



South African Nation Building

The self-expression of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (1890s) and the democratic Republic of South Africa (1990s) in the architecture of its governmental buildings.

Research Report

G. J. Jansen | 4006097 | 18-06-2017

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Abstract

The leprosy colony Westfort (1897-1898) was built by the *Department Publieke Werken* (DPW) of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR, 1854-1902) during its heydays. With the Dutch born architect Sytze Wopkes Wierda as head of department, the DPW was consciously trying to create a national style that corresponded to the cultural and political beliefs of the young nation. This is expressed most clearly in the *Ou Raadzaal* and the *Paleis van Justitie*.

At the moment South Africa is a democracy. After its first general elections in 1994 the country underwent a radical political change by abolishing apartheid. After this change all cultures were equal. This led to new architectural approaches. Examples are the *Northern Cape Legislature Complex* and the *Constitutional Court*.

Where the ZAR had a dominant homogeneous culture, contemporary South Africa has a multiplicity of cultures that are all equally recognised. Origin of influences and style and the relation to public play key roles in both eras.

keywords: South Africa, Westfort, Wesfort, nation building, ZAR, democracy, representation, cultural and political ideologies

Introduction

In the city centre of Pretoria some buildings can be found that are clearly influenced by the (Dutch) Neo-Renaissance architecture. They can be recognised by the use of red bricks, *speklagen* (streaky bacon), bull eyed windows, pinnacles and the modest and strict use of ornamentation and art. Examples are the ZAR Government Printing Works (1895- 1896), the *Grootte Kerk* (1905) at Bosman Street, the impressive *Raadzaal* (1888-1892) and the *Paleis van Justitie* (1897-1904). The location of my graduation project, the former leprosy colony Westfort (1897-1898) shows this influence

as well. All these aforementioned buildings were built during the heydays of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR, 1854-1902), a nation that was situated in the north of contemporary South Africa, also known as the Transvaal.

Throughout history, different groups have been in charge of the area that covered the Transvaal. Amongst others several native tribes, the Voortrekkers, the British, the white minority during the apartheid era and currently it is part of the democratic Republic of South Africa. All these groups had and have different cultural and political thoughts and values. It made me wonder how these groups expressed their values and ideas in their architecture. What were they influenced by and why?

The aim of this report is to research what is specific about the architecture of the ZAR and South Africa since 1994. The aim is to give a better understanding of Westfort in relation to the cultural and political context of the time in which Westfort was built and how it is today. The report especially focuses on public architecture since Westfort was built as part of the public architecture of the ZAR and I plan to create a new public function on the site.

The values and ideas of a nation are most prominently expressed in the architecture of governmental buildings. These are the flagships of a nation. Therefore the research focuses on governmental buildings. This resulted in the following research question:

How are the cultural and political ideologies expressed in the architecture of governmental buildings during the ZAR and South Africa after 1994?

The method used to answer this question is a literature study combined with case studies. Firstly, the self-expression of nations in governmental buildings in general is described briefly to place the research in a broader perspective and to get a better understanding of the subject one should focus on. Secondly, the political and cultural situation of both periods will be described briefly. Thirdly, two buildings are researched of each period. Of the ZAR, the *Raadzaal* and the *Paleis van*

Justitie in Pretoria. The *Raadzaal* housed the government of the ZAR and formed its most important building.

The *Paleis van Justitie* is the symbol of ZAR law and is an interesting case as style became a hot-tempered point of issue.

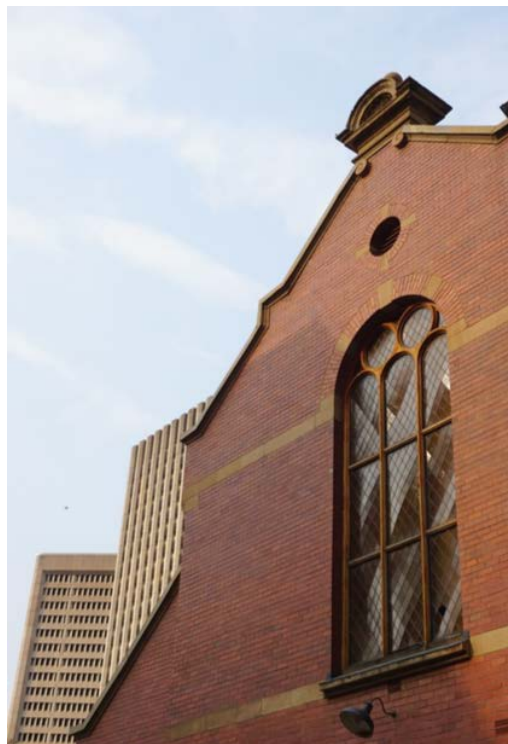
In the period after 1994 a wide variety of governmental buildings has been built. The *Northern Cape Provincial Legislature* (2004) is a complex that consists of several different buildings that all have their own specific form, including the striking cone shaped tower that is seen in more post-apartheid projects. I wondered where the inspiration for these shapes comes from and why they suit the new South Africa.

The most prominent building of this period is the *Constitutional Court* (2004) in Johannesburg. This building, can be seen as the symbol of the new South Africa.

The buildings will be researched along the following topics; brief, site, style and influence, composition, material and construction, art and ornament and last the relation to public. In the case of the Northern Cape Legislature and the Constitutional Court the design entries will also be researched since these played an important role in the design process. In every topic the political and cultural considerations are taken into account as well as the underlying conceptual aspects. Lastly, the connection with Westfort will be made.



0.1.1 Governmental Printing Works (1895-1896)



0.1.2 Facade of the Groote Kerk (1905)

1.1

The self-expression of a nation in the architecture of its governmental buildings

Both public and private buildings contribute to the identity of a nation. Through architecture we can see who and what matters in a society. It shows political ideals such as nationalism, democracy and socialism, but also cultural ideologies. In addition, there are many more influences that leave their mark on the architecture of a country, such as the climate, geology, available building materials, etc.

This research however, focuses on the political and cultural influences. And particularly to public buildings. According to Norberg-Schulz, public buildings embody a set of beliefs or values that make the common world visible. (Norberg-Schulz, 1985, p. 13) Governmental buildings particularly have to represent the entire nation, or at least its dominant part. They show how the dominant part relates itself to the people.

That this can be very sensitive became clear at the end of the 19th century in England and later in many Western countries and also the ZAR. Which style is appropriate? What should the architecture refer to? And maybe more importantly, what not to? These were the questions that arose in the time. It led to a public debate that became known as the 'Battle of the styles'. This Battle was not only a matter of taste, it had a strong political, cultural and religious foundation.

An example in the Netherlands was the controversy around the *Rijksmuseum* (1885). The architect Pierre Cuypers faced the difficult task of designing the national museum in a time of the upcoming *verzuijing* (pillarisation). Although Cuypers was an outspoken Catholic, he searched for an architectural expression that would not take sides the strict pillarising country. He searched the solution in the so-called *Oud-Hollandsche Stijl* (Old Dutch Style, Neo-Renaissance). A style based on the mutual history of the Golden Age of the Dutch Republic in the 17th century. Despite Cuypers' attempt to build in the *Oud-Hollandsche Stijl* (of which the stylistic characteristics were not clear) the *Rijksmuseum* became the topic of a hot-tempered debate about style. Cuypers eclectic design was seen as too

Catholic. Neo-Gothic elements were too dominant according to opponents who were offended. Even King Willem III refused to lay the foundation stone, nor was he present at the opening because of its too catholic appearance. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, pp. 33-34) The example of the *Rijksmuseum* shows what the style and expression of a building can evoke and how sensitive the subject is.

By looking closely at the most politically charged buildings it becomes possible to diagnose more diverse social and cultural phenomena according to Vale. However, the relation between the social and spatial is never a direct one because it may be limited by the value of abstraction in architectural design. One has to be conscious that political buildings might not exactly express the nature of a nation. Hereby it is important to see where and how a governmental building is built. Do not only look to the relation between the direct context, but also to the city or even to the country. In the case of an extremely poor country, a lavish and decadent governmental building does not correspond to its people, but it clearly shows how the government relates itself to them. (Vale, 2008, p. ix)



1.1.1 The *Rijksmuseum* (1885) in Amsterdam. According to critics a 'catholic cathedral'. King Willem III would have said in 1885: '*Ik zet geen voet in dat klooster*' (I will never enter that monastery).

2.1

The Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, cultural and political context

Eendragt maakt magt
(Unity empowers)

Unity through Unity

The origin of the ZAR lays in the 1830s till 1850s when the Voortrekkers, also called Boers, migrated from the, by the British annexed Cape Colony, to the interior of South Africa. The Voortrekkers were descendants of the Dutch East India Company's first settlers of the Cape with a mainly Dutch, but also French and German background. These descendants formed a community at the Cape. They were called the Afrikaners. Their language was called Afrikaans (a daughter language of Dutch mixed with German, French, Malay, Portuguese and Bantu languages), were strictly Protestant and lived free and independent lives on their farms. The change of government caused insecurities for the Afrikaner community and led to a vast migration. Main reasons were the threat of their Protestant religion, the Afrikaner language, new English tax laws and the abolishment of slavery. The Afrikaners who migrated (called the Boers) formed their own 'Boer Republics, of which the largest was the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR). This state, also called the Transvaal, acquired its independency in 1852. (Minnaar, 2000, p. 13)

In the beginning the ZAR was an inward turned and farming oriented state. The Boers felt no need to join international politics and economics. There was also no interest for the upcoming industrialisation and modernisation. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 69) The Protestant religion and independency played a main role in the culture of the Boer society. This was reflected in the modest houses they built out of local materials. These houses had a single storey, mud walls, a thatched roof and a *stoep* in front. (See image 2.1.1 and 2.1.2) The Boers lived their independent lives on remote farms. The community only came together four times a year for the *nachtmaal* (Holy Communion). (Fisher R. L., 1998, pp. 56, 57)

This changed after the First Boer War (1880-1881). Under the British annexation (1877-1881) Paul Kruger (who became President of the ZAR from



2.1.1 Typical modest and simple architecture of buildings in Pretoria around 1890. The photo is taken of the then future location of the *Paleis van Justisie*.



2.1.2 The Dutch Reformed Church on Church Square with the covered wagons of the Boers gathering for the *nachtmaal* in 1881.

1883-1900) united the Boers, which eventually led to the war. After the conquest, feelings of solidarity and nationalism increased amongst the Boers. However, the ZAR was almost facing bankruptcy. Modernisation and industrialisation of the country was seen as the only way out by president Paul Kruger. He invested in industrial projects, the exploitation of the newly discovered gold fields and railway construction. The ZAR became a booming state with self-awareness and a player on international economical and political stage.

Politically, the ZAR was a Republic ruled by a parliament, the *Volksraad*. The country was ruled by a state president who was elected every five years. The country was very nationalistic. The white Boers were dominant and had a strict policy on who could become a citizen. Blacks, Asians and coloured people were in any case excluded. The Protestant religion, independency and the Afrikaner language were the keystones of their culture. The motto of the nation '*Eendragt maakt magt*' (Unity empowers) depicts this nationalist ideology. Lots of effort was made to create a uniform nation. The welfare caused the desire to built buildings that would represent the dignity of the young state. The ZAR had a clear vision about how its architecture should to be. First of all it had to depict the free and Protestant nature

of the new nation, it had to differ itself from the British opponent and it had to be based on European tradition without taking over any specific stylistic iconography of other nations. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 75)

To build these buildings, the ZAR recovered the *Department Publieke Werken* (DPW) that took care of all the public works (roads, rails, and public buildings). The ZAR did not have a good educational system yet. It lacked skilled engineers and architects who could build the country. Thus they looked outside the country. The people they were looking for clearly had to stand behind the religious, political and nationalistic values of the ZAR. Hence they could not be anglicized Afrikaners from the Cape Colony. Paul Kruger was personally involved in the search for the head of the DPW. He found the perfect man in the Netherlands, the strictly Protestant Sytze Wopkes Wierda (1839 - 1911). The relationship between the Netherlands and the ZAR was good. The Dutch felt empathy for the ZAR since they won the First Boer War. The Dutch saw the Boers as *their* descendants who rose up against the great British Empire. The Dutch wanted to strengthen the ties and invested a lot in the ZAR. On the other hand Kruger needed the Dutch. It was the only way in which he could realise the modernisation of the ZAR. However, Krugers so called *Hollanderpolitiek* was not well received by many of the nationalistic Boers. Therefore it was really important that the Dutch who came to build the ZAR did not a strong voice. Wierda who had the task of creating a new style for the country had to make sure that this would be a distinctive independent style. It was essential that this style would not look *too* Dutch.



2.1.3 Coat of arms of the ZAR with the motto 'Eendragt maakt magt' (Unity empowers).

2.2 Raadzaal

After the recovery of the ZAR in 1881 the government and its officials were housed in the first *Raadzaal* at Church Square and several other buildings scattered over the city of Pretoria. These buildings had the modest and simple agrarian architecture of the buildings built by the first settlers in Pretoria as mentioned before. They were seen as unpractical and unpretentious. In 1882, the first ideas to build a new governmental building emerged. The discovery and development of the Witwatersrand gold fields in 1886 improved the financial situation of the ZAR and allowed the new *Raadzaal* to be developed. In 1887 the first concrete plans were made. (Rex, 1974, pp. 362 - 369)

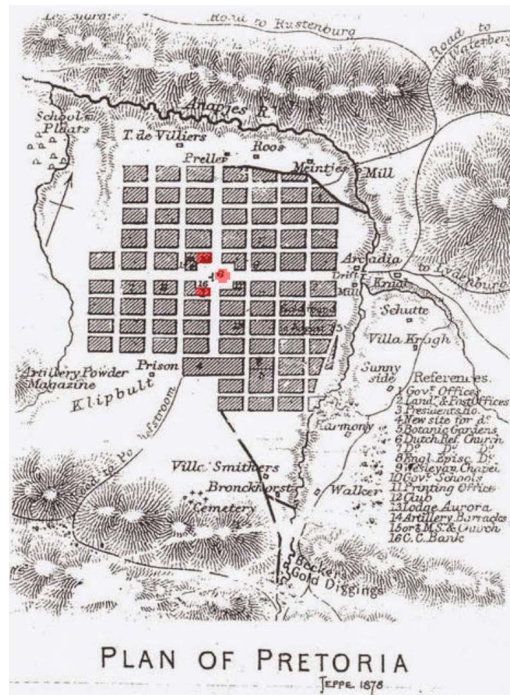
Brief

When Wierda arrived in the ZAR his main task was the creation of an architecture that expressed the values of the young ZAR state. With the new *Raadzaal* he had the task to design the most representative and iconic building of the state. Wierda was not the first one who confronted this endeavour. Earlier an international competition had been written that was won by an (most likely unqualified) architect who had done more work in the ZAR, J W Leslie Simmonds. However, this plan was rejected by a commission led by the Dutch born architect Klaas van Rijssen due to practical reasons. Van Rijssen even did an attempt to improve the design, but before he could finish Wierda arrived and took over the task. Unfortunately no drawings could be found of Leslie Simmonds design and Van Rijssens adjustments. (Rex, 1974, pp. 370 - 372)

President Paul Kruger formulated his vision for the building during the laying of the corner stone of the new *Raadzaal*. According to Kruger it was no longer good enough for the civil servants to only have a roof under which they could work. They needed a building with status and dignity. How this status and dignity had to be represented is not explicitly explained. However, as mentioned before, the ZAR had a clear vision of how the architecture had to look: they wanted an own extensive style, based on European tradition, however not referring to any specific European country. It could not look Dutch because of the sensitive feelings among the



2.2.1 the first *Raadzaal* building. A simple single storey building with mud walls, a thatched roof and a *stoep*.



2.2.2 Plan of Pretoria (1878) with in the middle Church Square. Marked in red below the location of the *Raadzaal*, in the middle the former Dutch Reformed Church (1885-1904) and the top location of the *Paleis van Justitie*.

nationalistic Boer citizens. But most importantly, it had to reassemble the free, independent and equal spirit of the Boer society and its Protestant nature. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 75)

Site

The chosen location for the new *Raadzaal* was at the site of the first *Raadzaal* at Kerkplein (Church Square). This choice has been self-evident. Kerkplein was the most important urban place of Pretoria and is the historical centre. It is the place where the strict Protestant Boers came together for the *nachtmaal* (Holy Communion) and from where the city emerged along an orthogonal grid. Religion played an important role in the ZAR society. Therefore closeness of the *Raadzaal* to the church was important. Kerkplein resembles the most important public place of the ZAR. It can be seen as the centre of the inhabitants. The place

were the people gathered together. Locating it here also showed how close the government was to the people. It showed the accessibility and visibility of the government.

Style and influence

Wierda designed the *Raadzaal* in the styles that were dominant in continental Western Europe. Similarities can be seen in *Reichstag* (1894) in Berlin and the *Palais de Justice de Montbenon* (1886) in Lausanne. Both also have a classical composition influenced by Schinkel, Semper and the Beaux-Arts school. Typical characteristics are the in five bays divided facades with a central *avant-corps* and pavilion ends, different pediments above the windows on the first and second levels and the accentuating pilasters and columns. The plan of the *Raadzaal* is similar to the plan of the *Reichstag*, almost square with the council chamber in the middle. Both buildings have a pompous appearance with the focus on the front facade. In the *Palais de Justice de Montbenon* you also see the mansard roofs above the centre, the pavilions on the outer bays and the prominence of statues on top in the middle bay. These buildings might not have had a direct influence on Wierda's design for the *Raadzaal*, but it shows the popular style for governmental buildings that swept through continental Europe.

Both Wierda and Kruger were well known with the European architecture. Kruger had traveled in Europe to raise sympathy for the Transvaal. He not only had good relations with the Netherlands, but also Belgium, France, Germany and Switzerland. By following the popular styles in continental Western Europe, Wierda tried to position the ZAR internationally as a powerful, independent and self-consciousness nation with Pretoria as its cosmopolitan capital.

Wierda started his career in the Netherlands. He worked as chief supervisor on projects of the *Staatsspoorwegen* (State Railway) and as an architect. Through his work for the *Staatsspoorwegen* he met influential architects such as Dolf van Gendt and Pierre Cuypers. The Netherlands who had been an insignificant country in comparison to its neighbouring countries in the first part of the 19th century celebrated,



2.2.3 The Raadzaal, 1889.



2.2.4 Reichstag (1894) in Berlin, Germany.



2.2.5 Palais Justice de Montbenon (1886) in Lausanne, Switzerland.



2.2.6 Painting of the Amsterdam's City Hall, 1665.

through industrialisation and new development of infrastructure, a 'second golden age' in the second half of the century. This also revitalised the architectural practice. Following the European tendency, architects strove to find a nationalistic style. Important were firstly the 'character' of a building. It had to reflect its function and meaning in society. An eclectic use of revival styles was applied. Neo-Renaissance seemed, as well as in other countries to be the right 'character' for governmental buildings since it exuded 'dignity and authority'. Secondly 'truth' was an important aspect. Materials and components had to be used in a constructional and rational way. *Character, style and material* formed the tools of the architects of that time. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, pp. 15-17)

Wierda lived and worked in the middle of rapidly changing Amsterdam. He must have seen the variety of new buildings that were erected like the *Rijksmuseum* (1885), the *Stadsschouwburg* (1872 by B de Greef and W Springer), the Neo-Renaissance Park Pavilion in the Vondelpark (1874-1881 of W Hamer), the Artis Zoo Aquarium building (1879-1882 by GB and A Salm), the *Amstel Hotel* (1867 by Cornelis Outshoorn) and the utilitarian Neo-Renaissance buildings as the *Westergasfabriek* (1883-1885 by Isaac Gosschalk). (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, pp. 43,44) Wierda had a critical view on the 'Catholic' architecture of Cuypers and admired the architecture of Van Gendt. During his practice as an architect in the Netherlands Wierda expressed his strong Protestant principles in amongst others the several Christian Reformed churches he designed in Zaandam, Breda, Tilburg, Hijum, Baarn, Enlichheim and Almkerk- Nieuwendijk. This must have caught the eye of Kruger. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 74) Wierda's work in the ZAR evolved due to this Dutch frame. Wierda took his task to create a distinctive ZAR style very serious. He could literally start afresh in the young state. Wierda made, by different use of style, ornament and materials, a clear distinction between representative and utilitarian buildings. This resulted in a range of buildings from very representative, such as the *Raadzaal* and the *Paleis van Justitie* with their use of natural stone and decorated facades, to utilitarian, such as the *Staatsdrukkerij* (1896) and

the *Staatsartillerie* (1898) with a more austere style recognisable by the locally made red bricks, white *speklagen* (streaky bacon), round arch windows and bull-eye windows that were clearly inspired by buildings in Amsterdam as *Westergasfabriek*.

The *Paleis op de Dam*, the former City Hall of Amsterdam, designed by Jacob van Campen formed an important inspiration for the *Raadzaal*. In the Netherlands it was a popular example in the last half of the 19th century for Dutch architects. The building was seen as the symbol of the Dutch Golden Age in the 17th century. The City Hall symbolised the victory on the Spanish occupation and the booming world-power the *Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden* became by trade. The *Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* entered into a prosperous time because of the industrial revolution in the late 19th century. Because of this newly acquired wealth the architects emulated the architecture of the 17th century Golden Age. This reference was also made in the ZAR, that also liberated from British occupation. Wierda knew the plan of the City Hall very well. He studied it for the competition of the Exchange building on the Dam Square in Amsterdam in the 1880s. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, pp. 31,32, 43-46)

Composition

Wierda's design for the *Raadzaal* is clearly influenced by the *Paleis op de Dam*. First of all the location on the square is similar. Both stand in the central square of the town, the most important public space. Further similarities show that both buildings are rectangular and have courtyards. They have four wings with offices that face the street side. The offices are connected by a corridor facing the inner courtyards. Centrally is located the most important space, in the case of the *Paleis op de Dam*, the *Grand Saal* and in the *Raadzaal*, the *Eerste Volksraadzaal*. The entrance of both buildings is located on street level. By way of an impressive staircase you are directly led to the most important space located on the first floor. The entrance has a dark and small appearance which is caused by the low height and the dark wood of the stairs and doors in the case of the *Raadzaal*. This is in contrast to the high ceilings and the abundance of natural light in the *Eerste Volksraadzaal*.

All facades of the *Raadzaal* have the same

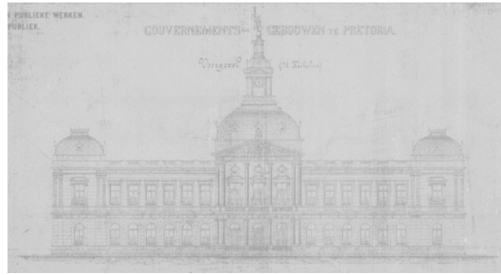
symmetrical classical set up of five bays with pavilions at the end that pop out and are topped with a mansard roof cupola. The ground floor has a heavy and modest plinth-like appearance with its arched windows that go all around the building. The first and second floors appear lighter and more ornamental. The only difference is the height and the pediments above the windows.

The front facade is the most striking. The others are more modest. The back and east facade look similar and are just like the front facade quite austere. They face the main roads. The west facade is a bit less structured. In the early years the centre part was kept open and later the *Tweede Volksraadzaal* was built into this void. This side faces the smaller street on the west that is a more insignificant street. All of this shows how Wierda adapted the plan to the location with his pragmatic and financially conscious Protestant views.

Just as in the *Paleis op de Dam* the focus lays on the front. The prominent front facade is dominated by the middle bay that is crowned with a large triangular pediment, a mansard roof cupola with a tower and statue on top. The initial plan of Wierda only consisted of two floors (see image 2.2.7). However, during the building process it was decided to add a third floor. Legend has it that the planned hotel next to the *Raadzaal* would become higher than the initial plan for the *Raadzaal*, therefore Kruger demanded an extra floor. However it is also a fact that the government expanded rapidly. An extra floor was most likely needed to create more space. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 80) The extra floor gave the building a more ostentatious appearance and a less horizontal appearance. By this the *Raadzaal* comes across, just as the *Paleis op de Dam*, as a more solid volume. However, the top floor of the middle bay has a relatively small height in relation to the second floor. The small, but wide columns on the top floor look heavy to the narrow and refined columns on the first floor.

Material and construction

The character, and by that, the correct appliance of style and material was the main focal point for Wierda. This was in line with the late 19th century thinking. As the most important building of the nation, the *Raadzaal* had to have its own extensive character. Wierda used Western traditional materials



2.2.7 First design proposal for the front facade of the *Raadzaal* showing the two initial floors.



2.2.8 The front facade of the *Raadzaal*.



2.2.9 The north and east facade of the *Raadzaal*. Notice the similarities.

and techniques as well as modern. This send out the message of the ZAR as being a modern and wealthy state. Since there was little industry in the ZAR, all materials, except for the fired bricks and lime mortar, were imported from Europe.

The outer walls seem to be made from a light red/yellowish/white sandstone. However, except for the plinth, these are brick walls, plastered and rendered with a layer that resembles sandstone. This might have been done because of a tight budget, or the parsimonious Protestant nature of the ZAR. Also on the roof you see this cost-effective use of materials. The prominent French-style mansard roofs are covered with grey galvanized fish-scale tiles while the roofs that are not visible from the street side are covered with red corrugated steel panels (widely used in the ZAR). The ornamental stone parts, the stone blocks on the first level and the balustrades are made of *ciment-fondu* (an artificial stone), imported from the Netherlands.

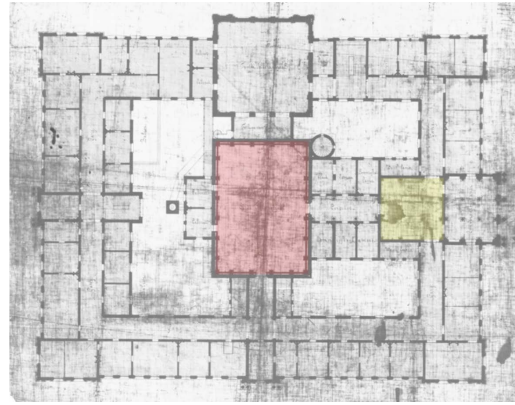
Wierda also applied new technologies. He used steel I-beams in the construction of the floors and the roof. For the large floors spans he applied structural floors of unreinforced concrete in steel I-beams, a very new technique that only has been used in the Netherlands since 1878. The floors were leveled with lightweight pumice screed and finished with clay tiles, linoleum, carpets or elevated timber floors. Other new technologies were water reticulation, fire alarm, central heating, natural ventilation shafts in the walls, intercom (voice tubes) and a telephone system (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, pp. 80, 81). Wierda also applied the typical air vents on the roof, a local adaptation to the climate, that can be seen in all the buildings he designed in the ZAR. Inside, the interior walls and ornaments are painted in a pallet from white, light pink, brown, light yellow and green colours. The stairs, window- and door-frames and furniture are made of a dark wood.

With the smart use of materials and new techniques, Wierda designed an extraordinary building that could positively compare itself with its European counterparts. Through the full 'sandstone' appearance the *Raadzaal* conveyed the message of being the most important building. However, it also showed its part of 'the DPW family' by its similarities for example the reddish colour of the stones. Although the materials may not be what they seem to be, their expression is in line with the late 19th centuries ideas of 'character' and they show the parsimonious nature of the Protestant ZAR.

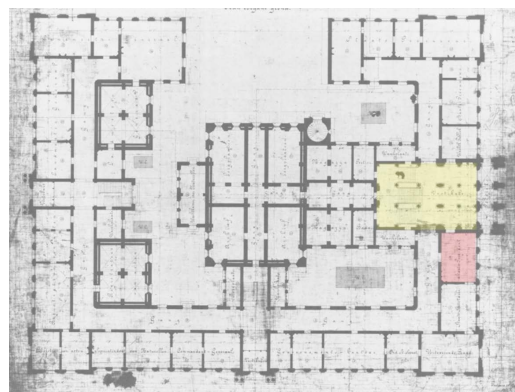
Art and ornament

The ornamentation of the *Raadzaal* shows the eclectic character by which Wierda tried to find a distinctive ZAR style. On the exterior this has been done by a sober, eclectic and strict use of classic ornamentation. Inside one sees classic, baroque, but also jugendstil elements. This is very apparent in the *Eerste Volksraadzaal* (see image 2.2.14). Note here the curved transition between walls and ceiling in and under the balcony (Jugendstil) in combination with the Corinthian capitals (classic).

Art is important in the *Raadzaal*. It depicts the pride and values of the ZAR. On the outside there are only two works of art, both situated in the central bay of the front facade. Firstly there is the tympanum with



2.2.10 First floor of the *Raadzaal*. At the right the foyer (yellow) with the stairs leading to the *Eerste Volksraadzaal*. Directly next to the entrance is the office of the Staats President (red).



2.2.11 Second floor of the *Raadzaal* with the later extension in the west-wing of the Tweede *Raadzaal* (1890) The *Eerste Volksraadzaal* is situated in the middle (red) and accessible from the stairs in the foyer (yellow) via a small corridor with supportive functions on both side.

the Transvaal arms and the motto *Eendragt maakt magt* (Unity empowers), sculpted by the Dutch immigrant Anton van Wouw (see image 2.2.15). The choice of Van Wouw as the sculptor of the statues in the *Raadzaal* was well considered. The Dutch-born sculptor Van Wouw moved to Pretoria at the age of 28. He developed a great admiration for the Boers. He is regarded as the father of South African sculpture. Other important works are the statue of Paul Kruger that still stands proudly in the centre of Church Square. Secondly there is the female statue that stands prominently on top of the tower on the mansard roof. Some think she represents Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom, while others say she represents Freedom or Liberty, which seems more likely. (Allen, 1971, pp. 40-41) Legend has it that when the statue was installed she did not wear a hat. Conservative Boers complained. According to them a woman could not appear in public without a hat. Therefore she was fitted with a Grecian helmet.

The bells in the tower are carved with nationalistic mottoes and the name of Paul Kruger. By this the values of the ZAR sounded through the capital when the bells were ringing. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, pp. 80, 81) Within the building one finds just a few paintings of important figures in the *Eerste Volksraadzaal*, the carving of the coat of arms in the woodwork of the chair of the president and small bronze statues on the balustrade of the stairs. Most prominent is the eclectic use of ornaments.

The *Raadzaal* is not overtly ornamented or decorated with artwork. The almost subtle use of ornaments and artwork on the exterior gave the building a modest and calm appearance that is very suitable within the Protestant values of the ZAR. However, it also shows very clearly the dignity and wealth of the nation.

Relation to public

The *Raadzaal* was placed right in the heart of the ZAR on the most important square of the nation. The Boer society saw itself as a nation in which everyone was equal (immigrants, black and coloured people were excluded). The government was of the people and Paul Kruger felt very connected to the Boers. Therefore the *Raadzaal* needed to express accessibility and have a low threshold. This was quite similar to the situation in 17th century Netherlands. Just as in the Amsterdam City Hall the ‘threshold’ to the *Raadzaal* is very low. The entrance is situated on street level. Also the room of the *Staats President* is located directly next to the entrance hall on the ground floor (see image 2.2.11). This is similar to the Amsterdam City Hall where the room of the mayor was located in the same place, although on the first floor, but in Amsterdam the public hall on the first floor was also accessible for the public (see image 2.2.18). This configuration showed the accessibility to the President and the government towards the citizens of the ZAR.



2.2.12 Facade of the *Raadzaal*. Notice the *ciment-fondu* balusters and plastered ‘sand stone’ walls.



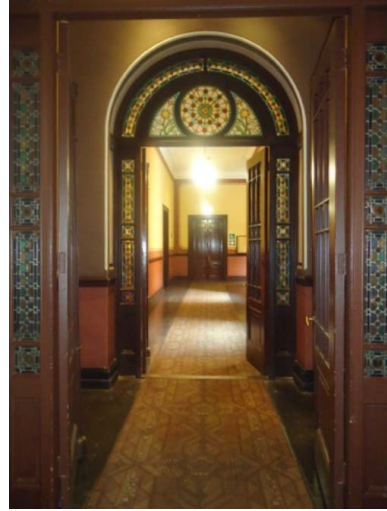
2.2.13 Transvaal Arms in the pediment with the motto *Eendracht maakt magt*.



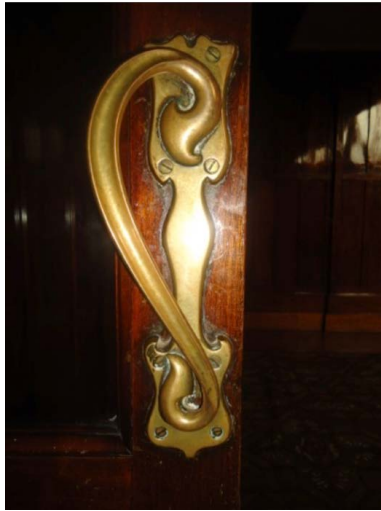
2.2.14 Interior of the *Eerste Volksraadzaal*.



2.2.15 The statue of a woman figure on top of the *Raadzaal* wearing a helmet.



2.2.17 Stained glass windows in interior.



2.2.16 Jugendstil styled door handle.



2.2.18 Paul Kruger leaving the *Raadzaal* in 1899. This shows the low threshold to the *Raadzaal* and the practical integration of the *porte-cochère* that creates both a dry entrance and a balcony on top from where the states man could speak to the public.

Paleis van Justitie

In the beginning it was the idea that the new *Raadzaal* building would house all three branches of the government including the Supreme Court of the ZAR. However, chief Justice J.G. Kotzé and other judges objected. Kotzé sent a letter to President Kruger and the government with plans for a new building for the Supreme Court in 1896. According to him, the court and other branches of the government had to be separated to avoid conflict. Kruger and the council agreed. They instructed Wierda to design a new building for the Court at Church Square, opposite of the *Raadzaal*.

Brief

The government and President Kruger gave the task to design the *Paleis van Justitie*, and appointed a building commission led by Kotzé. The commission informed Wierda about the functional demands and they also had clear ideas about the ‘character’ and style the building had to comply with. Kotzé wanted the building to represent the professionalisation of the judicial system. For an appropriate style Kotzé looked to examples in the Netherlands. As reference he proposed the Ministry of Justice building in The Hague that was built in the *Oud-Hollandsche* or Dutch Renaissance style. This building was built by C. H. Peters (supported by Victor de Stuers,

also the driving force behind the appointment of fellow catholic Cuypers for the *Rijksmuseum*). Peters buildings, as well the Ministry of Justice are characterized by a combination of neo-Gothic and Renaissance elements. Resulting in an extravagant use of red bricks, white coursing and stepped gables. According to Kotzé this would express the Roman-Dutch law that was also in force in the ZAR. However, Wierda was obviously not amused by this reference. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 47)

Site

The choice to locate the *Paleis van Justitie* on Church Square seemed to have been evident. There are no indications that any other site was considered. At the design stage of the *Raadzaal* Wierda was facing the fact that the Paul Kruger street crossed Church Square in the middle so the *Raadzaal* was placed on the western side. The *Raadzaal* was also facing the backside of the church. Hence the *Raadzaal* had an almost isolated location on the corner of the square. It did not suit the dignity the building deserved. By placing the *Paleis van Justitie* opposite the *Raadzaal* Wierda could create coherence on the western side of the square. There is a strong visual connection between both buildings. Together with the church in the middle they formed the pillars of the Boer society (see image 2.3.1).



2.3.1 The Trinity at Church Square. The *Raadzaal* at the left, the Dutch Reformed Church in the middle and the *Paleis van Justitie* at the right.

Style and influences

Wierda's task was not only to design individual buildings such as the *Raadzaal* and the *Paleis van Justitie*, but also a general style for the ZAR. He envisioned coherence between the application of style based on his own and the collective Dutch and Protestant ideas. As mentioned in the chapter about the *Raadzaal*, the notions of 'truth' and 'character' were essential for the way in which he approached his design. However this resulted into a discussion during the design process of the *Paleis van Justitie*. Wierda's first design proposal was very similar to the design of the *Raadzaal*. It also had four inner courts, surrounded by secondary functions such as the offices that were connected by a hall facing the inner courts. This all in a similar eclectic Neo-Renaissance style. However, this design was rejected by the commission mainly because of style. As mentioned before, Kotzé demanded the Dutch Renaissance style with the references of Peters in his mind. Wierda however disagreed. He argued that this style would be too expensive. (Haese, z.d., p. 1) Beside Wierda's practical arguments, the inappropriateness of the Dutch Renaissance style seemed to be an important aspect to reject Kotzé's ideas. Wierda argued that the Dutch Renaissance style would be too Dutch orientated and evoke feelings of 'colonial' architecture. The ZAR wanted to avoid this association. Beside, Wierda wanted an architectural unity among the public buildings of the DPW and therefore the *Paleis van Justitie* had to have the same style as the *Raadzaal*. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, pp. 46, 47) Wierda's final design for the *Paleis van Justitie* had the same eclectic Neo-Renaissance style as the *Raadzaal*, however more opulent.

Composition

Whereas the *Raadzaal* has a set up that is concentrated on the front, the *Paleis van Justitie* has a strong north-south orientation. The front part facing Church Square is public, the back is for the judges and the endorsed. Both sides have their own characteristic expression. The front facade has the same set as the up as the *Raadzaal* consisting out of five bays with two pavilions that stick out at the ends and an expressive central bay. The central bay is also topped with a pediment and French mansard roof cupola, a feature returning in more of the representative buildings of Wierda. The central

bay is flanked by the two remarkable towers on either side. The towers, that are also seen in similar buildings in Europe, were added as a vertical reaction to the tower of the church. (Haese, z.d., p. 2) The middle part of the backside is recessed into the building and has a gracious sweeping staircase leading to the entrance for the judges. The convicts enter through doors in the plinth leading to the basement where the cells are.

The original design only had two levels. During the design process it was decided to add an extra level, just as in the *Raadzaal*. The facades of the original design ended in a cornice under the level of the pediment and the towers adjacent to the central bay. By the addition of the extra level this strong effect of the cornices was reduced and the third level ended above the pediment. This gave the whole building a strange appearance (see image 2.3.6 and 2.3.7).

Unlike the *Raadzaal*, the *Paleis van Justitie* is lifted from the street level and stands on a sand stone plinth. On the front, a monumental staircase leads to the raised arched portico. Behind it lays the public foyer that is seen as one of the finest classical public spaces in South Africa. The foyer consists of three parts and is surrounded by a two-story colonnaded walkway that gives access to the offices and the three courtrooms that lay in the centre of the building. In the back are the library and other supportive functions for the court.

Material and construction

The materials used on the exterior are similar to the *Raadzaal*. However, there are some differences in their use. The higher plinth of sand stone is more prominent and because of difference in ground level it reaches the height of the first level at the south side. The sand stone is local and comes from Vereeniging. (Haese, z.d., p. 5) The facades of the first floor are just as in the *Raadzaal* brick walls plastered to resemble sandstone. The walls of the two top floors have a brick face surface with plastered pediments above and around the windows and plastered corners. The towers and central bay are also plastered. The stairs and decorative stone elements are made entirely from pre-cast *ciment-fondu*. As in the *Raadzaal* the newest construction techniques were used such as the floors unreinforced



2.3.2 Front facade of the *Paleis van Justitie*.



2.3.3 Back facade of the *Paleis van Justitie*.



2.3.4 Design drawing of the front facade showing the two initial floors.



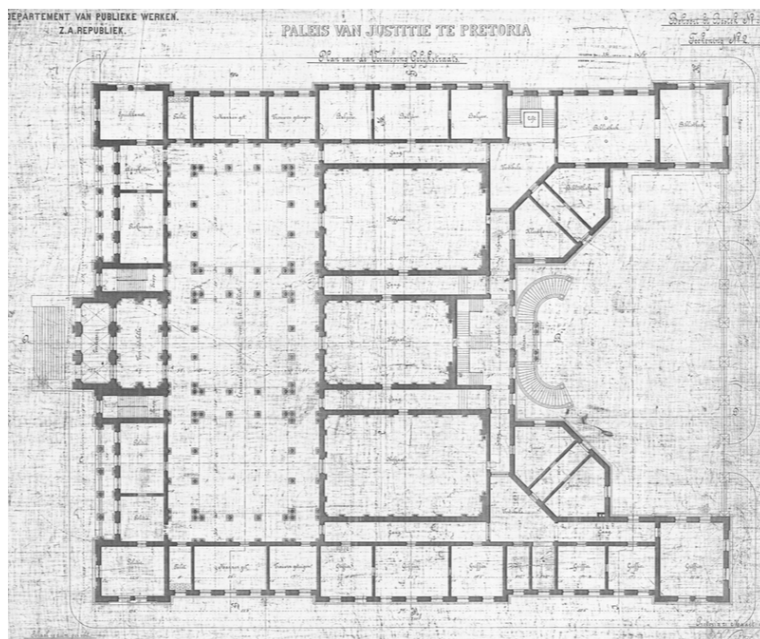
2.3.5 Final realized front facade with three floors.



2.3.6 The sweeping stair at the north facade leading to the entrance for the judges.



2.3.7 The western facade. Note the appliance of half round and triangle pediments above the windows on the second floor.



2.3.8 Plan of the *Paleis van Justitie*.

concrete in steel I-beams. The building also had the most modern technological systems such as, an ingenious buoyancy-driven natural ventilation system.

The interior of the building is very light, especially the public foyer. The central part of the foyer is covered by a steel-framed dome enriched by a plastered ceiling with coffering. Natural light is led into the foyer by sky-lights. The walls and columns are painted white. Further use of polished dark wood, brass, stained glass and tiled floors all contribute to the prestige and dignity of the young nation. (Fisher R. C., 2014, p. 95) The use of the newest techniques and the richness of materials all contributed to the progressive, wealthy and powerful image the ZAR wanted to evoke.

Art and ornament

The appliance of ornamentation of the *Paleis van Justitie* is similar to the *Raadzaal*. The same eclectic use of styles is seen again. Columns and pilasters are only applied in the central bay of the facades of the front- and backside. The base and capital of the columns are Corinthian while the shaft is smooth, the shafts are not fluted but smooth. This is in line with the eclectic use of styles of Wierda. Interesting is the more free use of pediments above the windows of the first level. A combination of half round and triangle shapes is used. Brick is prominently used in the facade giving the *Paleis van Justitie* a more busy appearance than the *Raadzaal*. This also links with the other ZAR buildings in which the locally produced brick plays an important role. It places the *Paleis van Justitie* on the scale of hierarchy that Wierda foresaw for the public buildings. The most important buildings have the most natural stone, and less brick. Beside the ornamentation, it is remarkable that there is no artwork applied to the exterior. The pediment above the front facade is empty and painted white. There are neither mottos nor figurative images on the facades.

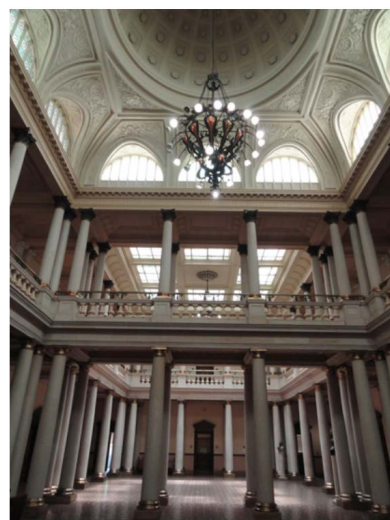
The interior is very light by the use of white paint and light coloured paint and the ornamentation is robust and minimal. There are no expressive works of art. This all is in line with the frugal nature of the strictly Protestant ZAR.

Connection to public

The *Paleis van Justitie* had to express the seriousness of the judicial system of the ZAR. The court stood of course above all citizens. There is a clear division between the public, judges and the ones that are prosecuted by giving them all their own entrance. The public entered the elevated ground floor by a staircase in front. This expressed the power of the court clearly. The large public hall shows the openness of the court to it's Boer citizens. The monumental back facade with its striking sweeping stairs are meant for the judges. There is a small entrance below for the convicts leading into the basement of the court. By this division it was clear how the hierarchical relation between public, judge and prosecuted was seen in the ZAR.



2.3.9 Court C.



2.3.10 The foyer hall.

3.1

The democratic Republic of South Africa, cultural and political context

!ke e: ǀxarra ǁke
(Diverse people unite)

Unity through Diversity

The first democratic elections in 1994, in which all races could vote, marked the end of the apartheid-era that ruled South Africa for decades. After a long struggle, all citizens got equal rights. This event also had its effect on the public architecture of the country.

After the 1910 Act of Union, South Africa became a unified state which it is up to date. The Union Buildings (1913) in Pretoria symbolised the unification. The two wings represent the Afrikaner and English parts of the dominant white South Africans that who in charge. After the elections of 1948 the apartheid was formalised. The policy of racial separation development divided the country and cities in areas for the different races. The differences between races was also made clear in the architecture. The white race glorified their Afrikaner heritage and looked closely to what happened in the Western world. It also looked to former colonies such as Brazil which developed its own nationalistic modern style. This resulted in Brutalist buildings such as the Civic Centre in Johannesburg (1963). Just as Kruger and Wierda in the ZAR intended, South Africa was consciously searching for a contemporary and Western style, with a distinctive own touch. A tradition that continued especially in Pretoria and surrounding area. However, inspiration for distinction was not any longer sought after in the 'own' culture now. At this moment some architects also searched for inspiration in native architecture and art. Examples are Rex Martienssen, Norman Eaton (such as the mosaic of Polley's Arcade, Pretoria (see image 3.1.2)) and Adriaan Louw Meiring (a pioneer in studying the N'debele buildings).

The international and cultural boycott of 1968 made international relations difficult. Nevertheless, architects tried to stay in contact with the world by looking at the international trends through foreign journals. It resulted in huge and imposing, but sterile buildings and tower blocks. With the occurrence

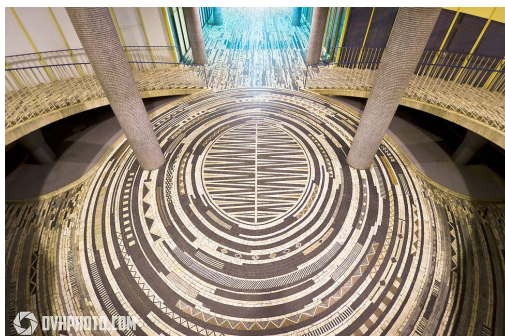
of Post-Modernism, attempts were made to reflect traditional (South) African history in architecture. According to Jo Noero, this was done in a form of 'vulgar exploitation of indulgent facadism'. An example is the Palace and Entertainment Centre at Lost City, Bophuthatswana (1992) with its Egyptian halls. (Sanders, 2000, p. 70) On the other hand, white architects also designed buildings for the black people that referred to traditional South African cultures. The apartheid regime promoted the practice of various forms of traditional culture to underline the distinct cultural identity of the different races. (Marschall, 2001, p. 146) During the apartheid years, racial segregation formed the basis of the urban and architectural practice. The focus was mostly placed on one specific cultural,



3.1.1 Union Buildings in Pretoria (1913).



3.1.2 Civic Centre in Johannesburg (1963).



3.1.3 Polley's arcade floor tiling based on native patterns.

historical and political reference. The traces of this policy are still very prominent in current South Africa and lead to conflicts till today.

In the post-apartheid years the social and cultural segregation was officially dissolved. An euphoric time broke out in which all the diverse cultures within South Africa were recognised and seen as equal. This can be seen in the new motto of the country *!ke e: !xarra !lke*, which means in the !Xam language 'diverse people unite'.

Public buildings did not have to represent one single race, but address all races. Architects searched for ways to give form to the new South Africa. According to Hannah le Roux, post-apartheid architecture centres more on 'types of actions' rather than form. This because of the strictly separate spatial landscape that had been created during the years of apartheid. The free movement of all citizens became an important design factor. (Judin, 1998, p. 354) The architects of the post-apartheid also needed to generate public spaces that creatively and critically addressed aspects of memory and identity, intimately linked with repairing the sensitive past. (Tzonis, 2001, p. 187)

Designs for public buildings were assigned by competitions. The new era had a wide range of architectural approaches. Ranging from basing the design on traditional South African architecture (this as a reaction to give attention to cultures that were suppressed for years), to an architecture that is more an assemblage of the divers cultures that South Africa contains. Public buildings played (and still play) an important role to bring the different cultures in the nation together and relay a sense of hope for the future without forgetting the past.



3.1.4 The coat of arms of the Republic of South Africa introduced on Freedom Day 27 April 2000. The motto *!ke e: !xarra !lke* in the !Xam language means 'diverse people unite'.

Northern Cape Provincial Legislature

On the eve of the 1994 democratic elections, South Africa reformed its provinces. The four former provinces and the Bantustans¹ were dissolved and divided into nine new provinces. With this rearrangement arose the need for new capitals and subsequently new provincial governmental buildings. The Northern Cape is one of the new provinces. The mining town Kimberley was chosen as the new capital and the seat for the Provincial Legislature. In the beginning the Legislature was accommodated at various places in the old Central Business District (CBD) of Kimberley. It shared the debating chamber with the City Council. This situation was not ideal. Therefore a committee, chaired by the local Department of Public Works (DPW) was set up to look for possibilities for a new accommodation. Finally it was decided to build a new building at a site located between 'the black' Galeshewa Township and 'the white' CBD. The DPW set up a competition consisting of two steps. First an early conceptual stage and secondly a stage for resolving detailed planning. The final outcome was announced in April 1998.

Brief

The brief called for a contextual design that would reflect the particularities of the Northern Cape. Next to the programmatic requirements the brief demanded the design proposals to answer questions about political ambition, empowerment, public symbolism and architectural character. To give insight into what is specific about the Northern Cape, the brief explained the natural, cultural, political and historical heritage. Special attention was paid to the local fauna and flora, the archaeology of the area, pre-colonial settlement patterns, Stone Age heritage, rock engravings, vernacular architecture, as well to cultural and political leaders of the region. The Jurors emphasised the importance of a contextual approach.

... the building should be rooted both physically and culturally in the South African landscape ... [and should] reflect the cultural aspirations and characteristics of the Northern Cape.' '[t] he choice of local materials is deemed to be of great importance ... because the sensitive and appropriate use of local materials could help to

achieve the indigenous appearance. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 67-68)

The brief clearly refers to an approach that does not highlight one specific contextual characteristic, but an approach that includes the richly layered and various contexts of the province. The brief places the emphasis on natural and indigenous references, and the hopeful cultural and political context of post-apartheid. The sensitivity of the colonial and apartheid years, seems to be neglected. It appears as if they wanted to create a neutral and harmless building. However, this can also become too inconspicuous and superficial.

Site

The Northern Cape is the largest province, however the smallest in numbers of population. The province consists mainly of small rural villages and has only two notable towns. The centrally located town of Upington was considered as a place to locate the Legislature, however Kimberley became quickly favourite. The city is more prominent, has a rich history and good infrastructure. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 64-65)

At the location of Kimberley emerged at the end of the 1860s a Voortrekker settlement. The discovery of diamond fields in the area struck the attention of the surrounding Boer Republics and the British. In 1871 the British took control of the area. Kimberley became a wealthy mining town crowned with architectural monuments such as The Honoured Dead Memorial, commissioned by Cecil John Rhodes and designed by Sir Herbert Baker (1904) (see image 3.2.1). During the apartheid-era Kimberley developed into a segregated apartheid city with areas for the different races and a CBD predestined for the white people.

The committee, that was set up to look for possible sites to build the Legislature, looked both at the possibility to locate the Legislature in an existing building or to build a new building. Six sites were selected. All sites were located in the CBD except for one, the Tshwaragano Centre, which is located in

¹ Bantustans, also called 'homelands' were areas allocated by the Apartheid regime to the black inhabitants of South Africa from 1913 on. These areas totaled 13% of the country. Some had a certain degree of independence. However, other countries did not recognise them.

the black residential township Galeshewe. This site was immediately the least preferred because of its large distance to the CBD. Politically it would have been a symbol of empowerment for the black and poor population. Preference fell on a more and open stretch of land in the CBD. However the costs to purchase the site were too high. Eventually this site was dismissed.

The then Premier of the Northern Cape, Manne Depico, preferred to locate the new Legislature in or near the Galeshewe Township. According to him, placing the Legislature here would demand new infrastructure and services that could work as a catalyst for future developments in the township. The City Council was opposed to this idea because the high price that had to be paid for new infrastructure and services. The choice of the final site was a compromise, located at a buffer zone separating the Galeshewe Township from the CBD. The site was government owned and donated to the provincial government. Also the costs for the needed infrastructure and services would not be as high as a location in the township. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 66-67)

The final site is seen as a bridge between the black and white sides of the city. It is a political choice that fits better within the new South Africa than if it would have been placed right in the black township or the white CBD. However, the proposed infrastructure has never been fully developed. For example, the planned tram connection between Galeshewe and the CBD has never been realised. So the clear separation between the green and wealthy 'white' side of the city and the poor and dry 'black' side of town continues to exist till today. Nevertheless, the Legislature functions more like an island in the torn city than a bridge. A sign of hope, that unfortunately was not strong enough to spread its wings. (see image 3.2.2)

Design submissions

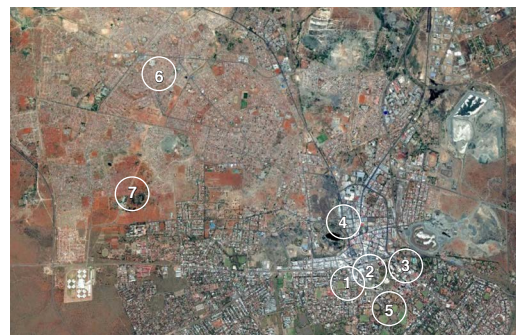
In the first round, seventy-two designs were submitted of which the Jurors selected five. The Jurors explained that all the selected designs had 'strong evocative ideas'. (Noble J.A., 2011, p. 68). It is striking that out of the five selected entries all, except for the winning one, have a strong and rigid set up. The designs will briefly be described below

in order from the fifth to the first place. This will give insight in what the Jurors were looking for.

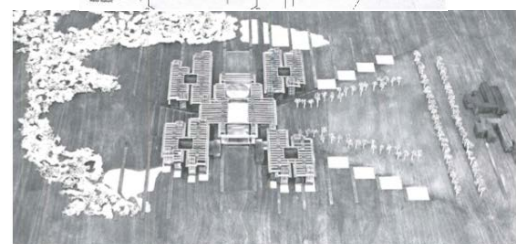
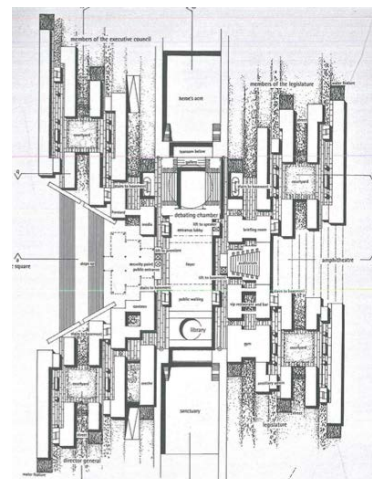
The fifth prized design of Paul Elliott, focused mainly on ecological themes and the landscape



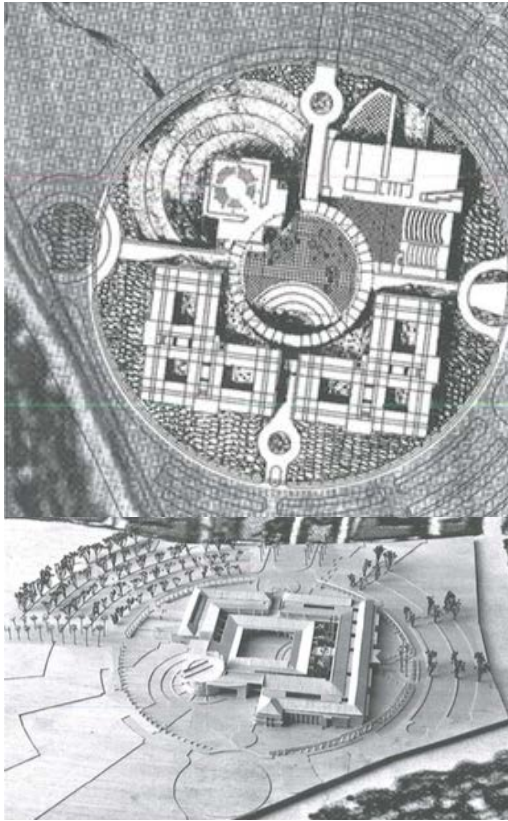
3.2.1 Honoured Dead Memorial, Herbert Baker (1904),



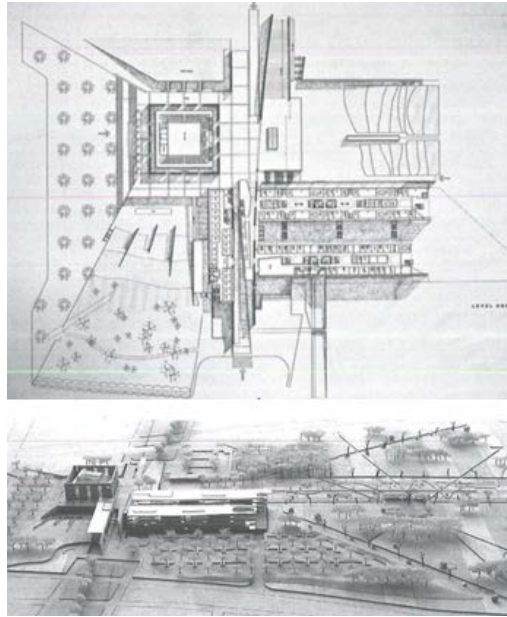
3.2.2 Map of the six possible sites, ranked in preferred order. Note that all options were located in the CBD or at border of the CBD and 'white, wealthy suburbs' (the green area at the right bottom) except for option 6. This option in the black township Galeshewe was proposed by Provincial Premier Manne Depic. The final site, number seven was added later to the list.



3.2.3 Design submission by Paul Elliot, plan and model (1998)



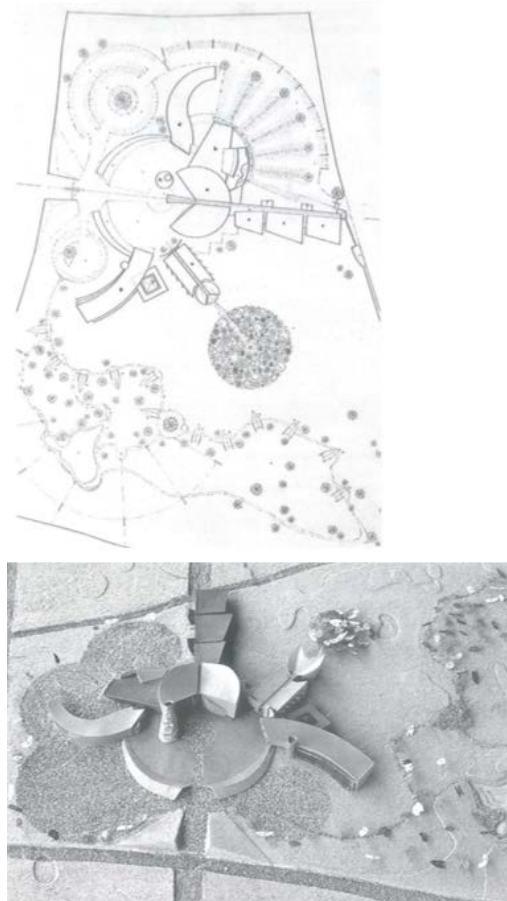
3.2.4 Design submission by AC, plan and model (1998)



3.2.6 Design submission by MRA, plan and model (1998)



3.2.5 Design submission by Hendri Comrie, plan and model (1998)



3.2.7 Design submission by LFS, plan and model (1998)

(see image 3.2.3). He made several cultural and historical references to amongst others traditional African wall patterns, spatial patterns of the African kraal and to /Xam rock art. However, this resulted in a large rigid structure which did not meet the proposed ecological and landscape expectations.

The fourth prized design of Architects Collaborative presented a building with a square floor plan and a central circular open space that formed the core (see image 3.2.3). The architects referred to the open space as the *kothla*, an open space that formed the centre of pre-colonial Tshwane settlements. They also made references to nature and wanted their building to look like trees providing shade that would be welcoming and give shelter. In the model however it is immediately noticeable that the square structure surrounding the round open space is dominant. The entire complex has a rather closed appearance. The assembly hall is placed awkwardly as a weird shape in one of the corners.

The third prized entry of Henrie Comrie is as a complex small village with functions arranged in different structures around courts (see image 3.2.4). The design responds to the natural environment, vernacular architecture, San rock engravings, the history of anti-apartheid resistance and idealistic visions of democracy. The amphitheatre is situated in the centre and symbolises the democratic character of the new South Africa. There is a Hero's Acre with sculptures of the anti-apartheid heroes. Earth toned materials are used to react to the question of using local materials and embed the complex into the landscape. Despite all the symbolism it resulted in an large unclear complex.

The second prized entry of Mashabana Rose Architects is designed on north-south and east-west axes (see image 3.2.5). The north-south axis connects Kimberley with Galeshewa. The east-west axis depicts as a time line the history beginning in the pre-colonial time moving along Hero's Acre to the Debating Chamber, the last representing democracy. The Debating Chamber is located very prominently. Reference to native crafts and materials is made by the use of woven grass panels, referring to the '*matjehuis*' of the Khoisan and Tswana people. The design refers to political and historical narratives and includes African tectonics

and spatial themes. But the Jurors saw the design as something that could be build anywhere and the monumental Debating Chamber reminds too much of the colonial Honoured Dead Memorial of Herbert Baker. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 70-80)

The winning design is of Luis Ferreira da Silva architects (LFS). The Jurors stated that the design was the one which

most captured the spirit and aspirations of the people of the Northern Cape by its unique, evocative family of forms and interrelation of volumes and spaces. Dynamic tension is created by the differentiated scales of the composition which tend to lend themselves to be landmarks rooted in local traditions and place. (Noble J. A., 2011, p. 81)

Luis Ferreira da Silva followed his studies at the University of Natal in Durban and founded his own office in 1973. His architecture has been clearly influenced by modernist Architecture that has been brought into South Africa in the mid 20th century.

Style and influence

In contrast to the other entries, the set up of the complex is not rigid but appears more random. It displays a multiplicity of different forms and materials. The design does not refer to only one specific aspect like one historical era, the landscape or the climate, but makes many references. It is varied and rather modern, yet very specific. LFS architects described what they wanted to achieve as following:

what was required was not ... just a traditional building mimicking the familiar symbols of the past regime, but one that presented a statement of creative design, a design that would create new identity, a new reality.' (Noble J. A., 2011, p. 63)

The design of LFS distinguishes itself according to Noble from the others on three points: the formation of new imagery; the interactive design of public space and the exploration of cosmopolitan narratives.

The new imagery concerns a new way of transmitting symbolic ideas of the new South Africa through art, material and architectural form. All were integrated and not seen as lose things. The space was meant to be open to public with many

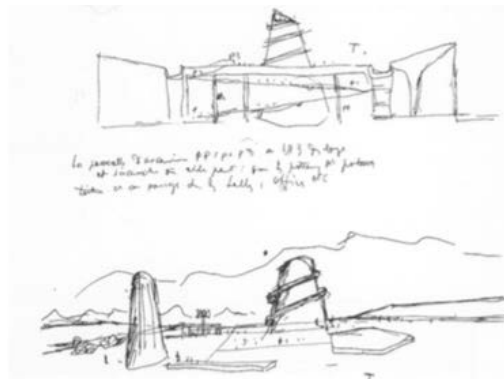
interactive places and making a link with the two parts of the city by the proposed tramway and road connection. This is clearly visible in their sketches (see image 3.2.7 – 3.2.9). The central axis that crosses the site, the auditorium on the square and the gardens with their meandering paths and proposed art are all remnants of this idea. Unfortunately, the side never became the public space the architects had in mind.

Finally, the architects provided the design with a ‘cosmopolitan representation’. They thought about how democratic architecture should look. According to Noble, democracy must go beyond the representation of common will. It must open itself to forms of differentiation. Therefore there are two options. First of all to build in a style that has no connotations with any history or dominant culture. This has been tried in modernist architecture. Secondly, one could recognise all the diversities of cultural differences and use this in the design. LFS architects chose for the last option. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 92, 93)

The architects refer to the African traditional cultures and landscape. This has not only been done in architectural form and applied arts, but also in the

design process. The architects used a technique of a *sangoma* for the formation of the composition of the plan. A *sangoma* is an African healer who performs practices by throwing bones. LFS made a Plasticine form for every function, threw them several times on the ground and sketched and analysed the compositions till they found an appealing set up (Noble J. , 2009, p. 52). This resulted in the loose geometry.

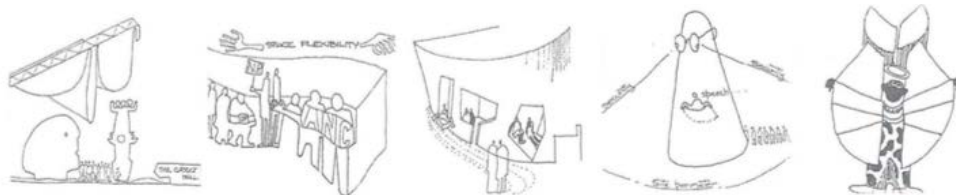
Despite the attempts to base the design on traditional South African culture and habits, a concern of ‘Eurocentrism’ developed during the design process. This is according to project architect Kevin Johnston. They wanted to create a truly ‘African’ building. The method they used however is based on a Western tradition of modernist vernacular architecture. The forms of the design were abstract and sculptural, evoking the sense of modernism. The architects tried to reduce this by the use of artwork on the facade and earthly colours. Their design is indeed clearly influenced by the modern architecture that was brought into South Africa by the South African architect Rex Martensen in the 1930s. Since then South African architecture education and practice



3.2.8 Sketches of Le Corbusier of the Assembly and the cooling towers in Ahmedabad.



3.2.9 Design sketch of LFS of the Northern Cape Legislature (1998).



3.2.10 Sketches of LFS for the competition (1998).

looked closely to how modernist architects, like Le Corbusier in Chandigarh (India) and architects in Brazil, dealt with vernacular architecture and how they were creating an architectural style with a national identity. Not only has this approach influenced LFS, but it has also equally influenced the formal language. Close similarities can be seen between Le Corbusiers' design for the Chandigarh governmental buildings. The way in which LFS had presented their design shows similarities with Le Corbusier too. Reference is made to the sketches of Le Corbusiers' view on Chandigarh and LFS sketches (see images 3.2.7 – 3.2.9).

Composition

The complex is organised along a north-south axis that crosses a circle forming a circus, named 'People's Square'. All functions have their own specific form, material and construction. This gives them an own strong identity. The cone shaped tower on the square in front of the Assembly and foyer dominates the complex. The tower stands as a proud, freestanding element in front of the dark wall of the Assembly. Above ground level it has a small door with a small balcony. Giving the suggestion that an important (almost holy) person could speak from here to the people on People's Square. Nevertheless, this composition clarifies the relation between the powerful Legislature and the people. The tower is commonly associated with the 'Zimbabwe Cone' of the ruins of Great Zimbabwe. One of the few African pre-colonial settlements made of stone (see image 3.2.12)

The Assembly is placed centrally at the end of People's Square. It has a round form of which a quarter has been cut out, opening to People's Square. Two plain sloping walls that get higher at the ends form a welcoming gesture that directs to the small entrance of the foyer in the middle. The Premiers Building is located at the east of the Assembly. The facade facing the court is detached from the solid closed building behind. The symmetrical facade has two large walls in the middle around the entrance. On the walls are two large man figures. Two wing-shaped elements protrude from the wall. The composition depicts a metaphor of the Premiers' body as shown by the architects in a sketch where the Premier is standing with a cape and outstretched arms welcoming people (see image 3.2.9 at the right).

The Members of Parliament building, west of the Assembly, has a fluid form that flows into the landscape. On the side facing People's Square is a solid closed wall with a cylindrical form in the middle.

The last components are the administrative offices placed behind the Assembly along the main axis. They highlight the axis and the direction to the north.

The expressive buildings around Peoples Square together with the tribune-like wings form an enclosed, welcoming stage. It is clearly a public space. The empty square symbolises a piece of semi-desert landscape of the province. The only thing on the square is the grass mound with symbolic trees. Despite the welcoming and embracing impression that the building evokes, the plain walls give a closed and fortified impression. It makes one feel welcome to enter the square, but



3.2.11 Aerial photo of the complex.



3.2.12 From a distance the forms seem to grow naturally out of the semi-desert landscape.



3.2.13 The cone shaped tower of the ruins of Great Zimbabwe.

the closed and imposing buildings are not inviting to enter. Overall the complex has a natural expression. Especially from a distance it looks as if the different shapes have grown out of the semi-desert landscape (see image 3.2.11).

Material and construction

Each building on the complex has its own particular material. This is to achieve the desired multiplicity of the design. The walls are plastered in earthy tones that refer to the semi-desert landscape.

The Assembly has a complex concrete frame and steel construction. The dark painted walls form a background for the square and emphasise the light, earthy, cone tower. There are large glass windows around the entrance to welcome people. Once inside, you enter the cave-like foyer. The cave-like atmosphere is enforced through the floor that is covered with dark, textured tiles. There are different dark concrete volumes, concrete columns, different ceiling heights and small beams of natural light that punctuate through the roof. All of this makes reference to the nearby archaeological discovery of caves.

The Premiers Building has a robust concrete frame with bricks plastered with a dark red colour resulting in a solid block. By this the Premier is

protected. Despite the welcoming impression, the building has a rather closed and distant appearance. The Members of Parliament Building has a simple construction with load bearing brickwork. The administrative block has a very light appearance with light green steel plated facades. It has modernist elements like the *pilotis*-like legs on which the building stands, the open plan and the *brise-soleil* walkway screening.

Art and ornament

Art played an important role in the symbolic and metaphoric references that are made in the project. The architects appointed the South African artist Clive van den Berg for all the artwork. He did not just want to add art on to the building like a separate layer. According to him, this was a Western and European manner in which art and architecture were in itself standing elements. In South African traditions, art is integrated within the building. Van den Berg also wanted to apply this idea in the Legislature. His vision for the art was to create a 'new public language, a new identity for the post-apartheid society'. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 87, 90) He used indigenous craft and decorative traditions. The art refers to several topics ranging from landscape, local rock formations, fauna and flora,



3.2.14 The Assembly and the conical tower.



3.2.16 The facade of the Premiers Building.



3.2.15 The facade of the Members of Parliament Building facing Peoples Square.



3.2.17 The administrative wing with its modernist light architecture.

San rock art, ways of moving through space and anti-apartheid icons. Art is applied throughout the entire complex, the exterior, the interior and also the gardens. In the facades facing Peoples Square, art is most extensively applied. The art is very symbolic and refers to the function of the building on which it is applied. On the cone, Van den Berg depicted the hopeful leaders of the new South Africa, Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki, in mosaics. He left a blank space for the future icons. He did the same on the cylinder of the Members of Parliament Offices where he made mosaics of South African Heroes and left three blank spaces. The open-ended narrative depicts the euphoric vision Van den Berg had on the future of South Africa.

The two human figures on the facade of the Premiers Building are like guards protecting the Premier. This feeling of protection is enforced by the wing shaped facade. This evokes a welcoming and intimidating impression at the same time. The wall is decorated with cast aluminum elements in the form of amongst others a HIV ribbon, a house and a book. These symbols have to remind the premier of his/her duties.

Natural references are made on Peoples Square. The sweeping stone patterns represent the lines that ants and insects make on the desert soil. In the cave-like entrance hall, brass reliefs represent San rock engravings. They are inserted in the dark stone floor tiles.

The art has clear similarities with the way in which art is applied in modernist architecture. Notice the similarities between the rough concrete head sculptures in the garden of the Legislature and the Open Hand Monument of Le Corbusier in Chandigarh. (see image 3.2.16 and 3.2.17).

The garden also forms an interesting part of the design. It was also planned to plan native plants here. So it would be a catalogue of local flora. However this garden has never been realised as

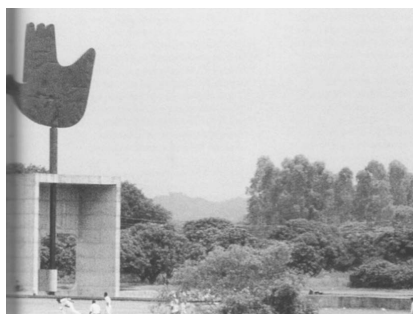
planned. Till today it still has the barren flora of the surrounding desert.

Relation to public

'Interactive Public Space' was one of the core elements of the design of LFS. Just as in some of the other entries the idea was to make the complex accessible to the public. First of all the architects tried to reach an inviting and open image by the lay-out of the complex. The central axis forms a connection between the north and the south. At the north, the complex borders the neighbouring township. Here a tram station was planned. From the south the complex is accessible by road. The axis crosses People Square that forms the centre of the site. The entire complex is surrounded by the proposed public gardens. By this the complex would not become an isolated site, but part of the future urban tissue. However, the surrounding area has still not been developed. The area is predominantly empty or occupied by squatters staying in tin shacks. The proposed tram was never materialised. While the vision for the complex was to form a bridge and encourage developments, it now forms a rather isolated island between the CBD and the townships. On top, the site is not freely accessible and although All photos show an image of large geometrical volumes standing in a desolated space.

Form, materials and symbolic art are used to transmit the values of the young nation and the characteristics of the province. On Peoples Square the architecture and art gives welcoming and embracing impression. As a matter of fact, as said before, this can also come across as distant and imposing.

The various art works refer to many historical, local, present and future topics. However, all the art is the vision of one man, Van den Berg. It is his view on the past, the present and the future of the Northern Cape and of South Africa.



3.2.18 Chandigarh's Open Hand monument.



3.2.19 Profile head sculpture in garden Northern Cape Legislature.

Constitutional Court

On the 4th of February 1997 President Nelson Mandela signed the New African Constitution. It replaced the Interim Constitution that was formed in the last years of the apartheid era. The way towards the New Constitution consisted of two steps. Firstly, the Interim Constitution was formed that began at the date of the elections. Secondly, a final Constitution would be formed under full democratic circumstances. After the Interim Constitution was introduced, the Constitutional Court was formed as a new board that had to watch over the new constitution. The Constitutional Court replaced the Appellate Division that was South Africa's highest court under the apartheid regime. The Appellate Division as an institute could have been maintained as the highest Court of South Africa. Just as the monumental building it was housed in (see image 3.3.1). Nevertheless there were too many associations with the apartheid regime. Therefore a new Court was formed existing of eleven new Judges. They demanded a new building that would suit the new South Africa.

Brief

The new Constitution represented the values of the new South Africa. The new Court building had to become a symbol of this new South Africa. The Court had to establish itself from the ground up. The first design task for the Court was to create a logo. With this, the first question arose about how the Court had to relate and express itself to the new society. According to Judge Albie Sachs, who was strongly involved in both the design process of the logo and the building, the symbol had to express the Court as inviting, warm, accommodating and transparent. It had to be in contrast to the former regime and something that was truly South African. So they avoided conventional iconography such as classical Western iconography, symbols that elevate the Court above the people and Lady Justice. The new symbol became a tree under which people of all races gather (see image 3.3.2). The tree was the place where native tribes gathered and where justice was done in pre-colonial time. The symbol shows that all people are equal. The lack of a framework makes the symbol dynamic and shows the freedom and openness of the logo. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp.

118, 120) The tree is a symbol that is more often used in post-apartheid South Africa. It is seen in many buildings. Such as in the Northern Cape Legislature where a real tree is placed on People's Square.

In 1997 an international competition was launched for the design of the new Court building. There was discussion about making it a national competition, probably to make it a 'real' South African building. In the end it became an international competition with the idea that if the South African entries were so good, they could withstand the foreign entries. The competition existed of two rounds. In the first round literally everyone could send ideas. Five projects were selected and entered the more detailed second round. (Noble J. A., 2011, p. 119) That there were no requirements to join the competition show the open and accessible attitude the Court wanted to express.



3.3.1 Court building of the Appellate Division in Bloemfontein.



3.3.2 Logo of the Constitutional Court. 'Justice under a tree'.

The design brief also notes the vision for the architectural expression. The building

... should have a distinctive presence, as befits its unique role, and should convey an atmosphere of balance, rationality, security, tranquility and humanity. It should be dignified and serious, but should have a welcoming, open and attractive character and make everyone feel free to enter and feel safe and protected once inside. (Noble J. A., 2011, p. 120)

The architectural brief shows similarities to the brief for the logo. The need that the Court had to be something new, representing the values of the open, free and diverse new South Africa, in contrast to the authoritarian, divided, apartheid regime, is clearly tangible. The entire process of the founding of the new Court shows a feeling of pride and euphoria about the future. This is also visible in the vision the Judges had about the building. The brief clearly points towards a building that expresses pride and dignity as well as also openness to the public and a friendly expression. It wants to represent the cultural diversity of South Africa, much more focused on the present and future.

Site

Before the composition of the brief, the Judges looked together, with the Department of Public Works, for possible locations in Johannesburg. They searched for a place with history and a narrative. The tension between the old regime and the new South Africa had to be tangible. The Judges were enthusiastic about the location of the Old Fort, a notorious prison during the apartheid years.² The largely abandoned site needed redevelopment.

In 1893, the ZAR Government built a prison on top of Hospital Hill in the north of Johannesburg. As a reaction on the Jameson Raid (1895-96) it was transformed into a fort. Wierda designed the prison and the fort. The main entrances features a ZAR crest with the ZAR slogan *Eendragt maakt Magt* (Unity empowers), most probably sculpted by Anton van Wouw. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 83) The jail and chosen location was a political statement of Kruger. He wanted to deal with the crime in the rapidly expanding mining town. The strategic location allowed the Boers to watch over and intimidate the *uitlanders* (foreigners, mostly

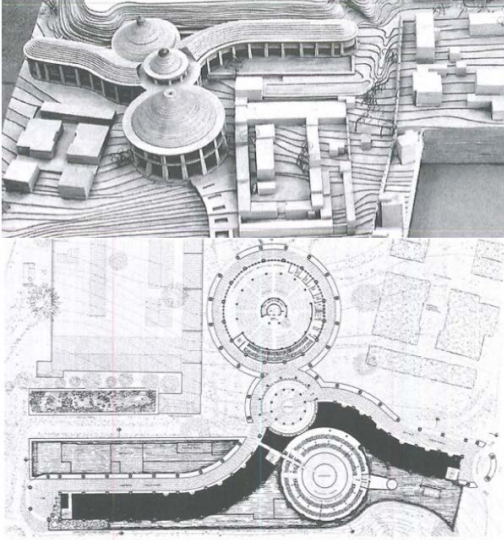
English speaking immigrants) who were considered to be a threat to the government. (Welch, A., 2015, p. 95, 96) After the Second Boer War the complex became once again a prison and grew into a complex consisting out of four blocks; the Old Fort, for white men, sections Number Four and Five, for the native prisoners, the Women's Gaol and the Awaiting Trail Block. During the British Colonial and apartheid years the complex housed all kind of prisoners ranging from petty to large major inmates as well as political prisoners amongst which Mahatma Ghandi. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 115-116) Nelson Mandela and the other members of the Congress of the People were captured in the Prison before the 1956 Treasons Trail in the *Paleis van Justitie* in Pretoria. Also the Old Synagogue in Pretoria formed an important place during this trail. On this way, all three buildings are important places in South African history of the struggle for freedom. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 84-85)

The site was seen as a symbol of past inequities that would be turned into a place of commemoration, solidarity and democracy. Further, the site is located between Braamfontein, the affluent 'cultural arc' of Johannesburg and Hillbrow. This is a poor neighbourhood known for its high levels of (multi racial) population density, unemployment, poverty and crime. One of the aims was the redevelopment of the area that formed an inaccessible island in the city for a long time. Next to the Court, housing and an array of museums and institutions promoting human rights have been realised. This strategic choice of location forms an interesting bridge between the past, the present and the future and the different sides of the town of Johannesburg.

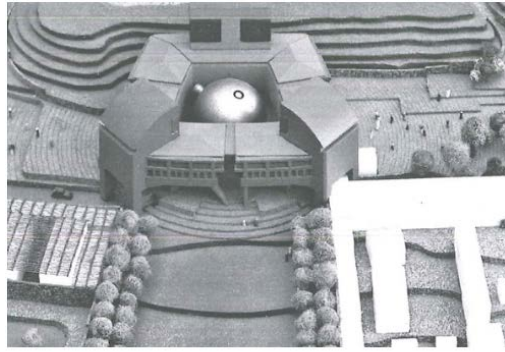


3.3.3 Location of the Old Fort Prison Complex with at the left the neighbourhood Hillbrow and right Braamfontein. The green spot right down at the site is the Old Fort. The Constitutional Court is market red.

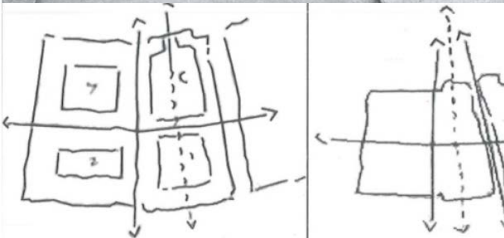
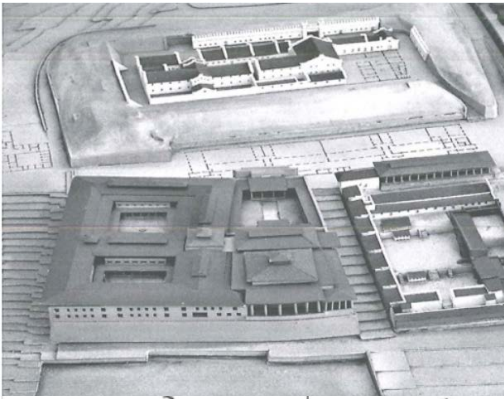
² Other options were: the Old Post Office, an abandoned colonial building in the Johannesburg CBD, not chosen because of its tight urban context; a site near Crown Mines, that could symbolically form a link between the white CBD and black Soweto but was too disconnected and finally a site in Midrand that was refused because of its lack of historic meaning. (Noble J. A., 2011, p. 118)



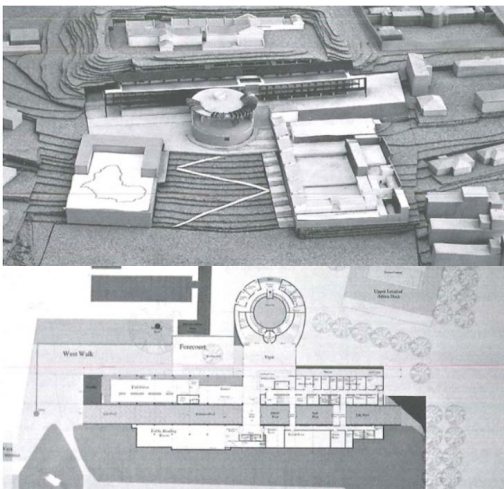
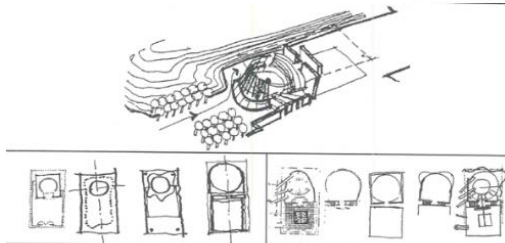
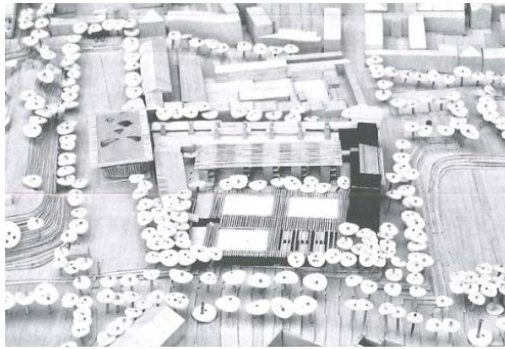
3.3.4 Design submission by Pearce Partnership.



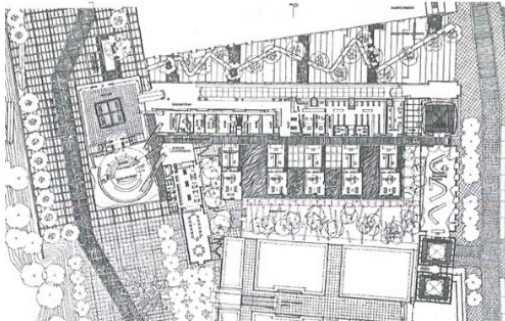
3.3.7 Design submission by Holm Jordaan and Holm.



3.3.5 Design submission by Justin Snell.



3.3.6 Design submission by Planning and Design Consultants.



3.3.8 The winning design submission of OMMUS.

Design submissions

The five final designs vary a lot. They differ amongst others from referring clearly to traditional South African architecture, a reaction on the site of the former prison and fort, and a very symbolic and iconic approach.

The fifth prized design of Pearce Partnership shows a plan that refers clearly to the traditional African round rondavels. It tries to achieve a 'sense of Africanness' by referring to traditional pre-colonial forms. It is as a magnified traditional African village that flows on the slopes of the hill between the rigid architecture of the prison. The Jurors critiqued the magnification of the traditional forms and saw it as a huge 'game lodge'. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 124-125) The plan shows the dominant reference to traditional Africa. It forms an independent shape in its surrounding. By this, the building does not react to the historic meaning of the site and discloses a large part of the South African culture of the past, present en future.

The fourth prized entry of Justin Snell shows a fortress-like design consisting of four courts. The architects reacted on the site, both architecturally and metaphorically. The architects seek the similarities in form and typologies of prison and court and how they can have a different meaning. This ambitious translation of mirroring the prison typology into a court could however remind the people of South Africa too much of the old regime. Despite the good urban embedding, the public spaces and use of the courtyard typology, the Jurors found this a risk and decided that the plan was too authoritarian. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 125 - 127)

The third prized entry of Planning and Design Consultants, presented a simple design consisting of two east- west orientated volumes with the court as a round independent shape on top of the slope of the hill overlooking the 'Constitution Field'. The Jurors commented that although the architects refer to many influences, this is not seen in the design. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 128, 129) The design seems to reflect on the site. However it has an overall generic appearance and architecture that could be build anywhere.

The second prized design of Holm Jordaan and

Holm, makes with their symbolic concept of 'HOLDING HANDS' a strong reference to the new, diverse and united society of South Africa. The architects explain that their design resembles different people of all backgrounds holding hands. They also refer to the tree and see their building as a new entity that grows out of the existing site. The Jurors admired the figurative symbolism, but missed a clear translation in the design. (Noble J. A., 2011, pp. 129, 130) The design is an abstract translation of people holding hands. It resulted in a heavy and dominant building, that earlier landed as a spaceship on Constitution Hill rather than a structure that grew out of the site.

The winning design came out of a collaboration between two offices, OMM Design Workshop and Urban Solutions (OMMUS). They presented a design that was much more fragmented and almost seemed to become one with the site.

Style and influence

Crucial for the OMMUS was to find an expression for the new democratic South Africa that emphasises its diversity. They pondered on the question what a democratic public space should be. In an interview by Johan Noble with the architects they stated the following:

Grand dominant monuments are only needed to represent victories of war, exclusivity in the face of threat to an unpopular social system, economic or elite social power, or the unattainable – places of God or the gods. The Constitution, and therefore its houses and precinct, have nothing in common with any of these situations. (Noble J. A., 2011, p. 131)

The architects emphasised they clearly wanted to distance the 'new South Africa' from the 'old South Africa'.

The architects explained that they were influenced by South Africa's unique culture and also by international influences ranging from Scarpa and Siza to Miralles. Important aspects were an understanding of South Africa's history (especially the history associated with the site), landscape, climate, urban context and the relation between public and private. (Sanders, 2000, p. 73) The modern architecture, with its open plan and routing, forms a tool that is used to create the open relation to the public. It is used as a coherent frame in which

the local South African peculiarities are integrated.

Composition

Openness to the public played an important aspect for the composition of the complex. The plan is a reinterpretation of the traditional African *indaba*, a meeting of representatives in the Zulu and Xhosa culture. This was mostly done under a tree. The main public space is the Constitution Square. The building mass in which the foyer and court chamber are housed is placed prominently on the square. The facade is both protective and inviting, just as a tree. A 'concrete umbrella' is draped over the volume and provides protection. Yet, this structure is open at several places through which the transparent glass facade is visible. The entire volume is accentuated by towers that lights up at night. These towers stand as a beacon of light and hope above the remnants of the staircases of the old fort.

The foyer stands on a small plinth of black natural. This stone is also used as flooring of the public spaces inside. The angled columns inside the foyer elaborate on the tree reference. The court chamber is directly accessible from the foyer. Here the design distinguishes itself from the other entries, that detach the court chamber from the public, by either hiding it behind high walls, or lifting it above ground level.

Adjacent to the foyer is a hall that runs parallel to the 'African Steps' down to the library. Here emerges an interesting play between public and private. Next to the hall is the private area for the judges that looks out at the court. The wall between both spaces has slotted openings to make the private and public part visible to one another.

Materials and construction

Materials are used in a very elegant and subtle way. Different building techniques are used such as the obvious concrete column construction in the foyer, a light steel skeleton, wooden roofing and brick walls. Everywhere the construction is clearly visible giving the building an honest expression. It has nothing to hide. Different materials are used to distinguish the different building parts in expressing their multiplicity. The dark coloured natural stone plinth, on which the building volume of the foyer and court chamber stands, continues into the foyer and other public spaces. This emphasises the accessibility of the Court.

While the concrete construction and roof have a heavy and protective expression, the large glass facades of the foyer and translucent plating on the towers embody a very light and hopeful expression. Material is also used as a means to tell narratives. The bricks in the wall behind the Judges bench was derived from the demolished Isolation Block and serves as a reminder of the inequities of the past to both the judges and the public (see image 3.3.15).

Art and ornament

The art work also shows the euphoric feelings during the design process. Instead of one single artist, there was an art committee that selected about thirty artists and craft masters. There were five special sites appointed to well known artists. The artworks that are scattered through the building show a wide range of local African craft and sculptural traditions. Examples are the woven light fittings in the hall leading to the library. Other pieces are more symbolic and tell a narrative. Such as the brightly coloured text on the wall of the foyer (see image 3.3.16). Here is written in all eleven official languages 'Constitutional Court' showing the diversity in the country. Another example is the



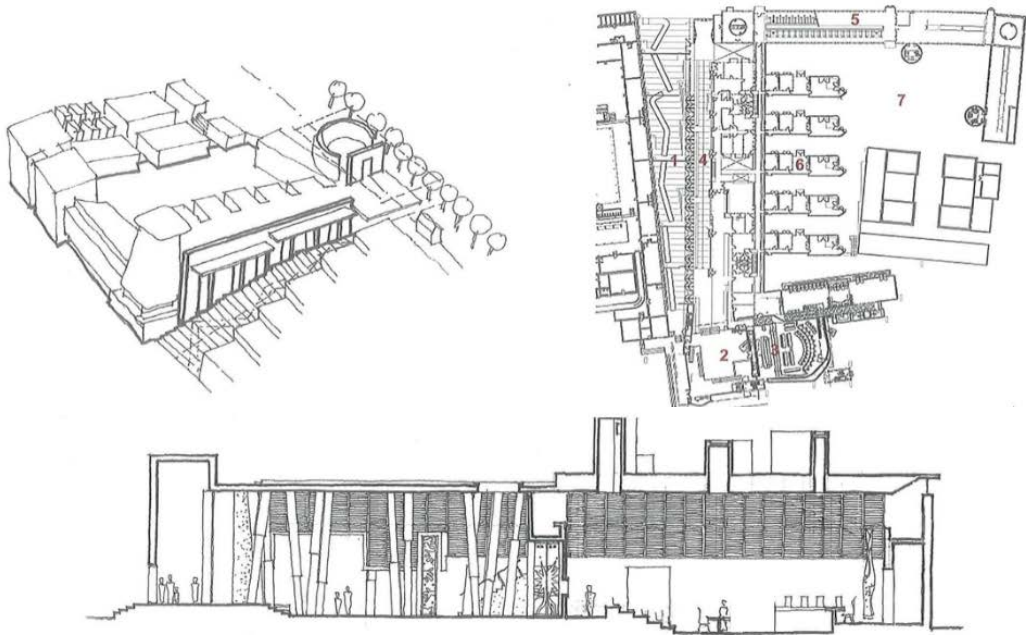
3.3.9 The African steps with at the left the Constitutional Court and at the right an old prison wall.



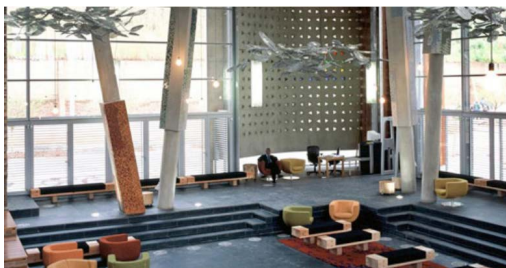
3.3.10 The light translucent structures above the old staircases.



3.3.11 The building volume of the foyer and court chamber seen from Constitutional Square.



3.3.12 Aerial sketch showing clearly the different forms of buildings and the two axes of the 'African Stairs' and the east-west connection, also visible in the plan. The elevation is a section from the square to the foyer and the court chamber.



3.3.13 The foyer with the arched columns with leaf patterns on.



3.3.14 The large doors with the 27 provisions of the South African Bill of Rights.



3.3.15 The reused brick of the prison on the wall behind the Judges benches.



3.3.16 The light translucent structures above the old staircases.

large heavy door on the front facade. Sign language that illustrations depicting the 27 provisions of the South African Bill of Rights are carved into the wooden doors. The concrete columns inside the foyer are covered with coloured mosaics of leaf-like patterns (see image 3.3.13). The columns are only partly covered so the concrete construction is still visible. A demand of the architects who wanted the construction to be visible to evoke an honest expression. The large variation of art is integrated in a subtle and coherent manner. The art tells many stories and enforces the public and open character of the building.

Relation to public

Public openness was one of the main issues of the design. The complex is carefully embedded in the urban tissue of the site. The two pedestrian axis come together in the prominent Constitutional Square. Braamfontein is now linked to Hillbrow by an east-west connection. the north-south stairsm named the African Steps, connect the square in front of the Court to the southern part of the site. The accessibility continues in the building through the foyer that leads to the court chamber. The public can circulate parallel to the secluded chambers of the Judges, clustered around courtyards. However, visual contact between both 'worlds' is possible by way of openings in the separating wall. The building has a warm and inviting feeling. The foyer is as inviting as a modernist concert hall. The public route through the building and its historical site make it an interesting and inviting building to visit.

Relation to Westfort

The reason for this research is the project I am doing about the Westfort Leper Colony. Especially the architecture of the main administration building and the church struck my attention. In this chapter I will look to Westfort ‘through the glasses’ of this research. How are the discovered values of the ZAR visible in Westfort? What can be learned of the approaches of the Northern Cape Legislature and Constitutional Court mean for a future public function on Westfort?

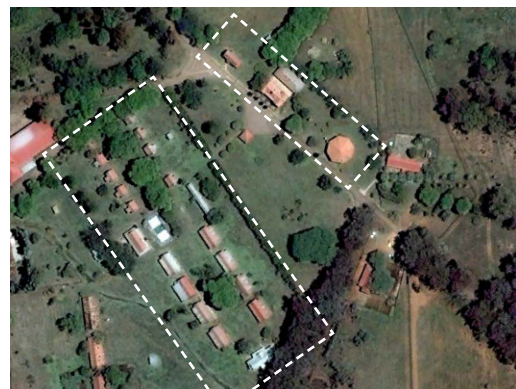
The first part of Westfort has been built by the DPW under the directions of Wierda and was called the *Nieuwe Leprozen Gesticht* (1898). Since 1927 the institution is known as the Westfort Leper Institution, or just as Westfort, *Wesfort* in Afrikaans. It was named after the English name, Westfort, for the nearby ZAR fort *Daspoortrand*. The first built part of Westfort clearly belongs to the canon of the ZAR buildings. With its red brick architecture, *speklagen* (streaky bacon) and modest ornamentation it is placed on the scale from representational to utilitarian buildings of the ZAR. This hierarchy is also visible on the site. Less representational buildings like the patient houses are more modest in ornamentation and style. The more representational buildings such as the Dutch Reformed church and main administration building have natural stone, streaky bacon strips and express dignity. The patient houses are now all plastered white. This has probably been done shortly after the arrival of the British.

Remarkable of Westfort is the trinity of the church, the administration building and the post office. They stand proudly on the foot of the ridge, along the end of the long road that leads to the fort. Because of their higher location on the site they overlook the patient area of Westfort. The church was located at the entrance of Westfort. It was the first building you saw when you entered the institution. This prominent location reflects the important position of the Dutch Reformed Church in the ZAR society. Unfortunately the church was burnt down and demolished in 2016. The second building along the main entry of Westfort is the administration building that proudly overlooks the institution. Thirdly along

the main entry stands the post office. This was the first building built on the site and it functioned in the beginning as a laboratory. Later its function changed into a post office. A function that formed the only connection for patients with the outside world before the existence of the telephone and other communication devices. A similar organisation of functions can be seen at Church Square. The church has the most prominent place and the executive power is located nearby in an building that expresses dignity. Both the *Raadzaal* and the administration building in Westfort show a ‘low threshold’. In the case of the administration building in Westfort, there is an *stoep* that gives the building a more informal and accessible appearance.

An open field separates the church, administration building and post office from the patient quarters. This configuration shows the relation between patient and staff. Wierda’s set up relates to the landscape. Note the different angles under which the trinity of the church, administration building and post office and the cluster of the patient quarters. This is because of the different directions of the slopes of the landscape (see image 4.1.1). Nevertheless, within the buildings and clusters there is a strict symmetry and hierarchy.

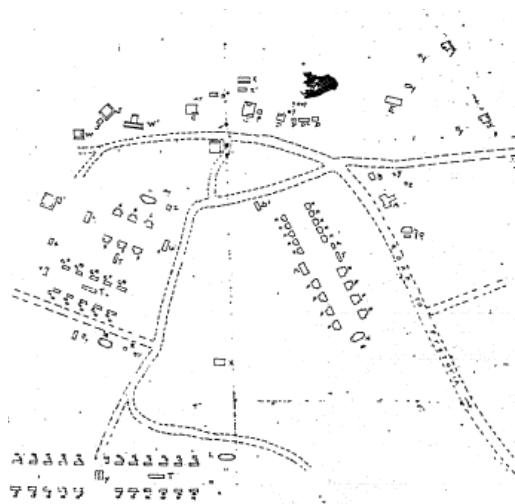
The plan of Wierda was based on the one hand on the Protestant healthcare architecture and the opinions about leprosy, at the time it was believed that leprosy could be transmitted through air, and on the other hand the ideologies of the ideal ZAR society. Freestanding buildings separated staff and patients from the healthcare point of view. However patients were also separated by sexes, class and race. This was according to the ideals of the ZAR



4.1.1 Relation of the church, administration building and post office (right on top) to the patient cluster (left below) in Westfort.

society.

There are similarities between Westfort and healthcare institutions in the Netherlands and its colonies. According to Nicholas Clarke similarities can be found in the *Maatschappij van Weldadigheid* Veenhuizen (1822). That has a strict orthogonal structure and became the principal leprosy colony of the Netherlands between 1848 and 1886. Just as in Veenhuizen the accommodation for the patients is placed along a court. The main institution building in Veenhuizen has a central turret, that marks its formal nature, and a clearly bilaterally symmetrical set up. This shows similarities with the administration building of Westfort. The church of Veenhuizen also seems to show similarities. Both have an octagonal structure. (Bakker, Clarke, & Fisher, 2014, p. 166, 168) However the recent discovery of photos and drawings show that the church in Westfort existed in the beginning out of two parts. A shelter for the reverend and the healthy people (probably the staff) and a large covered tribune for the patients. The tribune for the patients had three entrances at the back and a fence on the front of the tribune. This all avoided contact between the healthy and the diseased. Similar structures are found in the open churches built in the leprosy institutions of the Dutch colonies, such as the open church in the Gerardus Majella Leprosy Colony in Suriname. Veenhuizen is an example of early 19th century healthcare architecture in the Netherlands. At this time, healthcare facilities were mostly large interconnected buildings after French example. However, Wierda is most likely also influenced by the healthcare architecture of his time. The architecture for healthcare was developing



4.1.3 First known drawings of Westfort, not the open church.

quickly in the late 19th century. In the Netherlands, it was accelerated by the pillarisation. The different pillars had a desire to built all kind of institutions for their own people. This in a distinctive style of architecture. The so called pavilion system became popular among Protestants in the Netherlands as a distinct type of healthcare complexes in the late 19th century. In comparison to the early 19th century healthcare architecture, that were large interconnected buildings like Veenhuizen, the trend was now to build separate pavilions. These pavilions housed smaller groups of patients. Each house functioned as a ‘normal family’ with at the head a ‘father and mother’ that took care of the patients. In the case of the Netherlands, a strict separation was made on social class. All of this was in line with the general thinking that healthcare facilities needed to be placed outside the city in the nature, with fresh air, light and space were patients could heal and work. The first example of such a Protestant healthcare facility in the Netherlands is the psychiatric institution Veldwijk (1886). Veldwijk was built by the strict Protstant architect E.G. Wentink (1843-1911), the father of D.E. Wentink (1867-1940) who moved to South Africa and also



4.1.2 .First design for Veldwijk made by E.G. Wentink in 1884. Note the similar setup of the administration building in Westfort with the buildings on the drawing.



4.1.4 Plan of Veldwijk in 1913.

became here an architect. Veldwijk functioned as a model for Protestant healthcare institutions and was followed by a five other Protestant institutions in the Netherlands. Veldwijk shows similarities with Westfort. Both complexes have the same set up of patient houses around a symmetrical court. The most prominent place is appointed to the church. Staff houses (and some patient houses for the rich in the case of Veldwijk) are placed freely in the surrounding landscape. The administration buildings of Veldwijk and Westfort are both free standing buildings and stand on a prominent place next to the church. They both have a bilaterally symmetrical set up of three bays. The two outer bays have a triangular gable. The middle bay is set back and has the entrance. The covered *stoep* in the middle bay of the administrative building in Westfort is a local adaption to the climate and building culture of the ZAR. Both buildings were built in a Neo-Renaissance style, the style of the Protestants in the Netherlands, with red brick, white speklagen (streaky bacon) and modest ornamentation. This shows the Dutch Protestant influence that Wierda brought to the ZAR.

In my plan to give the oldest part of Westfort a public function, by way of a work incubator, the theme of separation and connection plays a major role, just as in the Northern Cape Legislature and Constitutional Court. The incubator does not have to be as representative as the governmental buildings. The people that come there have to feel welcome and should be able to relate to the architecture. The concept of separation resulted in the unique and characteristic layout of Westfort. This structure should not be denied. The open stretches of land between the clusters and free standing buildings are important, because contribute they to the unique sequence of different places. In the old days these spaces had a function as orchard, vegetable garden, flower garden or just a large grass lawn. However nowadays they are neglected and look more like wasteland. Especially these open stretches of land are very vulnerable. The tension between this characteristic spatial value of Westfort, and the sensitive concept behind, the idea of separation, stands in contrast with the idea of connection of contemporary South Africa. One must note that the idea of separation in Westfort was not only based on racial separation, but also the 19th century

healthcare point of view. This tension plays a major role in my project. By making a subtle connection over the different kind of borders I answered to this design assignment. This has been further done by using the architectural forms and dimensions of Westforts buildings in combination with the use of specific materials and the incorporation of local art and decorative patterns. Just as in the case of the Constitutional Court, the task for Westfort is to find



4.1.5 The open Dutch Reformed church in 1901.



4.1.6 The 'closed' Dutch Reformed church (2015).



4.1.7 The administrative building (2015).

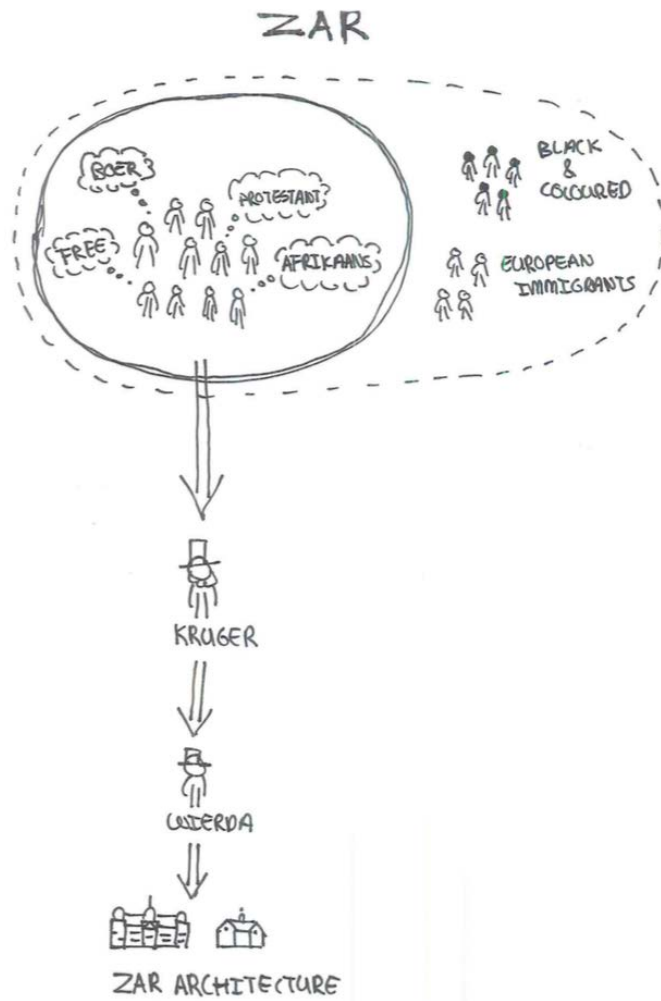
5.1 Conclusion

The aim of the research was to discover how the cultural and political values of the ZAR and the current democratic Republic of South Africa are translated into architecture. This in order for a better understanding of Westfort in relation to the time it was built and to the public architecture of today. In both periods there was a strong sense to create a distinctive architecture. All the four buildings are political statements that show to the citizens, but also to foreign countries, the ideals of the country. In the ZAR this has been done in a very uniform way. Effort was made to create homogeneous values. President Paul Kruger was the personification of this set of beliefs. He appointed the Dutch architect Wierda to translate the values of the ZAR into architecture. An interesting fact is that Wierda could start from zero. The ZAR did not have a building history, plus there were no notable public buildings yet. Wierda developed a distinct ZAR style based on his own and on the late 19th century, Protestant, Dutch ideas. He applied this style he created in a very consistent way. Wierda was insistent to maintain coherence in the style and identity of the public buildings. The canon of ZAR buildings is unique. In the Netherlands for example, buildings were built with the same frame of mind. However, here it resulted in an incoherency between the public buildings because of the different cultural and political backgrounds of the architects. From this perspective the ZAR architecture is unique, and Westfort is an indispensable part of that legacy. The ZAR clearly made a lot of effort to create *unity through unity*.

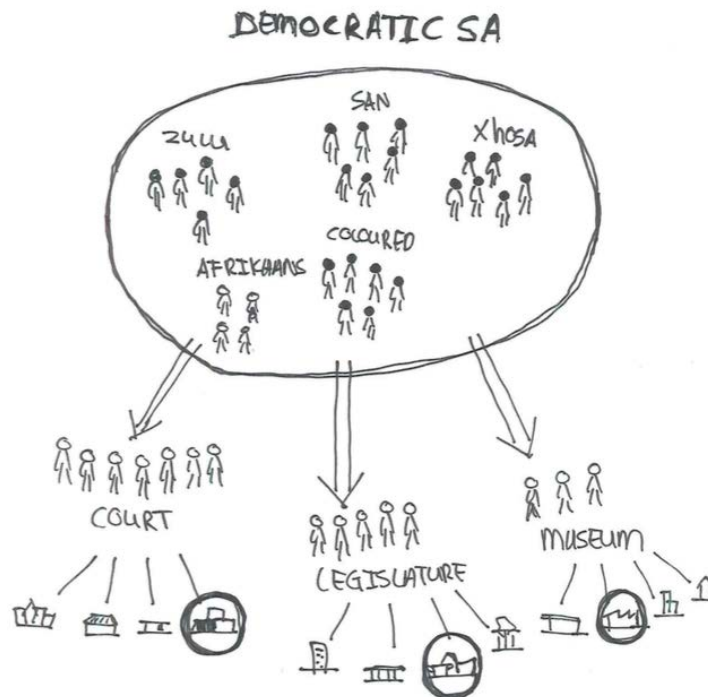
The South Africa of today is a diverse nation. There is a strong urge to represent all, and especially the formerly suppressed cultures in the public buildings in architecture. Both projects show that a design that was chosen that does not mainly represent one influence mainly one influence, but one that refers to many different South African influences. This resulted in hybrid and fragmented designs. In both cases, traditional and national specific elements have been combined with modern, western architectural styles. *Unity through diversity* would be a suitable slogan for this period. The range of public buildings is not coherent in style, there is a

wide variety. This is because of the many different architects. This suits the new South African ideology too.

Similar in both eras is how the use of material and art play a role as a mean to express ideas and communicate narratives and ideals to the people. In both periods the background of the architect was utmost importance. The Boer society clearly searched an architect that stood behind his beliefs and values. They found the right man in the Dutch Wierda, but still there was suspicion against this foreign influence. In the case of the Constitutional Court there was discussion about making the competition national. Location and relation to other buildings and the surrounding context is in both periods important. The public accessibility was the most important architectural issue.



5.1.1 Scheme architecture in relation to society ZAR.



5.1.2 Scheme architecture in relation to society current South Africa.

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