

Research article

## CONTESTED MEMORIES AND REINVENTION OF SPACES: CASE STUDIES ILLUSTRATING STRATEGIES IN THE PRESERVATION OF PUBLIC MONUMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

ISABELLE MCGINN <sup>a</sup> AND GERARD DE KAMPER <sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Tangible Heritage Conservation, School of the Arts, Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria,  
E-mail: isabelle.mcginn@up.ac.za

<sup>b</sup>Department of Historical & Heritage Studies, Faculty of Humanities & University of Pretoria Museums,  
University of Pretoria, E-mail: gerard.dekamper@up.ac.za

(Received July 2019: Accepted December 2019)

---

### ABSTRACT

*Throughout history, society has celebrated and elevated events and people with visible monuments, structures, or sculptures in prominent public positions for symbolic, historical, powerful veneration, admiration and education. Being in the open domain, these monuments have withstood the worst of changes in socio-economic conditions, historical reinterpretation, changes in state leadership and rapid urban growth. Their location too, has often placed these monuments at risk of physical damage and ongoing destruction. The debate on the continued presence of these monuments in a globalised world, post-colonial and post-democratic South Africa has greatly intensified in the past decade and challenges remain concerning the continued preservation of these monuments. Do they still have a place in this current contested political and social space, and should they even be preserved? Should we disown these works and how do we decolonize them? In 2015, the South African government initiated a task team for the transformation of the heritage landscape in an attempt to set guidelines for 'contested' and 'offensive' monuments, yet the report has yet to be released. This article does not offer new empirical evidence nor definitive answers to such challenging questions; instead, it offers fresh preservation perspectives by outlining case studies and illustrating strategies in dealing with and contributing to the debate on public monuments as contested memories and the reinvention of those public spaces.*

**Key words:** Preservation; monuments; memorials; *in-situ* sculpture; decolonisation.

---

### INTRODUCTION

The preservation of monuments and memorials is challenging not only because of the placement of monuments *in-situ* where they are exposed to natural elements in the public domain, but also because of their very nature and history and associations. Generally, a monument is defined as an official structure, statue or sculpture which was explicitly created to commemorate a person or event, or which has become relevant to a particular social group or authority. According to (Eröss 2017:19), "... by placing a physical reminder in the public space they intend to enhance the recollection and integration of memories related to the subject of the commemoration and its narrative ..." as part of their remembrance of historic times or cultural heritage.

Monuments and memorials are ubiquitous in the public landscape and encompass a broad range of material culture including commemorative statues, historical markers, plaques, edifices and even street names that have been used in the production of collective memory (Alderman & Dwyer 2009:51). Some memorials and monuments, some more than others have become emblematic and are embraced by both the

public and the state, whilst others have failed to be accepted as landmarks of the nation, and have even been aggressively rejected. Petersen (2018:1) clarifies this reasoning to the reaction that they are "... never about the persona alone, but about the totality of values he/she represents."

It is widely recognised that 'remembering' and 'forgetting' are both an individual process as well as being a societal process. In the individual, brain chemistry and individual tendencies dictate what is both remembered and forgotten. However, in a larger societal group what becomes worthy of commemoration is mediated within that community. Alderman and Dwyer (2009:51) explains that, "... many of our recollections of the past are collective memories that are constructed and transmitted to us through group interactions and a variety of cultural practices." Commemoration and memory is additionally fluid and changes over times. Not all past events are commemorative and or deemed significant, but instead are carefully selected, as the result of an enforcement of social control, power play, intimidation, negotiation and contestation. As such, the chosen narratives tend to bias the worldviews and values of those in power, excluding or masking the histories of minority or subaltern groups (Alderman & Dwyer 2009:51).

It is within this context, that this paper discusses public monuments from preservation perspectives as statues, their locality remains heavily contested sites within a transformative heritage landscape as well as in some cases, the relocation of monuments to reinvented spaces.

### MEANING AND MEMORALISING MONUMENTS

Marschall (2017) recounts that monuments have a duality of purpose, to be visible and respected. Musil (1936) contends that monuments at the same time can be repulsive and stirring intense negative and oftentimes aggressive reactions, as is evidenced in the anti-confederate movements in the United States. The U.S is realising that it suffers from deferred maintenance of its own history, as the grouping 'confederate monuments' is given to monuments commemorating persons and historical events from the Confederate States who fought to uphold the rights of citizens to own and keep slaves, by largely honouring white supremacists after the Post-Civil War period (Shapiro 2017). As Taussig (1999) points out, the continued presence of these monuments have completely divided communities in the U.S. between those that view these monuments as sites of trauma, glorifying white supremacy, oppression and promoting slavery; and those that experience them as visible markers of their forefathers and their place in shaping Southern American Civil History.

Marschall (2017:204) explains further that repressed memories are an integral part of monuments and that public commemoration is based on 'selective remembering and strategic forgetting'. Marschall argues that "... the more monumental, imposing, conceited the statue, the more alluring, inviting, beckoning it presumably becomes as a target for expressions of discontent in times of contestation and socio-political change" (Marschall 2017:204). This is certainly not a phenomenon unique to South Africa. This practice has been observed in western domains as early as 1566, with the 'Great Iconoclasm' in Europe, the early days of the French Revolution and the purge of symbols of the Ancient Regime led by Robespierre in the 1790s.

Similar western parallels can be drawn further from:

*... post-Nazi Germany, post-Soviet Russia, post-communist Eastern Europe, post-Portuguese Colonialism in Mozambique, and numerous other postcolonial societies in Africa and Asia where monuments of the previous era were contested and often eradicated from the public sphere* (Marschall 2017:207).

Contestation of monuments and memorials is an international phenomenon and is not unique to South Africa nor the wider African continent. The focus of this paper is not intended to review these global debates as this has been widely debated in other literature, the focus of this argument centres on the remedial preservation strategies that were employed and could be adopted and used within a local context. South

Africa is generally seen as an anomaly as the regime shift from Apartheid has been subdued with no radical change of the symbolic landscape. The replacement or removal of commemorative monuments and statuary has been imperceptible, with many statues remaining. Apartheid was a system of institutionalised racial segregation in South Africa lasting from 1948 until the early 1990s.

It has been argued by Marschall (2017:207) that this anomaly could be the result of the negotiated transition from Apartheid, as opposed to a radical and sudden regime change. After Apartheid, the South African government chose to embrace the country's difficult past and keep the Colonial Nationalist and Apartheid era monuments to serve as a reference point, a record, which they could offset with the addition of newer statuary to create sites that are more inclusive.

*By celebrating carefully selected memories, monuments (as well as museums and heritage sites) offer an opportunity to rewrite history, to control the representation of controversial events and persons, and to create a new national identity* (Marschall 2004:86).

The monuments and memorials can also be seen as transitional objects connecting the past with the present in a very tangible way. As Marschall describes (2004:82), these monuments form a focal point for rituals of commemoration and remembering, facilitating mourning, and overcoming loss, particularly in the case where the remains of loved ones were never returned or even found. Marschall goes on to say that by "... constituting a public, visible, lasting recognition they affirm the group identity that is based on such trauma, help to overcome loss, and pave the way for reconciliation (Marschall 2004:82).

Like all cultural landscapes, memorials and monuments have a normative power, at once reflecting and reproducing social ideas about the past. However, at the same time, monuments assist in organising and homogenising public memory with a single authorised narrative (Morley & Robins 1995:11), representing what the public is meant to value, rather than what they necessarily value (Marschall 2004:86). In a sense then monuments contribute to the erosion of memory as certain elements of the past become visible, whilst other details tend to remain obscured, monuments then become tools in the hands of the ruling power as evidence of their presence (Eröss & Tátraí 2016).

In South Africa, this need to rewrite a national narrative has translated in a rush to memorialise particularly struggle heroes (Grunnebaum 2011:54,96). What is interesting is that the new memorials often engage the old in new symbolic dialogues (Shepherd 2008:122), further asserting that the symbolic landscape should reflect both the good and bad points of history so the nation could remember, learn from and not repeat mistakes of the past (Barkan 2000; Marschall 2010). This 'warts and blemishes' philosophy as described by

Tomaselli and Mpofo (1997:57) however reveals itself to be one of intermittent 'pustules and boils' (Barnabas 2016:113) as scanning of South African newspaper articles from the past two decades reveals several instances of vandalism and defacement of both old and new statues (Anon 1997; Pather 2015; Sapa 1997).

Marschall (2019:1088) argues that "... heritage and the memory of the past are entangled with socio-political and economic realities in the present ..." and public monuments, museums and other commemorative markers will continue to be vandalised if the root issues of poverty, inequality, and poor service delivery. The debate on the continued presence of 'offensive' monuments from previous eras has intensified in the last couple of years, notably with the 2015 #Rhodesmustfall movement at the University of Cape Town (Alfred 2015; Anon 2015; Chifamba 2015; Mbangeni 2015; Smith 2015). This movement engendered a sleuth of attacks on other monuments across South Africa and elicited a response from National government in the form of the constitution of a task team on transformation of the heritage landscape (Mthethwa 2015).

The 2015 DAC report on the task team on transformation of the heritage landscape suggested thirteen action points to be nationally carried out. This included: that the resolution of these issues should be done through dialogue; the vandalism and defacing of statues should be condemned; to rather opt for selective rather than blanket removals; to identify 'offensive' persona that should not be displayed in public spaces; that removals should be carried out within the perimeters of the law and counter narratives should be introduced and counter memorials established. It further included, recontextualising and disinvesting colonial and Apartheid memorials; re-interpretation and re-dedication; informed selection of new memorials and statues based on enduring values and shifts how memorialisation occurs to a more symbolic memorialisation. In addition, integrated dialogue between all stakeholders at a provincial level; to introduce easy and cost-effective measures for implementation of transformation of the heritage landscape and a call for a provincial audit of the heritage landscape to identify and remedy gaps in the narrative (Kubheka 2016:2).

Several propositions have been offered worldwide for dealing with 'offensive' monuments and there is a plethora of globally relevant literature on this subject. Beatty (2018) suggests six strategies in dealing with 'offensive monuments' including non-action; removal to a museum or storage, destruction; relocation; adding markers for contextualization; adding to the monument to change its meaning; and finally, adding additional markers or monuments to offer other sides of the narrative. Non action maintains the status quo, the problem is not resolved and the monument will continue to cause tension; motivating for the removal of the monument for the purpose of destruction is the polar opposite and is likewise

inappropriate as the heritage object is then completely lost. According to Heritage Western Cape's Guidelines for Public Monuments and Memorials (DAC 2015:7), "... in general it is better to reinterpret than to relocate and better to relocate than recycle or destroy". In 2015, Minister Nathi Mthethwa of the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) commented in *The Guardian*, "...to come up with a blanket ban is not helpful. Each statue has to be examined on its own merits because each history is not the same. We want to keep them in a museum, not destroy them, because our policy of reconciliation is that we should forgive each other, but never forget" (Mthethwa, 2015). Later in 2018, Minister Mthethwa addressed the occasion of the tabling of the Report on Transformation of the Heritage Landscape:

*For the majority of people of this country, the continued public presence of apartheid monuments and places with offensive names is like putting salt in a fresh wound... Monuments are no innocent pieces of architectural work. They embody a strong symbolic power.... Of course, the removal of statues is not the end-goal. It is part of an -ongoing project towards transformation of our society, to make it humane for black people. Relocating statues of the old order simply adds impetus to our collective endeavor to realise the dream of just another non-racial society (Mthethwa 2018).*

Practical solutions for the caretakers of these problematic heritage works will have to navigate between these two extremes of non-action and destruction as outlined by Beatty (2018) to prove acceptable within South Africa's legislative parameters. Beatty's (2018) remaining suggestions of relocation, reinterpretation, and recontextualisation, are directly echoed in the DAC task team's actions points. Marschall (2019:1091) simplifies this into two solutions. Namely a 'selective relocation and replacement approach', which sees a monument removed from its original placement with its potential replacement by a new monument in its place; and the 'juxtaposition model', which sees a certain remaking and "... re-contextualization of existing monuments through the addition of explanatory plaques and new statues set up in close proximity to metaphorically create a dialogue as a symbol of reconciliation." Reinterpretation as suggested in the transformation report (Department of Arts and Culture 2015:2) includes both rededication of the monument to change its meaning, as well as reinterpreting the monument beyond its original intent.

There is no single solution and it is suggested that each case is taken on its individual merit, hence the need for provincial audits, followed by robust dialogue for decision-making (Kubheka 2016:2). Although decisions on the appropriateness and desirability to retain these monuments are to be taken at a provincial level, it comes down to the caretakers of the monuments on a local level to deal with the practical aspects, and advise on a way forward. This article thus looks at solutions advanced in the available literature (Beatty 2018; DAC 2015;

Kubheka 2016; Marschall 2019), suggested guidelines and illustrates through practical local examples the acceptable solutions offered by Beatty (2018) and the task team's report (2015) for monuments.

The following local case studies presented below will briefly review the challenge of preserving contested monuments in three locations: namely the University of Cape Town's Rhodes statue (removal), the University of Pretoria's equine sculpture, including the M.T. Steyn statue at the University of the Free State (relocation). Other monuments in front of the City Hall in Pretoria such as the statues of Andries Pretorius, his son Marthinus Wessels Pretorius and Chief Tshwane (recontextualisation) are also discussed. The outcome of each case study can influence the preservation of the statue as a heritage object, or lead to its deterioration and eventually its ultimate demise.

### CASE STUDY FOR REMOVAL

#### Rhodes Memorial, University of Cape Town

Created by the Scottish-born sculptor Marion Walgate (1886-1975), (Ogilvie 1988:730) the one-and-a-half life-size bronze statue represents a seated Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902) gazing out over the landscape. Rhodes, a British businessman, mining magnate and once Prime Minister of the Cape Colony was even in his time a controversial figure, mostly due to his business practices and forceful promotion of the British Imperialist agenda. He was a firm believer that the Anglo-Saxons were the 'first' race of the world, that Africans were a 'subject' race to be dominated, and that the more of the world the British could colonise; the better it would be for the human race in its entirety (Stead 1902:58).

The seated portrait statue by Walgate was donated to the University of Cape Town (UCT) by the Rhodes National South African Memorial Committee to commemorate the benefactor of the land on which the university's primary campus had been built. The sculpture was originally unveiled in 1934, looking out towards a rose garden from across De Waal Drive, below the university rugby field. In 1962, the sculpture was moved from its original setting to the space it occupied above the rugby field, at the top of the Jameson steps before its removal in 2015. The UCT campus itself is a heritage site, however it was argued that because the statue was not originally part of the site it did not form part of this heritage (Schmahmann 2013:56-58). This moving of the sculpture to a loftier position commanding both the interior view of the University, as well as the outward view towards Cape Town's southern suburbs and the Cape Flats increased the challenge of retaining the colonial monument which was then even more visible on the campus but also within a symbolic landscape of dominance and power. The result was several government calls and media outrage for its removal and demonstrations over the past decade prior to #Rhodesmustfall in 2015 (Schmahmann 2013:62).

Rhodes was finally unseated on 9 April 2015, a month after it had been defaced and the start of the #Rhodesmustfall movement. After public consultation and consultation with the students, the University removed the sculpture and relocated it to a secure storage location. Any depictions of Rhodes statues both locally and globally were likewise targeted, the one at Mahikeng's station road was quietly removed (Sosiko 2014), whereas the one in the façade of the Oriel College on the Oxford University campus, remains in its place. At University of Cape Town, all that remains is an empty plinth and a dark shadow painted on the steps by an unknown person, as Marschall describes as only, "... a symbol and reminder of the metaphorical shadow of the Rhodes legacy, remains in place to the present day" (Marschall 2019:1093).

### CASE STUDIES FOR RELOCATIONS

#### Equine sculpture by Danie de Jager, University of Pretoria

The University of Pretoria has a large bronze equine (horse) sculpture by the South African artist Danie de Jager, (1936-2003), which is placed on a high circular plinth on the Hillcrest campus, next to a dam on the university sports grounds. The sculpture originally titled, *Freedom Symbol* consists of four horses in full gallop representing the newfound freedom of the South African Republic from Imperialist British rule (Ogilvie 1988:161). The horses, each depicting one of the then four provinces are symbols of joy, energy and confidence in a new future. The sculptural work was originally set on a fifteen-meter-high plinth in Pretoria's City Centre as part of a monumental display on Strijdom Square, which included an oversized head of J.G. Strijdom who was Prime Minister from November 1954 until August 1958. The Prime Minister's bust was unveiled in 1972, shielded under an arched dome and the political arrangement was obviously linked to Afrikaner nationalist agendas.

Unfortunately, the dome structure collapsed in 2001 together with the oversized head of J.G. Strijdom leaving only the horses behind. Although the horses were undamaged, it was decided to redesign the square and rename it after Lilian Ngoyi (1911-1980), a struggle heroine who led the historic march to the Union Buildings in 1956 to protest against Strijdom's intention to extend the pass laws to include women. Some deemed retaining the horses in the square inappropriate as a reminder of the oppression under J.G. Strijdom and options were sought as to a way forward. The University of Pretoria was one of two bidders who were keenly interested in recovering the horse sculpture for public display, as its acquisition would fill a gap in the University's growing sculpture collections, particularly where the South African artist Danie de Jager was not represented. The Department of Arts and Culture subsequently donated the horses to the University of Pretoria in 2007 where the large beautiful work was relocated in the following year. With the relocation, the artwork of a group of horses has been re-interpreted in an idyllic almost natural setting, displaying a masterful representation of 'untamed nature' and simply retitled *Equine Sculpture* (Schmahmann

2013:147). All references to its political past has been 'erased' and removed and today it represents merely a 'thing of beauty' for the thousands of students and their families who use it as a photographic backdrop at their annual graduation ceremonies. Students remain unaware of its historical and complex past, nor what it means, or where it previously stood in the city centre, as for the youth it now symbolizes joy, hope and freedom as they step out into their futures as recent graduates.

The De Jager sculpture of horses had it not been relocated, which was once a strong symbol of apartheid would likely have been removed similarly to the large Strijdom Head, which today lies in the open, 'tucked away' from public view on the grounds of the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria. The move and reinterpretation gave the De Jager horses a new lease on life, where it is viewed without the attached stigma nor has debate around its current location resurfaced. As the horse sculpture is in the open public, it is now maintained, cleaned and looked after in terms of preservation, whereas the head of J.G. Strijdom has retained the damage it sustained during its fall and there are no signs of active preservation.

In general, the storage of over-sized sculptural and monumental works is problematic simply because of the size requirements and sometimes due to difficult locations. The costs of dedicated storage usually being prohibitive, over-sized objects and works are often placed within existing infrastructure or out of reach, plinths and storage would likely be in a large warehouse. Long-term storage, away from public view is also not ideal as even here they would certainly be damaged by other activities within proximity, from staff movements, use of machinery, fork lifts and vehicles and makes active preservation more difficult. The relocation of the equine sculpture is a mere example, and its relocation positively welcomed as well as its reinterpretation.

#### **M.T. Steyn figure, University of the Free State**

Another example of relocation is the M.T. Steyn statue at the University of the Free State. M.T. Steyn (1857-1916) was the last president of the independent Republic of the Orange Free State from 1896 to 1902. M.T. Steyn fought for the rights and safety of Boer women and children, and so his depiction could be reinterpreted as a humanist in place of a politician. However, his Republic did not recognize equal rights for all of its citizens and he remains viewed as a problematic historical figure. The M.T. Steyn sculpture is a twice life-size bronze on a tall granite plinth that towered over its surroundings and faced the offices of the Executive Council of the University of the Free State. The presence of this historical sculpture seemed inappropriate and despite numerous calls for its removal as far back as 2003, it was only in January 2018 that real progress was made as calls for its removal heightened. A task team was appointed to address its location, a heritage impact assessment carried out as per legislative requirements to comply with the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999. After extensive consultation including a public participation process to decide on its possible retention in its current position, i.e.: non-

action; reinterpretation; relocation elsewhere less significant on campus or completed removal and relocation off campus (Petersen 2018). It remains planned for the M.T. Steyn sculpture to be relocated to the War Museum in Bloemfontein, a new location accepted and better suited than the current University of Free State setting which espouses new and transformed ideals.

Relocation often seems to be a preferred course of action. Another example is the sculpture titled, *The sower and the Mower* (1966) by the South African artist Hennie Potgieter (1916-1922) that was once at the Land Bank Building in Pretoria, as the use and function of the building has changed, the relocation of the sculpture to the Willem Prinsloo Agricultural Museum seemed appropriate at the time. Another example of relocation is the statue of General Hertzog by the South African sculptor, Coert Steynberg (1905-1982). Hertzog was the third Prime Minister of South Africa and he was stood in front of the Union Buildings in Pretoria, but was moved to accommodate a new work of a much more iconic figure of Nelson Mandela in December 2013. Hertzog was eventually moved to a less central placement, but still close to its original position and was replaced by a large-scale bronze sculpture of Nelson Mandela (1918-2013), the first President of a Democratic South Africa. This relocation did not attract much attention at the time. Relocation is by far the simplest and in most cases, the most cost effective solution to monuments, to such an extent that part of the task team's suggestions have been the idea of opening historical 'theme parks'.

*In the event where certain symbols are removed from public spaces, it is preferred that a common park of symbols and statues with a thematic narrative of the evolution of our history be created as an inclusive space to properly reflect South African history. This approach is preferred than the one where each cultural group comes and collect what they think belongs to their heritage thus preserving separate histories and narratives than a common narrative of our history that will be mindful of sensitivities and diversity of our complex and yet common history. Such theme parks should be established at national, provincial and local levels (DAC 2015:5).*

Although maintenance and care of these monuments grouped in a single location could be more efficient, there are as yet no such dedicated 'theme parks' for historical statuary and monuments in South Africa, and the whole concept carries its own issues pros and cons which could inform an entirely new research paper.

#### **CASE STUDY FOR RE-CONTEXTUALISATION**

##### **Pretoria City Hall precinct**

The history of the Pretoria City Hall precinct goes back to 1926 when a competition was launched to design the future City Hall of the burgeoning town of Pretoria. The winning design by Frank Gordon McIntosh (1864-1926) in a semi-Italian classical style was realised when construction began in 1931. Pretorius

Square lies in front of the building with a formal garden planted either side of a fountain, and three large sculptures adorn the square. The first sculpture, farthest from the City Hall and facing away from it, is of Marthinus Wessel Pretorius (1819-1901). The sculpture represents the 'founder' of Pretoria, who purchased two farms on which he founded the city in 1855.

The second statue of a man on horseback is that of Andries Pretorius (1798-1853), M.W. Pretorius's father, and prominent Voortrekker leader who was instrumental in the creation of the South African Republic (ZAR), and after whom Pretoria was historically named. Andries Pretorius was a general in the Battle of Blood River or Battle of Ncome, between the Voortrekkers and the Zulu on 16 December 1838, a key moment in Afrikaner nationalistic history. Both bronze works placed on tall plinths, unveiled in 1955, are by the South African sculptor Coert Steynberg (Ogilvie 1988:639-640).

The final sculpture placed directly in front of the City Hall is a new addition by South African artist Angus Taylor (1970- ) and was unveiled in 2006 as part of the Re Kgabisa Tshwane project erected as part of the reclamation of the name change from Pretoria to Tshwane in March 2005. The 6.2m bronze depicts the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Chief Tshwane after whom the greater municipality of Tshwane is controversially named (Sapa 2006). The addition of Chief Tshwane to the City Hall precinct was intended to change the interpretation of the first two figures from Afrikaner settlers and a greater nationalistic narrative to a local narrative of the establishment and growth of the city of Pretoria. In addition, the inclusion of the figure of Chief Tshwane fills a historical gap on the origins of the city and engages audiences in a more complete historical dialogue, detracting from the notions that Pretoria, the greater municipality originated with Afrikaner settlers, and that the land was devoid of a past and other peoples prior to their arrival. The solution of re-contextualization *in-situ* conserves both the artistic intent, as well as avoiding risks of dissociation and losing the sense of place and reading of the object in association with other heritage markers.

Another good example of inclusive reinterpretation includes the installation of four statues of past African leaders once imprisoned in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town. The leaders included King Cetshwayo or *Cetshwayo kaMpande* was the king of the Zulu Kingdom from 1873 to 1879 and its leader during the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879; King Langalibalele, king of the *amaHlubi*, a Nguni ethnic group in what is the modern-day province of KwaZulu-Natal; King Sekhukhune or *Matsebe Sekhukhune*, the son of King Sekwati, was king of the Pedi people in Sekhukhuneland, in the present day Limpopo; and Doman, a *Goring-haiqua* Khoikhoi resistance fighter. This addition to the Castle, once a powerful military symbol during both the Dutch and English Colonial rule as well as the Apartheid Regime, made the heritage site a more inclusive site and reflected the entire history. The Minister of Defence and Military Veterans, Nosivwe Mapisa-Nqakula who

unveiled the statues quotes that the, "... collective history and heritage...the good, the bad and the ugly is a step toward consolidating an inclusive sense of South Africanhood" (Morris 2016).

## DISCUSSION

Each of the above-mentioned case studies presents different solutions for promoting the preservation of contested monuments in South Africa. The first preserves the physical object by removing the 'offensive' sculpture from public display and placing it in storage or outside the public sphere. This is possibly the conservator's preferred method, as the object's condition can be monitored, the environment controlled and all preventive measures put in place to ensure the object has continued existence. However, the object loses a part of its historical significance, its sense of place and artistic intent is lost. The long-term future of the object is also a concern. On a practical level, the costs associated with dedicated storage can be prohibitive, particularly for oversized sculptures. It is unlikely that an offensive monument will be more palatable in a museum setting. Will this undesirable object be relegated to storage with little to no maintenance? Will it ever be returned to exhibit, and if not, will the old adage of 'out of sight, out of mind' hold true, and as the dust piles up, will it be destined for possible de-accessioning. As in the case of Rhodes it has already been suggested that it may be relocated elsewhere (Businessstech 2016), furthermore, the plinth has remained empty and this emptiness is pervasive in perpetuating the memory of the 'thing that was' and promotes a negativity in the space, a kind of empty victory. This is further highlighted by the addition of the painted shadow on the steps, as one commentator describes, "Cecil Rhodes statue is gone but it still casts a shadow" (Cribbit 2017).

The second solution consists of preserving the monument on display but stripping it of historical context. The sculpture is broadly reinterpreted as nothing more than a superficial, albeit masterfully executed rendition of group of galloping horses at the University of Pretoria, or as a humanist in the case of M.T. Steyn. More importantly, historical context and meaning have now become subjects for the learned elite, which goes against notions of integration and decolonialism. This stripped historical context creates the danger that the lessons to be learned from the monument disappear. The third case study of Pretoria's City Hall looks at preservation *in-situ*, retaining both the sense of place and historical context. The re-making of the City Hall monument by inclusion of an additional commemorative statue provides for a more meaningful re-contextualisation and introduction of counter-memory and narratives. Although instances of vandalism have been directed against the new statue (Nthite 2006), alongside calls for the removal of the old ones, this more inclusive solution should increase the chances of preserving the individual artefacts within their original site, thus preserving intangible aspects too.

The one aspect that has not been explored in the article has been the creation of counter-monuments or anti-monuments. Where monuments and memorials are commissioned and erected by an authority and formal sites of memory making, anti-monuments or counter monuments tend to be a public-driven endeavor, described as "... memorial spaces conceived to challenge the very premise of the monument" (Young 2000:96). Stevens, Frank and Fazakerley (2012:962) explain that an 'anti-monument' can carry a:

*... dialogic message in which case it critiques the purpose and design of a specific, existing monument, in an explicit, contrary and proximate way and its positioning in space within proximity to the pre-existing monument is very important to facilitate that dialogue.*

The counter-monuments can be sculptural, in which case they tend to be conceptual rather than realistic and portray anti-heroic figures. However, they are not limited to sculptural works. In fact, anti-monuments come in a variety of disguises including semi to permanent structures. One example, is a simple cairn of stones deposited by visitors on a heritage walk organised by the District Six Museum in Cape Town to the end of the former Hanover street. The stones symbolize and commemorate the forced removals in the area as well as the associated loss of loved ones. The cairn has been built up over time by community members as part of their annual remembrance walk and commemoration and is the form of a monument in the making (Dano 2018).

Additionally, commemoration can be in the form of 'living memorials', events that actively engage with a commemorated event to expose or even move beyond: they use space as a mediator and stress the importance of social practice in remembrance. One such example of a continued commemoration is the annual running of the Comrades Marathon, a living war memorial to the soldiers of World War 1 (Alexander 1985). Although this living memorial does not face the complexities of preserving a tangible object at risk, it does serve to reinforce the notions that when heritage is integrated into the social fabric, it has a better chance of survival.

## CONCLUSION

Deciding which of the preservation strategies is the most appropriate or best suited for the country, communities and individuals is not straightforward. Each monument has to be evaluated, perhaps even re-evaluated on an individual basis, as the complexities of a particular case is dependent on the community in which it is located, which in turn affects the complexity and layers of meaning of the monuments themselves. There are no easy answers or solutions for what to do with historical monuments and memorials that find themselves on the wrong side of history in a turbulent and rapidly fickle political climate. However, monuments as transitional objects and sites assist in forming identities at the

local and national level; their presence prevents a collective amnesia and supports individual and community healing from injustices, loss or trauma experienced in the past. In a divided society attempting to come to grips with its traumatic past, the crisis is that we forget what injustices were carried out and that these be repeated in another format. Thus, more than ever we need to keep a space for existing, as well as new monuments and memorials and ensure their continued preservation. Simply removing those that are no longer palatable strips away that reference point. Meaningful engagement between communities, heritage professionals and government representatives in the decision-making process, as outlined in the transformation report (Kubheka 2016) is vital to return a sense of power to those communities who feel particular offense at the presence of certain monuments.

As Barsalou and Baxter (2007:2) state, "... memorial processes ... must be initiated and controlled by local actors if they are to become truly meaningful to recovering societies." Although, it may not always be possible, the reinterpretation of sites, monuments and memorials to dethrone authoritative colonial narratives all the while including alternative ones, will more accurately reflect the ancient, complex and layered history of South Africa. Reinterpretation will also determine the eventual fate of the monument, how it will be perceived and if it will possibly be accepted in the long-term, incorporated into the community landscape; or alternatively possibly neglected or even defaced by the public. However, as Marschall (2019:1098) rightly points out, the influence of socio-economic factors in the monuments debate has been poorly acknowledged and until the basic needs of communities in terms of employment, service delivery, dignity etc... have been addressed many will continue to see "... monuments as resources to be pilfered or strategically used as leverage in negotiating material benefits."

## REFERENCES

- Alderman, D.H. & Dwyer, O.J. 2009. Memorials and Monuments. *International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography*, 7: 51-58.
- Alexander, M. 1985. *The Comrades Story*. Craighall: Delta Books.
- Alfred, L. 2015. An epidemic of Heritage Vandalism. *Mail & Guardian*. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-05-14-an-epidemic-of-heritage-vandalism> (accessed on: 19 July 2019).
- Anon. 1997. AWB deface Biko statue. *Weekend Post*. 13 September.
- Anon. 2015. Curating the Absence. Available at: <https://curatingtheabsence.wordpress.com/2018/04/16/z/> (accessed on: 15 July 2019)

- Barkan, E. 2000. *The guilt of nations and negotiating historical injustices*. New York: Norton Press.
- Barnabas, S. 2016. Engagement with colonial and apartheid narratives in contemporary South Africa: a monumental debate. *Journal of Literary Studies*, 32(3): 109-128.
- Barsalou, J. & Baxter, V. 2007. *The urge to remember, the role of memorials in social reconstruction and transitional justice*. Stabilization and Reconstruction Series V. Washington: US Institute of Peace.
- Beatty, B. 2018. Six strategies for dealing with controversial monuments and memorials. Available at: <https://hyperallergic.com/445981/six-strategies-for-dealing-with-controversial-monuments-and-memorials/> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Businesstech. 2016. This is what's in store for the Rhodes statue at UCT. Available at: <https://businesstech.co.za/news/general/129448/this-is-whats-in-store-for-the-rhodes-statue-from-uct/> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Chifamba, S. 2015. The statue war: a racial storm is brewing in South Africa. *The Patriot*, 7 May.
- Cribbit. 2017. SJ Visit: University of Cape Town. Available at: <http://www.cribbit.net/sj20172.php> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- DAC see Department of Arts and Culture 2015.
- Dano, Z. 2018. District Six cairn custom is set to resume with walk. *IOL News*. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/district-six-cairn-custom-is-set-to-resume-with-walk-13108170> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Department of Arts and Culture. 2015. South African National Dialogue on the Transformation of the Heritage Sector with focus on Statues, Symbols, Place Names that define our Public Spaces. Department of Arts and Culture. Available at: [https://www.westerncape.gov.za/assets/departments/cultural-affairs-sport/resolutions\\_20\\_april\\_2015\\_national\\_department\\_of\\_arts\\_and\\_culture.pdf](https://www.westerncape.gov.za/assets/departments/cultural-affairs-sport/resolutions_20_april_2015_national_department_of_arts_and_culture.pdf) (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Eröss, Á. 2017. Living memorial and frozen monuments: the role of social practice in memorial sites. *Urban Development Issues*, 55: 19-32.
- Eröss, A. & Tátrai, P. 2016. When reality meets power/rhetoric. Power, mapping and practice in contested spaces: the case of Cyprus and Karabakh. *Documenti Geografici*, 2016(1): 1-30
- Grunnebaum, H.P. 2011. *Memorializing the past*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.
- Kubheka, T. 2016. Report of the Task Team on Transformation of Heritage Landscape. South African submission on Activities relating to the Working Group on Geographical Names as Cultural Heritage. Presented at the 29<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, Bangkok, 25-26 April 2016. [O] Available at: [https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/29th-gegn-docs/WP/WP86\\_16\\_Task%20Team%20on%20Transformation%20of%20Heritage%20Landscape.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/29th-gegn-docs/WP/WP86_16_Task%20Team%20on%20Transformation%20of%20Heritage%20Landscape.pdf) (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Marschall, S. 2004. Gestures of compensation: monuments and memorials in post-apartheid South Africa. *Transformation Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, 55(1): 78-95.
- Marschall, S. 2010. *Landscape of memory: commemorative monuments, memorials and public statuary in post-apartheid South Africa*. Leiden: Brill.
- Marschall, S. 2017. Targeting statues: monument "Vandalism" as an expression of sociopolitical protest in South Africa. *African Studies Review*, 60(3): 213-219.
- Marschall, S. 2019. The long shadow of apartheid: a critical assessment of heritage transformation in South Africa 25 years on. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 25(10): 1088-1102.
- Mbangeni, L. 2015. Statue of Gandhi defaced. *IOL news*. Available at: <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/Gauteng/statue-of-ghandi-defaced-1.1844041#VFaw0dKqqko> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Morley, D. & Robins, K. 1995. *Spaces of Identity*. Routledge, London.
- Morris, M. 2016. #Castle350 – Statues of kings, resistance leader unveiled. *IOL News*. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/castle350-statues-of-kings-resistance-leader-unveiled-7137724> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Mthethwa, N. 2015. Vandalism of apartheid-era statues sparks fevered debate in South Africa. *The Guardian*. Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/10/vandalismof-apartheid-era-statues-sparks-fevered-debate-in-south-africa> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Mthethwa. 2018. Report on transformation of Heritage landscape, 23 February 2018. Available at: <https://www.gov.za/speeches/minister-nathi-mthethwa-report-transformation-heritage-landscape-23-feb-2018-0000> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).

- Musil, R. 1936. Denkmale. In *Nachlaß zu Lebzeiten*, Chapter 3. <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/buch/nachlass-zu-lebzeiten-6941/3> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Nthite, S. 2006. Tshwane's statue target of racist vandalism. *Independent Online*. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/tshwanes-statue-target-of-racist-vandalism-285525#.VSvHPdyUeyo> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Ogilvie, G. 1988. *The dictionary of South African Painters and Sculptors*. Johannesburg: Everard Read.
- Pather, R. 2015. Down with statues down: five monumental vandalisms. Available at: <http://www.thedailyvox.co.za/down-with-statues-down-five-monumental-vandalisms/> 09 September 2015 (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Petersen, F. 2018. Opinion article. On statues and statutes: MT Steyn statue creates a vital precedent. University of Free State (UFS News archive). Available at: <https://www.ufs.ac.za/templates/news-archive/campus-news/2018/november/on-statues-and-statutes-mt-steyn-statue-creates-a-vital-precedent> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Sapa. 1997. Biko statue defaced – Again. *Eastern Province Herald*, 30 September.
- Sapa. 2006. Chief Tshwane statue finally unveiled. *IOL News*. Available at: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/chief-tshwane-statue-finally-unveiled-284489> (accessed on: 15 June 2019).
- Schmahmann, B. 2013. *Picturing change, curating visual culture at post-apartheid universities*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Shapiro, G. 2017. The meaning of our confederate 'monuments'. *New York Times*, 15 May.
- Shepherd, N. 2008. Heritage (p.122). In N. Shepherd & S. Robbins (Eds.). *New South African Keywords*. Johannesburg: Jacana.
- Smith, D. 2015. Vandalism of apartheid-era statues sparks fevered debate in South Africa. *The Guardian*, 10 April: 10.
- Sosiko, K. 2014. The peculiar search for Cecil 'Gone' Rhodes. *Mail & Guardian online*. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/article/2014-06-26-the-peculiar-search-for-the-statue-of-cecil-gone-rhodes> (accessed on: 15 July 2019).
- Stead, W.T. (Ed.). 1902. *The last will and testament of Cecil John Rhodes, with elucidatory notes*. London: London Review of Reviews Office.
- Stevens, Q., Frank, K.A. & Fazakerley, R. 2012. Counter-monuments: the anti-monumental and the dialogic. *The Journal of Architecture*, 17(6): 951-972.
- Taussig, M. 1999. *Defacement, public secrecy and the labor of the negative*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Tomaselli, K.G. & Mporu, A. 1997. The rearticulation of meaning of national monuments: beyond Apartheid. *Culture and Policy*, 8(3): 57-76.
- Young, J.E. 2000. *At Memory's edge*. Yale University Press, New Haven.