of the implementation of the visual brand language.

Figure 4: Example of the analysis of individual communiqués

The analysis and interpretation sought to, firstly, investigate the constitution of the South African visual brand language used in the design and construction of the pavilion’s communiqués and, secondly, to broadly identify the core values of the intentionally constructed South Africa nation brand - It’s Possible, made manifest in the South African exhibit through the visual communiqués.
The emergence of South Africa as a modern nation

In the case of the South African exhibit at the Expo 2010, since the pavilion represents in its entirety a single collective mass communiqué, the communicator/advocacy role is taken by the International Marketing Council of South Africa (IMC). Via the design of the pavilion’s communiqués (Figure 6).

The communication sequence outlined in Figure 6 was then examined more closely. Figure 7, details the initiation of communication, alongside which the fundamental dimensions of the theories of Bartholmé and Melewar, Anholt and Olins were added to determine at which stage in the process each theory was most relevant. Each stage, medium/channel, audience and message, was then assessed separately, as is visible in Figure 4.

Figure 6: South African pavilion model of communication at Expo 2010 (adapted from Westley and Maclean’s (1957) Model of Communication (McQuail 2010:70)).

Figure 7: Structure of analytical framework (King 2011: 21).
1.1.3. Relevant Conclusions

With regards to the intended MInt (Prof) study the following conclusions should be highlighted:

1.1.3.1. The rainbow nation myth

The South African visual brand language is informed by a narrative of progress (e.g., industrialisation / capitalism), centred on the nation’s new democracy, proposed development and apparent multiculturalism (King 2011:88).

However, while the narrative is generally progressive, elements of the language, particularly the democratic sub-narrative, restrict its ability to accurately and holistically reflect the nation’s collective national identity by anchoring the identity to important events and symbols associated with the country’s democratic transition in 1994, (King 2011:88). Namely, ‘Madiba Magic’ and, the identification as the ‘Rainbow Nation’ a term coined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, (Figure 8A).

The difficulty posed by the rainbow nation symbol lies in the rhetoric behind, and visual manifestations of, the symbol. While avoiding direct references to colour in the sense of race; the rainbow’s colours are meant to symbolise the diversity of South Africa’s various cultural, ethnic and racial groups (Baines 1998:1). However, at present the rainbow symbol does not go so far. The rainbow symbol in itself refers rather to a rainbow and not the multiculturalism of the nation. Seemingly, this disconnection results from the rainbow symbolisation through the various colours of the South African national flag.

1.1.3.2. Defining our Collective National Identity and a mass public culture

If a modern nation, according to Smith (1991:14), is “a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members”, then South Africa is lacking such shared myths, historical memories and a mass public culture. These disparities can be explained by its historical and more recent political and social struggles, which fragmented the nation’s collective national identity along racial and cultural lines. Consequently, the nation’s ethnic distinctiveness, typically based on shared myths of ancestry, is similarly disjointed, as it is based on interconnected, parasitic or symbiotic narratives told from varying perspectives, (Figure 8A).

Currently, the fictional rainbow nation identity functions as a temporary brand, stitched together from socially acceptable, socially neutral, and exclusively positive aspects of the country’s historical collective national identity, (King 2011:89).

Figure 8a: Graphic Summary of Relevant Conclusions
1.1.3.3. Inadvertent perpetuation of colonial myths

Furthermore, in its attempt to position South Africa as modern and international, as a response to globalization and for the benefit of the state’s economic desires, the nation brand, It’s Possible, re-enacted within the South African pavilion at Expo 2010 the ‘civilising’ rhetoric so pervasive in the 1936 Johannesburg Empire Exhibition, (King 2011:89). Accordingly, elements referring to the nation’s collective national identity were applied so sparingly to the design in its attempt to showcase the nation’s progress and development that the pavilion took on a general character and failed to appear distinctly South African or African. By omission, this aesthetic programme has, for the most part, served to relegate traditional and indigenous cultural practices, images and objects to a timeless existence in the past. This approach perpetuates the imperial discourse of ‘Othering’ and what Edward Said (1975) terms ‘Orientalism’. Alternatively, they functioned as a type of cultural packaging to a diverse range of economic messages, presenting the stereotypical images conventionally associated with the nation and not its actual identity (King 2011:90). (Figure 8B).

1.1.3.4. The homogeneous mass of everywhere

As a further consequence of the pavilion’s dominant economic focus, it can be said that while various aspects of the South African pavilion correlated with, and responded to, the exposition’s main theme Better City, Better Life, the design and content favoured the promotion of the nation’s economic aspirations and purposes. Consequently, the promotion of the nation’s collective national identity was marginalised. Ideally, an expression of the CNI would have better served to differentiate the nation and gained it an advantage.

Thus, the emerging image of South Africa from the pavilion did little to support the symbolic and physical break away from the homogeneous mass of Africa that the pavilion represented, (King 2011:91). In addition to the failure to differentiate the South African nation, the application of the intentionally constructed nation brand, in its attempts to appear ‘modern’ and international, served to de-contextualize the nation and its collective national identity by severing its ties to Africa. Positioned in a no-man’s land, belonging neither to Africa nor the West or the East, it is unlikely to ensure or improve the nation’s visibility in the eyes of the world, (Figure 8b).
1.2. Problem Statement

In summary, the South African pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai, China:

- Alienated the CNI from the intentionally constructed national identity, without promoting either.
- Failed to improve the perception and awareness of South Africa, which is evidenced in the nation branding indexes (Figure 12).
- Contributed in a limited manner to the ‘Universal Concern for all Humanity’ with its responses to the expo theme ~“Better City, Better Life”- which focused on sustainable urban development.

The roots of this disjunction seem to lie in the IMC’s mandate and its capitalistic intentions, expressed by the emphasis placed on increasing tourism, trade and investment.

This was compounded by the 2010 global context. As a result of the recession, the promotion of economic aspirations was a recurring trend in the majority of the exposition’s national and corporate pavilions. This repetition of focus and content across the pavilions and the hollow rainbow nation identity of the pavilion resulted in a failure to differentiate the South African nation from the rest of the world.

A more favourable strategy would be to promote the nation as a whole, which if successfully implemented, would inadvertently boost the nation’s economic prospects.

1.2.1. The government mandate: 2010-2016

Since 2010, it’s Possible (Late 2010 - Mid 2012), like its predecessor, Alive with Possibility (2002-2010) has been rebranded. Inspiring New Ways was launched 04 June 2012, (Figure 9).

The rebrand of the nation brand, has however not drastically altered the IMC mandate. According to the BrandSouthAfrica.com (2015)

The primary objective of Brand South Africa is to develop and implement a proactive marketing and communication strategy for South Africa, and to promote South Africa. Our role is to create a positive, unified image of South Africa: one that builds pride, promotes investment and tourism, and helps new enterprises and job creation.

We operate on five platforms:

- Raising awareness internationally of all that South Africa has to offer investors
- Operating missions abroad promoting investment and export industries
- Mobilising influential South Africans as well as members of the media abroad
- Boosting local pride and patriotism
- Inspiring all South Africans to contribute to positive change through the flagship active citizenship campaign, Play Your Part.

Figure 9: Brand South Africa logos
(BrandSouthAfrica 2010, 2016)
Although, looking at the figures, it is apparent that the mandate is doing the nation a disservice. In spite of the IMC’s efforts since 2002 to craft a desirable nation brand, South Africa has not performed favourably in the rating systems that specialise in assessing the performance of countries in terms of branding. According to Country Brand Index 2014-15 (CBI) of the consultancy firm FutureBrand, South Africa ranked in the 40th position, since the initial study the brand has lost nine places compared with the CBI 2010-2011 when it as ranked 31st. Likewise, in the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brand Index 2016 (NBI), the country is located in the place 38th, which is three places down since the 2010. This is outlined in Figure 12.

The poor performance highlighted by the indexes is supported by a 2014 study conducted by Oliva & Stringari. The study looked at nation branding in developing countries burdened by stigmatization. The conclusions revealed what the world knows and thinks about South Africa, namely that we are a country with many social problems including; crime, violence, poverty, inequality, sexual assaults, racism & discrimination as well as a chequered history marked by apartheid and colonialism. On the positive side, our beautiful natural landscapes, wildlife and charismatic leader (Nelson Mandela) came to mind.

The indicators echo this sentiment, particularly with regards to our natural landscapes. Tourism was and still is South Africa’s strongest drawing card. Figures 10-12 outline this perception of, as well as the strengths and weakness of the South African brand.
Yet, a strong and competitive brand is made up of more than one area of focus. Japan topped the ranking for 2014-15 on the Country Brand Index. Figure 13, shows a more ideal even spread between and multiple focus points that make up the Japanese brand.

Consequently, if South Africa wants to break away from the homogeneous mass of Africa, as is evident in Figure 14, it needs to focus on being more than just a tourist destination.

Secondly, based on the continued rhetoric and performance, as well as the outcomes of the 2010 study, it is the contention that the application of Inspiring New Ways to the pavilion at Expo 2020, Dubai, UAE will yield much the same result as the 2010 pavilion. This stance is assumed based on the continued disconnect between the collective and the intentionally constructed national identity.
1.2.2. The hypothesis

Anholt’s (2009) approach to nation branding expresses a distinctly western tradition of thinking, based on a homogeneous society with a common, shared culture. Whereby, the aim of any government should be to “build a reputation that is fair, true, powerful, genuinely useful to their economic, political and social aims, and honestly reflects the spirit, the genius and the will of the people” (Anholt 2009:207).

Similarly, in Smith’s (1991:70) opinion, it should be the raison d’être of any nation to cultivate its collective national identity (CNI), as it is this ethnic distinctiveness (including shared ancestry myths, common cultural memories, unique cultural markers and a sense of difference, if not election) that prevents the nation from becoming invisible to the eyes of the world.

It is crucial to note that in Anholt’s (2009:207) statement, cultural aims are left out of his description, and while Smith’s definition (1991:70) of CNI includes culture, it presupposes it is a ‘shared’ and/or ‘common’ culture.

It is here that the problem lies, for at its essence, South Africa is pluralistic. We are a multicultural rainbow nation. We do not have typical shared myths, historical memories and a mass public culture due to historical and more recent political struggles within our country. Consequently, we do not follow either of the typical ‘western models’ of nation branding.

1.2.3. Problem statement and aims

Firstly, the study aims to investigate how a multicultural identity can be constructed that is complex rather than reductive, while still conveying a single, strong, clear, believable idea about what a place really is and what it stands for, as an alternative to the archetypal western approach to identity construction, (Figure 15).

This entails a re-framing and re-distillation of our Collective National Identity (CNI) via the application of the Bhaba’s (1994) post-colonial notion of cultural hybridity which results from the interstice of minority identities. The resulting CNI will be used in the constructions of an alternative holistic nation brand for South Africa, celebrating its multicultural roots.

Once the brand values of the alternative holistic nation brand have been identified and embodied they will then be used to inform the design of the South African pavilion for Expo 2020, Dubai, UAE.

Figure 15: Western vs. The Alternative

This study will be a partial alternative nation brand owing to the time limitations of the study.

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Secondly, the study will explore a spatial transcription of the proposed nation brand in the design of the SA pavilion at Expo 2020. The intention is to develop a strategy to transform the current South African tactic for spatial branding beyond the existing brand washing approach. Figures 16 & 17, illustrate the differences between the two branding approaches.

1.2.4. Sub-problems

In order to explore the primary research problem fully, the following sub-problems need to be addressed:

1. The first objective is to apply Bhabha’s post-modern theories (1994) of interstice and hybridity to the identification and study of a relevant South African hybrid culture. Key cultural markers and representations will be examined using hermeneutical, social visual semiotic and lexical analysis methods to determine core values that constitute aspects of our collective national identity.

2. The second objective is to define and outline a preliminary (alternative) intentionally constructed nation brand, including the elaboration the brand language by embodying the identified core values in order to clarify and/or make them more emotionally evocative and accessible. The embodied values will take various forms. Some will be embodied graphically, while others will not necessarily need to be first translated graphically before they can become spatial informants, they can be translated directly.

3. The third objective is to study the current thinking and theories on exhibition design and examples of South African building that express the nation’s multiculturalism from an interior architectural perspective to aid in the creation of a nation brand experience that will differentiate South Africa.

4. The fourth objective is to translate the manifestations of the identified core values that constitute our collective nation identity in an intentional spatial manner to the design of the South African pavilion at Expo 2020, Dubai, UAE.

1.3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PARADIGMS

The proposed study follows a Relativist paradigm with subjective Qualitative and Constructivist approaches. According to Groat & Wang (2013:76), a relativistic paradigm views reality as subjective and multiple, wherein multiple realities are considered as being socially constructed ‘projections of the human imagination’.

A constructivist approach focuses on the social dynamics of design processes. While, qualitative research typically studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment (in situ) and focusing on their meaning and interpretation.

Hermeneutical, visual social semiotic and lexical techniques will be applied to the examination of key cultural markers and representations that express core values constituting our collective national identity.

The strength of hermeneutical and social semiotic tools is that they consider the context, both in term of the syntactic/intertextual meanings between the people, places and things depicted in images as well as the broader context ‘out there’ that the text function in or relates to. Additionally, these tactics look at the obvious (studium) as well as the obtuse (punctum) associations and symbolism (Spencer 2011:153-154).

This should assist the researcher to reduce bias ensuring greater criticality in the collection and analysis of the data.

The design of the pavilion will be informed by precedent studies of previous World Expo pavilions and a literature review on exhibition design.

1.4. REFLEXIVITY

Considering the application of personal interpretation throughout the research process and analysis, the author is aware of the risk of possible personal biases principally in the semiotic and semantic analysis which can influence the results of the study. However, as stated in the philosophical foundations, a relativistic paradigm views reality as multiple and subjective, while a constructivist approach strives to comprehend the social dynamics and how individuals in everyday settings construct meaning and explain the events in their worlds, reducing the need for neutrality.

Nevertheless, the author acknowledges that their cultural background may influence the process of analysis although this peril is shared between researchers investigating semiotic meanings and personal perceptions.
1.5. SELECTION OF I-JUSI

The hybridity resulting from the intersection of minority identities, chosen to express our multicultural roots, is i-jusi. i-jusi is an experimental magazine first published in the early years following South Africa's first democratic elections circa 1994. From the beginning i-jusi posed an important question: “What makes me South African, and what does that ‘look’ like?”

For Garth Walker the publisher/editor of i-jusi (I-jusi 2016), our emerging identity is the “result of a gradual piecing together of the various cultural dichotomies and social potentialities that have evolved following Apartheid’s demise. As was the case with the Soviet Union, a new social order begets a new visual order”.

The identification of i-jusi was based on the criteria that, firstly, like the proposed study, it asks a similar question about our identity as South Africans and secondly, it has been continuously produced for the last twenty-two years since the beginning of the nation’s new democracy, (Figure 18).

1.6. DELINEATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The focus of the intended study is limited to the proposal of a preliminary collective and intentionally constructed national identity, to be used in the spatial design of an exhibit for the South African Pavilion at Expo 2020, Dubai UAE. This focus does not include an elaboration of preliminary proposals into a final identity with supporting corporate identity and guidelines.

While the critique rendered against Post-Colonial theory and its roots in the Western academic tradition are acknowledged, its alternative perspective on the constitution and location(s) of culture will be beneficial to the South African context as our cultural identity is contentious and multiplicitous by nature.

Additionally, this study recognises that having the ability to effectively design and manage a nation brand can be assigned a monetary value, currently Brand South Africa is valued at $256bn with a brand strength of AA-, in comparison, the world’s most valuable brand in 2015, is the US, which is valued at $19.3 trillion, with a AAA- brand strength (BrandFinance – Nation Brands 2015:14).

Lastly, the study recognises the theoretical nature of the proposed site as it currently exists. No final details or architectural drawings are available as of 2016 when this study is to be undertaken. Hence, all design and construction details of the rented pavilion have been extrapolated from conceptual proposals and renders available on the official Expo 2020, Dubai, UAE website.

Figure 18: Selection criteria for i-jusi
1.7. KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

1. The fundamentals of nation branding and brand building according to the theories of Simon Anholt (2009) and Wally Olins (2008). The role of interior design has been highlighted in the left of Figure 19.

2. Transcription - Transcription is defined as 1.) The action or process of transcribing or copying, 2.) Music-The arrangement, or (less properly) modification, of a composition for some voice or instrument other than that for which it was originally written; an instance of this, a transcribed piece (OED 2016).

This concept has been adapted to the interior environment, 3) the arrangement/modification of a (cultural) text for a voice/medium other than that for which it was already written.

3. Modern Nation & Collective National Identities - Collective national identities and their associated systems of allegorical symbols embody and communicate the core concepts of nations, making them visible, distinct and emotionally evocative for all strata of the community (Smith in King 2011: 1). Additionally, collective national identities aid in the socialisation of members as ‘nationals’ and ‘citizens’, by way of encouraging social bonds between individuals and classes based on their common heritage and cultural kinship, thus bolstering nation-building processes (Smith in King 2011: 2).

4. Nation Branding - Anholt first coined the term nation branding in 1996. The term refers to an approach that integrates, guides and focuses place management. It involves the creation of a recognisable place identity, or nation brand, and the subsequent use of that identity to further other desirable processes, whether to improve financial investment, change user behaviours or generate political capital and goodwill (GfK Roper Public Affairs & Media in King 2011: 2).

Nation brands are intangible entities whose value is determined by external and internal perceptions and opinions of the brand (Kavaratzis in King 2001:11). Consequently, nation branding helps to manage the reputation of a nation and its collective national identity by implementing an intentionally constructed national brand as a harmonised and strategically informed approach to promoting the nation (Anholt in King 2011:11).

5. Communiqués (Visual and Spatial) - The term communiqué is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2009) as “an official announcement or report; esp. one delivered at the conclusion of a meeting, conference, etc. (now usually one concerned with diplomacy or international relations”) . For the purposes of this study, the connotation of the term communiqué is expanded to include all forms of visual and sensory communication constructed for the use in nation branding and diplomacy or international relations. (King 2011: 4)
6. Intercinges & Cultural Hybridities (Hybrid Cultures) - Intercinges are the small intervening spaces or locations of culture created when the boundaries of minority cultures approach, touch or begin to overlap. In these liminal spaces hybrid forms of culture are produced without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. “This process estranges any immediate access to an originary identity or of a ‘received’ tradition, (Bhabha 1994: 3), producing a distinctive ‘newness’.

7. Zeitgeist - If an active self-awareness is considered in the collective or social sense, then the knowledge and purposive activity of individuals may contribute to a collective activity (by societies, nations, cultures and even the entire human race), (Beiser 1993: 4288). In such an instance the “collective activity becomes conscious of itself insofar as individuals articulate and communicate it so that it becomes the shared consciousness of a culture and a tradition [Zeitgeist], (Beiser 1993:428).” The result is an ever deepening understanding of people’s cultural identity and common human nature.

8. Lebenswelt (translated literally as Life-world) - the ongoing continuity of ‘lived’ experience or the world of direct, lived experience (OED 2016).

9. Double Hermeneutic - is vital when undertaking any form of visual research. The concept stems from the uniquely visual phenomena, whereby visual data is already perceived and interpreted by others during the encoding stage. Thus what is perceived by the viewer has already been partially restricted, bounded and mediated, according to Spencer (2010:240).

10. Hermeneutical analysis - The hermeneutic approach is characterised by the following key principals according to Kinsella (2006:online), it “(a) seeks understanding rather than explanation; (b) acknowledges the situated location of interpretation; (c) recognizes the role of language and historicity in interpretation; (d) views inquiry as conversation; and (e) is comfortable with ambiguity”.

11. Social semiotics - is the study of images in “their social context”, and as with the hermeneutical approach acknowledges the situated location of interpretation, according van Leeuwen & Jewitt (2001:3).

12. A lexical semantic analysis - is the study of the meaning of words, the relationship between different words and how they are structured to form a sentence.

13. I-Jusi - is an experimental magazine first published in the early years following South Africa’s first democratic elections circa 1994. I-JUSE (Issue #1) = I-JUSI (I-JUSI - phonetically more accurate); Afro-Anglo word. No Zulu equivalent for the English word juice.


14. Afrocentric - Centred or focusing on Africa or on cultures of African origin (OED 2016)

15. Building with Art - This approach within the South African context typically begins with the transformation of vernacular ‘handiwork’ into either a form of ‘craft’ or ‘art’.

16. Handiwork - the Reproduction of existing forms (Traditional forms, although fixed in general principals are highly adaptable to specific needs).

17. Craft - as skilled labour in materials not necessarily mere handiwork. Artifacts that can be said to be cultivation of the mind and are of a high quality, rare and exhibit great artistic beauty.

18. Fine Art - Original works of art that express an Artistic Genius.

19. A pavilion’s ‘Moment’ - ‘This moment’ is meant to capture the essence of that country’s culture, society and people, while expressing a particular message they want to project to the world.

20. The Universal Concern for all Humanity - is what needs to be addressed through the theme of each World Expo. This theme needs to be a modren theme corresponding to expectations of contemporary society” (Nakamura 2006:203).

21. Expo Pavilion - can be defined as a single thematic display or cellular space for experiencing the best of what a country has to offer. Each pavilion needs to function both as an individual autonomous world and simultaneously as a piece linked to a larger thematic zone, which is in turn nested within a greater expo park (adaptation of Scelta’s 2014:5).

22. Self-built pavilions - Pavilions designed and built by an official participant on the plot of land allocated by the exposition organisers.

23. Rented Pavilions - module of pavilion built by the exposition organisers and rented to an official participant for customisation.
2011 Study
Ke Nako _ It’s Time
The Rise of the Modern Economy
- Rainbow Nation = 6 colours of the flag = Brand wash
- Propaganda Message = Trade, Tourism & Investment
  ↓
  ↓
  ↓
  [Mining, Lions & Madiba]

1. Western Approach
Homogeneous Society & Common shared Culture

1a. Criticality

1b. Modern vs. Traditional
- Rainbow Nation Myth = Hollow
- CNI + Mass Public Culture = Disjointed narratives told from varying perspectives
- Homogeneous Mass of Everywhere = Invisible in the eyes of the world
- Perpetuation of Colonial myths = Relegating the traditional and indigenous to a timeless existence in the past or as stereotypical cultural packaging

2. Alternative Approach

3. i-jusi
Cultural Hybridities

4. Modern

4a. Utilitarian Needs
- Natural Materials (Raw/Processed) or Found / Recycled Materials
- Tectonic Expressions
- Design for Disassembly
- Arts & Crafts Movement Principals

4b. Symbolic Meaning
- Building with Art
- Tectonic & Stereotomic Expressions
- Originality / Artistic Genius - Avoid Bricolage

5. Site & Context

6. Building with Art

7. Technical Opportunity
- Expo Theme

7.1. Indicators

7a. Informant +
Evaluation Criteria for Int. Design Concept

1. Reaction to:
1a. Ke Nako _ It’s Time
1b. Hollow + Politically Correct Narrative of CNI

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"The ethnic distinctiveness that prevents the nation from becoming invisible to the eyes of the world. (including shared ancestry myths, common cultural memories, unique cultural markers and a sense of difference, if not election) Smith (1991:70)"

Perceptions of South Africa

Western Approach

The external / internal audience

Inter - Connected

Symbiotic

Parasitic

Modern VS. Traditional

A multicultural identity complex rather than a whole still conveying strong, clear, belief about what a place really is and what it stands for.