02 The lure of the 'Golden Republic'

Architectural exchanges between the Netherlands and the ZAR 1887–1899

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Johannesburg might be known as the City of Gold but it was the great South African popular history writer TV Bulpin who, when chronicling the social history of the ZAR until its demise, labelled the short lived Boer homeland as the 'Golden Republic' in this book of the same name.[1]

Sytze Wierda and Dam Square

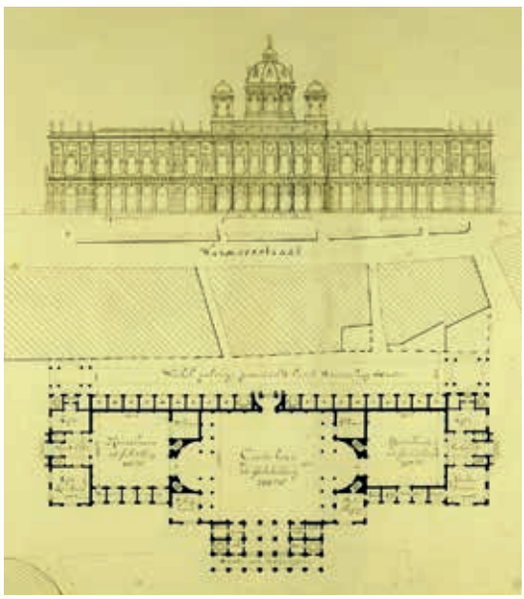
In the winter of 1879–1880 there was an overly ambitious proposal for the replacement of the Stock Exchange building on the most important public square in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, *Damplein* (Dam Square), Amsterdam. It was intended to change the face of the Dutch capital, but never went beyond being the dream of an obscure architect. Yet only a few years later, the same architect would shape another capital, 11 000km further south, where the inhabitants of a small twenty-odd year old frontier town were then embroiled in a war of independence which pitted back-veld farmers against the greatest world power of the time. The underdog won the day and during a brief interlude dreams of a Boer Arcadia were re-kindled in what became the short-lived resurrected *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (South African Republic, ZAR). These events and aspirations echoed as far away as the far-off Netherlands. There it found fruitful soil in their aspirations for a second Golden Republic, one far-removed from the intrigues, conflicts and aggressions of late C19 Europe. This is a story of those dreams and their architectural residue.

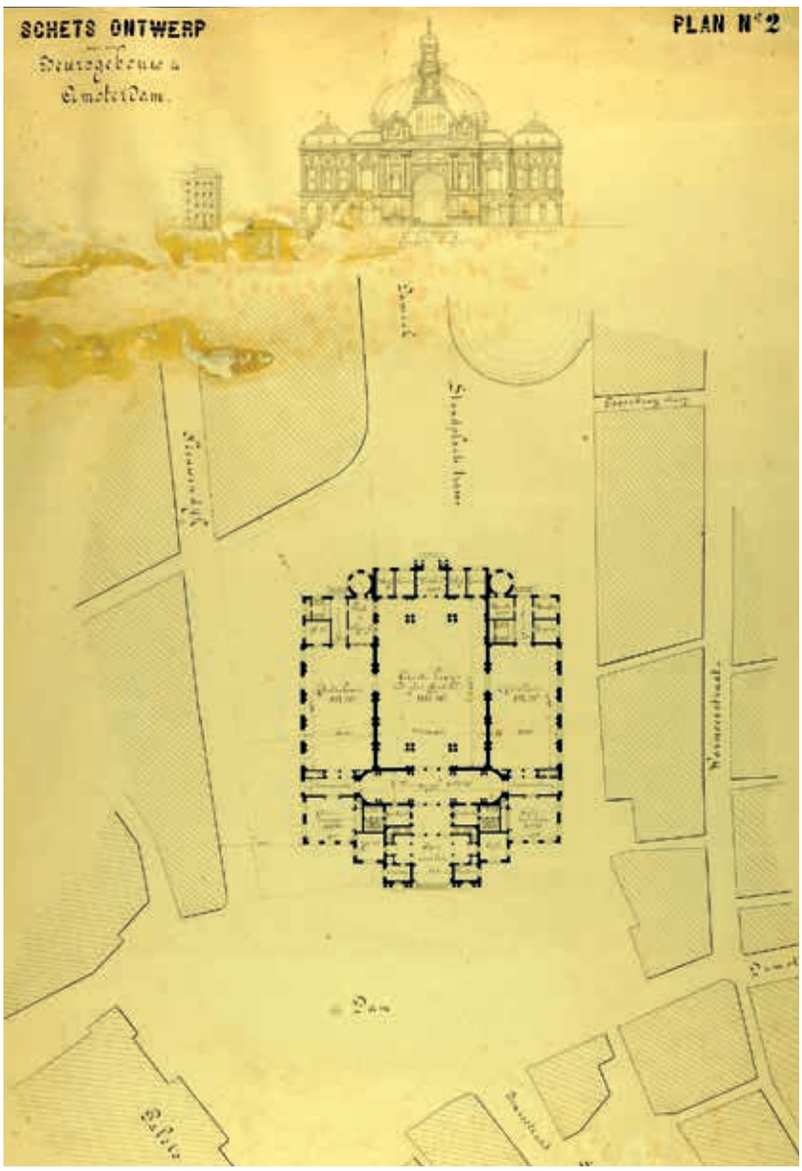
In Amsterdam of the 1870s Jan David Zocher's (1791–1870) unloved, Schinkelesque Neo-Classical Stock Exchange building dating from 1845 (figure 02.02) had become too small to cater for the late C19 boom in trade, a consequence of the later, by comparison elsewhere in Europe and on the globe, industrialisation of the Netherlands. The growth in

1 Bulpin, 1953.

02.01 (Left) Dam Square Palace (2005).

02.02 (Right) A c.1847 perspective drawing of the Amsterdam Stock Exchange on Dam Square, Amsterdam as designed by JD Zocher.





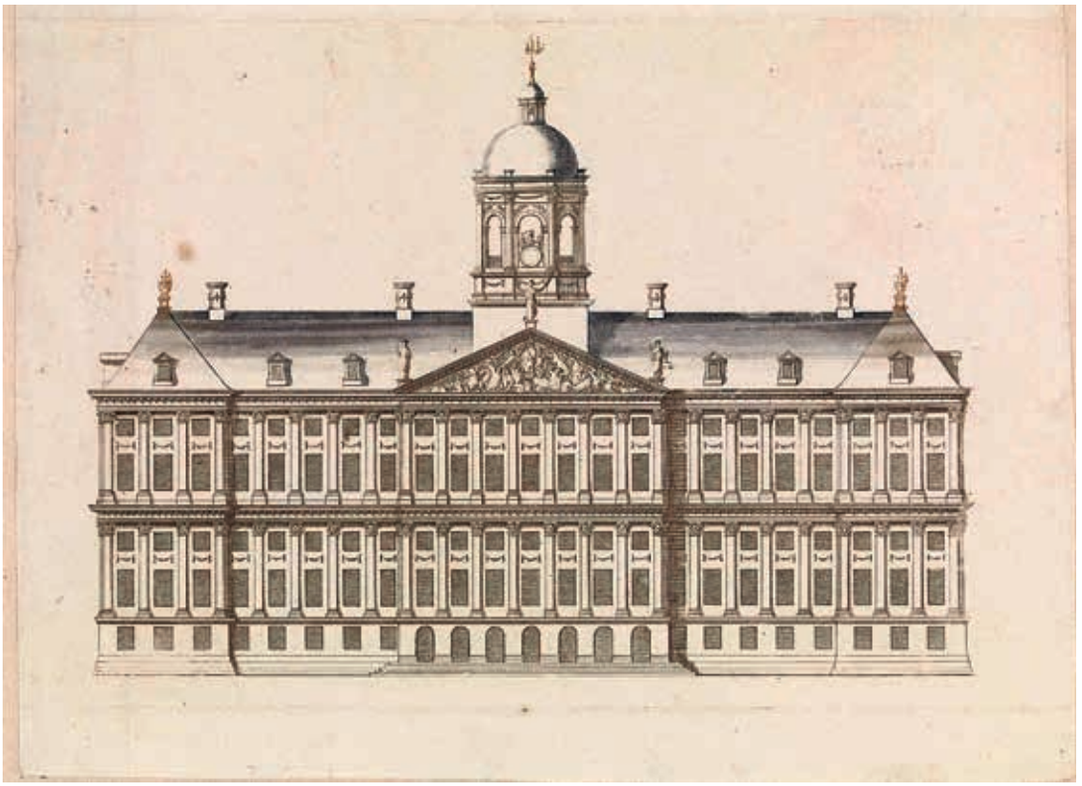
02.03 (Left, top) Sytze Wierda's first design for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange on Dam Square, 1880.

02.04 (Left, bottom) The Frankfurt stock exchange Buidling by Burnitz and Sommer (1874–1879).

02.05 (Above) Sytze Wierda's second design for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange on the Damrak, 1880.

02.06 (Below) Karl Freiherr von Hasenauer and Gottfried Semper, *Kunsthistorisches Museum*, Vienna, 1872–1891.

wealth and associated building boom is now often called the 'Second Golden Age' of Amsterdam. Apart from being too small, the Stock Exchange was also not deemed beautiful enough for its elevated civic role in the financial capital of the Kingdom and so the City of Amsterdam issued an open invitation to architects to submit proposals for its replacement. When, in the winter of 1879–1880, Sytze Wopkes Wierda (1839–1911), at that time employed as a chief supervisor of works in the *Maatschappij tot Exploitatie van Staatsspoorwegen* (Company for the Exploitation of the State Railways), submitted his designs for a new *Beurs* (Stock Exchange) for Amsterdam, he did so hoping that this project would set him up as independent architect.[2] Wierda was an ambitious, skilled and versatile man. Born, baptised and schooled in Wynjeterp, an outlying provincial town in the province of Friesland, he had trained as a carpenter, was night-schooled as a draughtsman and job-trained as an engineer and architect. This wide, if somewhat informal, set of skills would come in useful later in his life when he was entrusted with the role of Chief Engineer and Architect for the ZAR. In this role he was to oversee the design and construction of its administrative, judicial and utility buildings, roads, bridges and other infrastructure.



02.07 Amsterdam City Hall by Jacob van Campen, 1648–1665.

Nothing came of the, in total, five proposals developed by four architects for the *Beurs* but this exercise did eventually lead to the international competition for the Exchange, which in turn brought about the construction of the Stock Exchange in 1904 to the design of HP Berlage (1856–1921). The turbulent process that led to the realization of this building, and the related transformation of Dam Square, was a much talked-of topic at this time, leading to polemic discussions in the architectural and general press of the day.

In the first call for proposals, architects were asked to submit a design for an exchange building on a location of their choice. No programme was specified for the building, and neither were there any given criteria for the assessment of the submissions by the committee of city councillors appointed by the municipality to judge the designs.[3] This gave the participants the opportunity to express their visions for the Stock Exchange, also called the '*Beurs* problem', and the inner city without being hampered by financial restrictions or practical considerations.

Sytze Wierda submitted two designs, accompanied by a written explanation and a budget.[4] He argued that Dam Square was the only appropriate location for a new Exchange as it was the only place in the centre of Amsterdam where the Exchange would have enough space around it as befitted its status, or in his own words, that Dam Square was 'the only well-known and monumental square in Amsterdam'. In his opinion no other urban space in the city would lend as much to the character of the building as that of its location on Dam Square. He thus envisaged that his 'eighth Wonder of the World' would be created by either the expropriation and subsequent demolition of buildings, or by the filling in of canals.[5] He contested that the main façade of such a civic building had to be located on a square, and most definitely not in a street.[6] He concluded, without being overly modest, that his proposal would create a building for that the city of Amsterdam that would give impetus to its process of modernization and monumentalization. He stated that if 'enriched with a monumental Stock Exchange, Dam Square could be classified as one the most distinguished squares of Europe'.[7]

In both Wierda's designs, the Exchange was conceptualised as a free-standing structure on an enlarged Dam Square. Both designs contain three interconnected trading halls, one larger and two smaller. In the first proposal (figure 02.03), the Exchange building was to be stretched out along the Damrak (today the main thoroughfare connecting the Amsterdam Station with the Dam Square), with the three halls and their adjacent subsidiary rooms in succession. A shopping gallery was to run along the back of the building, out of sight. The seven-part main façade was to be located on the Damrak, where the demolition of an entire building block was required to create enough viewing space around the building. A dome and two smaller cupolas were to punctuate the central entrance to the main trading hall. Wierda mentions that he modelled this first proposal on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange (1874–1879), built in Renaissance style by the architects RH Burnitz (1827–1880) and O Sommer (1840–1894) (figure 02.04).[8]

2 Rex, 1974: 186–199.
3 Hoogewoud, 1974: 277–364.
4 Rex, 1974: 186–199.
5 Here, Wierda quotes C17 poet and writer Joost van den Vondel, who described Amsterdam City Hall as such in his occasional poem for the inauguration of the building in 1665. See Van den Vondel, 1655: for the entire text see www.dbnl.org/tekst/vond001inwy01_01/index.php. Wierda's explanatory notes are to be found with the drawings in the Amsterdam City Archives; see Hoogewoud, 1974.
6 Rex, 1974: 186–199. Other locations that were studied at that period were the location of Raadhuisstraat, at the back of the Royal Palace, and Damrak, where the Exchange ultimately was built: Hoogewoud, 1974. See about the second competition: Weissmann, 1904, 55 ff.
7 Rex, 1974: 187.
8 The similarities between the Frankfurt Exchange building and the Public Works-designed Magistrates' Court in Potchefstroom are quite striking.

Wierda included a motto in German in his explanatory text. It reads *Je reicher nun der Plastische Schmuck der Aeusser werden durfte, um zo einfachen mussten die Baumassen sich gestalten* (The richer the plastic ornamentation of the exterior is to be, the less complicated the volumes of the buildings should be formed). This motto referred to the then prevalent architectural position, based partly on the influential *Tektonik der Hellenen* by Karl Bötticher (1806–1889) of the time. In this the author made a distinction between the *Kernform* (tectonic structure) of a work of architecture and its *Kunstform* (decorative cladding), the latter representing and symbolizing the relevant institutional status of the building by revealing the inner essence of its tectonic nucleus.[9] This perspective on design became common in C19 architectural theory. Wierda's quote, which contains several errors in the German language,[10] might come from the circle around Gottfried Semper (1803–1879), the leading architect and theoretician of his time. This quote is not directly taken from Semper's handbook *Der Stil*, a work in which Semper set out his ideas on the design of buildings and the application of ornament,[11] but there is positive proof that Wierda had a profound knowledge and admiration for the architecture of Semper.

His first design for the Exchange building, with a longitudinal plan and the main façade located along Damrak, has a façade designed as an almost exact copy of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum* (Art History Museum) in Vienna (1872–1891), designed by Gottfried Semper and Karl Freiherr von Hasenauer (1833–1894) (figure 02.06 and 02.08). In fact the only distinction between the two is that in Wierda's design, the central *avant-corps* is composed of five bays instead of three, allowing for more space around the central domed turret. In his explanatory text, he described this, his first design, as being in 'high Renaissance style', which, he stated would combine well with the Royal Palace, Amsterdam's former Town Hall on Dam Square, which he curiously called 'early Renaissance'. Anecdotally it is worth mentioning that designs in subsequent competitions for the Amsterdam Exchange caused a public scandal when claims of plagiarism were raised against some of the

9 Frampton, 1996: 516–528.
10 Spelled correctly, Wierda's quote would read: *Je reicher nun der plastische Schmuck des Aeusseren werden durfte, um so einfacher mussten die Baumassen sich gestalten.* Thanks to Christian Bertram.
11 Kruft, 1985: 331–369; Semper, 1860. Thanks to Christian Bertram and Wilfred van Leeuwen.

02.08 Karl Freiherr von Hasenauer and Gottfried Semper, *Kunsthistorisches Museum*, Vienna, 1872–1891.

entries [that of the firm of AL van Gendt (1835–1901) in 1884 and that of LM Cordonnier (1854–1940) in 1885].[12] Fortunately for Wierda, his design disappeared from the discussions and therefore did not become the subject of controversy.

Wierda's second design (figure 02.05) was, in his own words, of a 'free Renaissance' style. The freedom Wierda referred to is the possibility of interpreting, modifying and applying any historical style, or combination of styles and elements to new buildings – the basis for eclecticism. Wierda obviously saw the Renaissance Revival, albeit 'free' or' high' as appropriate for important civic buildings like the Exchange, a position he maintained for the rest of his architectural career.

This second proposal was for a more centralized building, also free standing, but with an approximately square ground plan containing the central trading hall flanked by two smaller halls. This symmetrical main façade, planned to face onto Dam Square, was composed of a monumental entrance articulated as a derivation of a triumphal arch flanked by two small turrets. Set behind this was the main hall of the building, to be covered by a central dome, which, according to Wierda, would result in an 'elegant' and even 'exalted' building. This building was to have a greater presence on Dam Square than Wierda's first proposal and counter the façade of the Royal Palace (figures 02.01 and 02.07) on a diagonal axis. The siting of the building was however, clearly problematic for its designer, as the Exchange would in reality not form one of the sides of the square but be located *within* it. Dam Square would become larger in area – the tram stops would need to be relocated to the Rokin, a thoroughfare further along the way – but the plan would result in an irregular, ragged urban space, in which the front of the new exchange building would dominate Dam Square and overshadow the Palace.[13] In both designs, Wierda constrained his design with the requirement that all halls each be accessible independently from the other. This effectively mandated an all-round orientation to allow for this required direct accessibility from its urban surroundings. In support of his submission Wierda made a statement to the effect that while it was possible for a building in a street to have a monumental façade, only a free-standing building could be called truly 'monumental' as a whole. For this reason he allowed no shops on the perimeter of the Exchange even if this could have helped to balance the budget. His alternative proposal was that shops be created in a separate public street, reserving the monumental triumphal arched entrance for access to the Exchange alone.

Both the architectural design of the Stock Exchange as well as Wierda's proposals for the urban layout of Dam Square had their antecedent in Vienna's Maria Theresien Platz. Commissioned by Franz-Joseph I (1830–1916), emperor of Austria-Hungary, it consists of a public square, framed by two opposing symmetrical buildings of monumental scale; Semper's *Kunsthistorisches Museum* and the opposing and more-or-less identical edifice that contains the *Naturhistorisches Museum* (Natural History Museum), both topped by a tower-framed cupola. In the centre of the square stands a monumental statue of the Empress Maria-Theresa on a pedestal with four equestrian statues – a lay-out that influenced Wierda's dreams for Dam Square. Incidentally, Dam Square at the time also contained its own *pièce de milieu*, the *Naatje*, a free-standing Gothic Revival column on top of which stood the personification of the Unity of the State (figure 02.10). He was to get to the opportunity to effect this precedent later in his life.

As an aside, it is worth mentioning that in both Wierda's proposals the foundations of the existing Exchange would be re-used in the new building, which would strongly reduce building costs, a decision in tune with Wierda's pragmatic approach to architecture, and we can speculate, his prudent Calvinist character.

In 1880, there was no means by which the Amsterdam city administration could have realized either of Wierda's plans. Even though trade was flourishing and the city was expanding for the first time since the decline of the Dutch Republic, there was no prospect of finding the necessary funding required for the project. Neither was there consensus about the location of the building. In fact, the commission that was asked to judge the plans, opted for the choice of locations proposed by the architect and engineer AL van Gendt, either at the back of the Royal Palace, or near the Central Station (figure 02.09).[14] Wierda was not unfamiliar with the architectural practice of Van Gendt. A proponent of the Neo-Renaissance style, AL van Gendt had designed the station buildings on the Amsterdam-Zaandam railway line on which Sytze Wierda had acted as supervisor for the commissioning owner: the *Staatsspoorwegen*. (See Chapter 2, *The making of an architec*t)

Wierda, being an employee of the *Staatsspoorwegen*, did not only see his proposal for the new Stock Exchange as an opportunity to embellish Dam Square, but also approached it from a wider perspective. He seized it as a chance to realign the square to its the new urban position brought about by the location of the new Central Station on an artificial island in the IJ Lake connected to the Dam Square by the Damrak passage, an alignment which in effect followed the old course of the Amstel, the river in which the *Dam* was constructed and around which Amsterdam grew. Wierda was, after all, intimately involved in the construction of this new station. His second design seems to be directed chiefly towards the station, its eastern façade terminating the Damrak. This façade was to become the new façade of the city, a symbol

12 See for instance Lansink, 1979: 41.

13 Wierda therefore proposed the demolition of all buildings on Dam Square between Nieuwendijk and Damrak (the cost of which he estimated at 1,25m guilders).

14 After his unsuccessful proposals of 1880, Wierda withdrew from the further discussions about the Amsterdam Stock Exchange and did not take part in the international competition that was organised in 1884: Hoogewoud, 1974.

of property based on trade, seen by all entering the city from the new station. Even though this proposal would reshape Dam Square to a more intimate scale, it would remain as spatially problematical as it was before his proposed intervention.

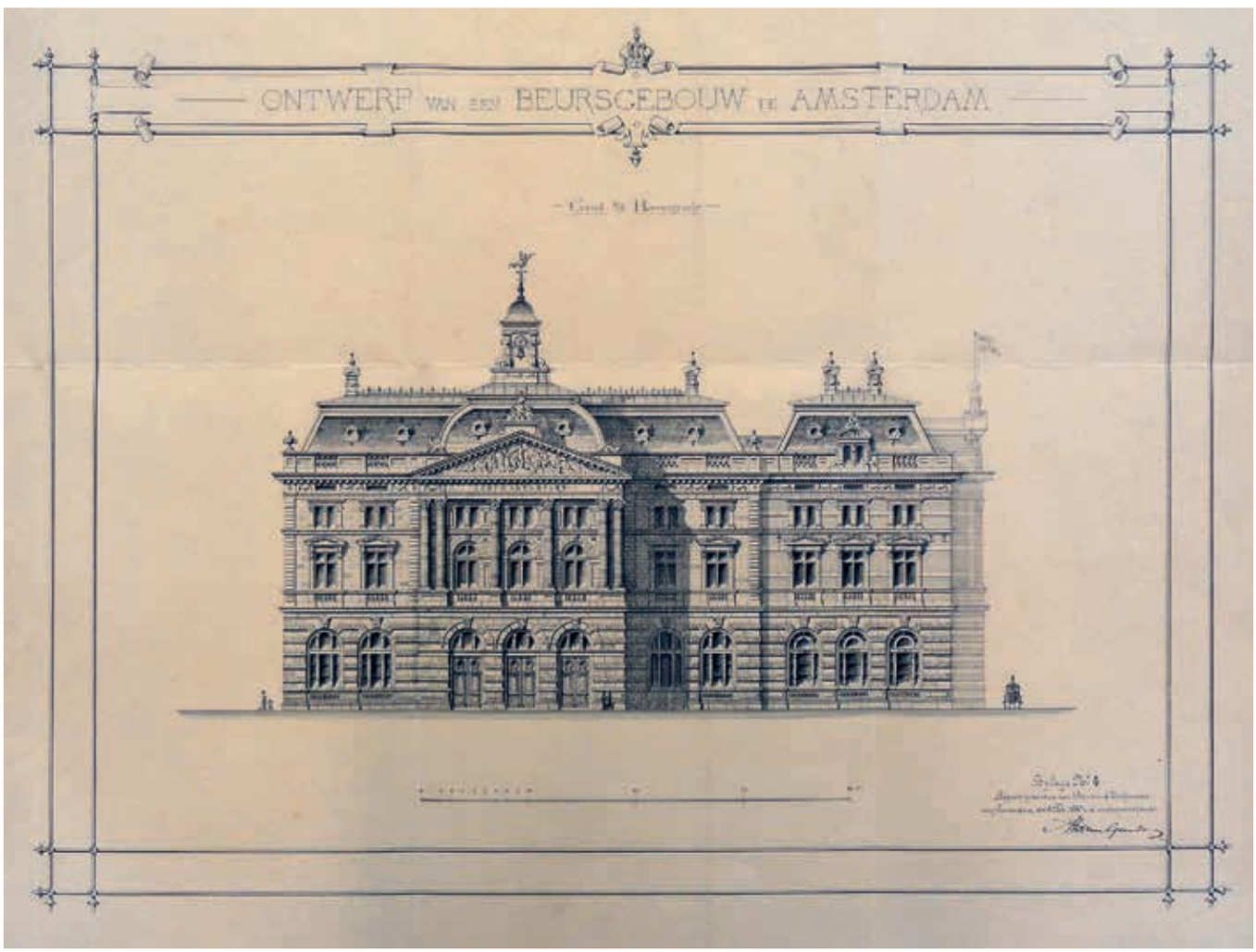
In developing his proposals Wierda also needed to study the large and complex spatial requirements of the programme for a Stock Exchange. The programme was complex, requiring strategies dealing with the distribution of the different interconnected parts of the building, each consisting of a large covered trading hall with its adjacent administrative and meeting rooms. It needed to address the role that such a building would play in the city, as well as the layout of a square. The making of urban space with monumental buildings was a complex problem which needed urban, architectural and engineering skills.

Wierda did not get opportunity to make any tangible contribution to Dam Square. Yet, like Amsterdam's Dam Square with its Royal Palace, Church Square in Pretoria, was to be the heart of a nation, where the governmental, administrative and judicial systems would be represented. Here Wierda's visions for Amsterdam's Dam Square were to find fruition.[15]

The politics of architecture in the Second Golden Age

After the end to the Dutch Republic of the United Netherlands brought by the Napoleonic invasion (1795) and the interregnum of the Batavian Republic (1795–1813), the Kingdom of the Netherlands was founded in the early C19 (1813). A period of nation-building followed and politicians, writers and artists found their inspiration in that of the earlier Dutch Golden Age. Figures like *father of the fatherland* William of Orange (1533–1584), painter Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), author Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679) (figure 02.11), and sailors Jan Pietersz Coen (1587–1629) and Michiel de Ruyter (1607–1676) were presented as national heroes through the erection of statues and other monuments as well as through inclusion in the *Nederlands Museum voor Geschiedenis en Kunst* (Netherlands National Museum for History and the Arts), founded in 1875. During this time conservationists started campaigns to protect the urban and architectural heritage of the period of the Dutch Republic from the wave of modernisation. The threat was consequent to the second Golden Age of the second half of the C19.[16] In 1857 *Vaderlandsche geschiedenis* (the history of the fatherland) became a

15 Rex 1974: 204, note 40.
16 Abrahamse, 2010: 22–26.



02.09 Van Gendt's 1880 design for the Amsterdam Stock Exchange shows a remarkable likeness to the design developed by Wierda for the Pretoria ZAR *Raadzaal*.

02.10 The Amsterdam Dam Square *Naatje,* a national monument representing the unity of the Dutch Kingdom. (Constructed in 1845, demolished 1914).

legally compulsory subject in primary education.[17] The story of the Dutch Revolt (1568–1648) against Spain was the central theme of this history as a given fact.

Neêrlands Israël

In the late C19, church and the state were still intimately linked. Sentiments such as those expressed by prominent Dutch statesman GW Groen van Prinsterer (1801–1876) that the Dutch Republic had owed its existence to the reformed church were not exceptional ideas. Van Prinsterer felt that the Protestant character of the state as consequence, of needs, had to be maintained. This Protestant hegemony, he felt, had to be fostered, especially after the restitution of Catholic episcopal power in the Netherlands in 1853. He was not the only public person to propagate this position. The prominent historian Pieter Geyl (1887–1966) was convinced that the patriotic feelings of leading groups in the Dutch Republic were based on the Protestant religion – in his view, the Republic was a state legitimized by its service to the Reformed church.

The comparison of the Dutch Republic, freed from Spanish and Roman Catholic rule, with the Biblical Israel was, from the late C16 onwards, a common theme in Dutch culture. It was also a popular subject for the arts and in literature during, what has subsequently been labelled, the 'Dutch Golden Age'. As a case in point, the orator at the funeral of Prince William IV of Orange (1687–1711) stated that:

> *In 1579, the Protestant church in the Netherlands was freed from the Egypt of Spanish tyranny, for it has secluded itself from the idolater people of the country, and the Protestant Netherlands withdrew itself from the midst and the community of the papist church, guided by one Moses and Aaron, with which I refer to prince William of Orange and count John of Nassau'.*[18]
> *In the C19, the idea of the Dutch Republic as a second Israel, enforcing the link between the state and its official religion, was a fairly common idea. The Netherlands was thought of as a state formed by God's chosen people through a 'history of which contained the grace of God.*[19]

This was not a perspective held only by the Calvinist reformed clergy, but seems to have been a ubiquitous belief throughout the Netherlands in the C19. It functioned as an ideology that was used to add meaning to the past and present state, while at the same time acting as guide towards the future.

During the Dutch Revolt, before the founding of the Dutch Republic, seventeen cities within the rebel provinces embarked on an ambitious trading enterprise, the *Vereenigde Oos-Indiesche Compagnie* (Dutch East Indian Company, VOC), founded in 1602. With its headquarters located in Amsterdam, it challenged Portuguese, English and French rule in the East Indies. Equally ambitiously, the *Vereenigde Wes-Indiesche Compagnie* (Dutch West-Indian Company) attempted to hijack the Spanish trade interests in the West Indies. In 1652, just after the 1648 Treaty of Münster brought an end to the Eighty Years War, the VOC established a trading company at the *Kaap de Goede Hoop* (Cape of Good Hope) while at the same time the City of Amsterdam was constructing a 'Palace for the Republic' as town hall at Amsterdam.

17 Boekholt and De Booy, 1987: 155–159.
18 *In 1579 is de kerke der Protestanten in Nederland verlost uit het Aegypten der Spaanse dwinglandy. Immers heeft zich afgezondert van de afgodische volkeren des lants ende de Protestantse Nederlanden zyn uit het midden ende de gemeenschap der Paepse kerke uitgegaen en uitgeleit door eenen Moses en Aäron, ik meene Prins Willem van Orange en graaf Jan van Nassauw;* Van Velzen, 1752: , cited in: Van der Kolk, 2009: 384.
19 Van der Kolk, 2009: 10, 14.

02.11 A statue of the C17 poet Joost van den Vondel by Louis Royer, 1867.

02.12 Hendrick de Keyser, Town Hall, Delft, 1618–1620.

Within this context of a *Neêrlands Israël* [20] it comes as no surprise that the architect Jacob van Campen (1596–1657) envisaged this majestic new town hall as a reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon. Like the temple, the City Hall was taken into use after seven years and seven months of construction, even if, to an extent, still incomplete.[21] It was a symbol of the civic and economic victory of the Dutch, God's chosen people, over the Spanish, the Catholic Canaanites or Egyptians (the Biblical metaphors were interchangeable). The VOC soon became the symbol of the newly found wealth of the Northern Lowlands despite the fact that much of the wealth in reality stemmed from the timber and grain trade with the Baltic states. Additionally much wealth and new skills had entered the country when Jews and Protestant Christians were forced to flee the Counter-Reformation in Spain at that time. The Spanish barricade across the River Scheldt and the subsequent fall of the most important Dutch trading city, Antwerp, to the Spanish commander Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma in 1585 changed the geography of the Netherlands. The Duke of Parma allowed Antwerp's wealthy traders a period of grace to leave Antwerp and take their riches along with them. Most resettled in Amsterdam and used their knowledge of trade and economics to make their adopted city the centre of world trade.

As part of the extensive VOC network, a small trading and refreshment post was established at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. Even though this was not initially intended as permanent settlement, the Dutch and other European colonists of the Golden Republic located at this C17 trading post were to become the ancestors of the Boers or Afrikaners of the ZAR of the C19. The Boer religion was a particularly conservative form of Calvinism,[22] their language was, officially at least, Dutch, the language of their *Statenvertaling*, or official Dutch version of the Bible, that same used by Afrikaans language Christians until 1933.

It should come as no surprise that many parallels were drawn between the hard-won freedom of the Dutch Republic in the C17 and that of the Boer ZAR in the C19. In both cases the struggle for independence was the force behind a growing nationalism, in both cases the struggle was against a seemingly invincible world power, Spain and Great Britain respectively. This was a struggle of Calvinist minority against a heavily institutionalized foreign religion, intrinsically interwoven with the center of power of the oppressor, be that Catholic or Anglican. It was to be the Boer David against the British Goliath; the fight of the righteous underdog.

Towards a national architecture in the Netherlands

Of similar nature to the early C19 architectural 'Battle of the styles' that waged on the British Isles, but of slightly later date, was the Dutch search for an architectural expression to embody their growing national identity. At first, Jacob van Campen's stern classicism, as exemplified by the Amsterdam Palace seemed to be the link between then contemporary Schinkelesque architecture and Dutch history, but in time, the early Dutch Renaissance came to be favoured.[23] Architect PJH (Pierre) Cuypers (1827–1921) with support of his friend, politician and bureaucrat Victor de Stuers (1843–1916), both outspoken Catholics, assimilated the rationalism of Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879) that prescribed the clear visibility of functionality and structure and a logical use of materials as the basic principle for a new national architecture. They realized that Gothic architecture, which according to Viollet-le-Duc was most suited for the application of his principles, was too closely associated with the dark Middle Ages and with Catholicism for its application in Dutch public buildings. This was in part because of the sharp increase in the number of newly constructed Catholic churches in the Gothic revival style that came to dominate the skylines of Dutch cities and the countryside, many of which were designed by Cuypers. For a country polarised into Catholic and Protestant factions, another historical style needed to be effected, hence a new interpretation of the Dutch Renaissance, called *Oud-Hollandsche stijl* (Old Dutch Style), was

20 A term commonly used in the Netherlands in the C19.
21 Vlaardingerbroek, 2011.
22 Fisher and Clarke. 2010: 151–160.
23 Oxenaar, 2009: 246–252.

developed. It was based on the architecture of the Low-Lands of about 1600, the early, formative years of the Dutch Republic. Not only did it represent the vigour of the people, it also avoided the controversy as to the religious background of the architectural style and its creators. The first phase of the Dutch Revolt represented a struggle against Spanish repression and the freedom of the people from foreign oppression and was not a war of religion. Therefore the Dutch Renaissance Revival represented a non-partisan aspect of the Dutch Golden Age brought about by military, maritime, commercial and national excellence. The choice of an architecture that was constructed mainly of brick followed naturally from this stylistic choice.[24] According to the C17 architect and writer Salomon de Bray, Dutch Renaissance architecture, was different from its Italian examples, because it was adapted to the local climate and traditions.[25] The Dutch Renaissance style, with, in the words of the architect and academic, Eugen Gugel's (1832–1905), its *cheerful and picturesque diversity*, turned out to be ideally positioned as an appropriate national architecture as set out by Viollet-le-Duc rationalism. This brick-and-stone architecture, while incarnating the national spirit of the Dutch Republic, was also praised for its tectonic qualities, as it showed the structural logic of

24 Van der Peet and Rosenberg, 1995: 165–195.
25 Ottenheym, Rosenberg and Smit, 2008.

02.13 Lieven de Key, Meat Hall, Haarlem, 1602–1603 (2005).

buildings, in, for instance, its characteristic relieving arches above doors and windows.[26] The built projects of leading architects of this early period, Hendrick de Keyser (1565–1621) (figure 02.12) and Lieven de Key (c. 1560–1627) (figure 02.13), proved informative. However Jacob van Campen's (1597–1657) Amsterdam Town Hall, remained the ultimate symbol of the successes of the Dutch Republic. Pierre Cuypers, an ardent admirer of Van Campen, a fellow Catholic, went so far as to emulate the plan of the Palace on the Dam when designing the *Rijksmuseum* (National Museum) his largest, and most celebrated work (figure 2.06).[27] Of the many historical scenes with which Cuypers chose to decorate the walls of the *Rijksmuseum's* foyer, a scene depicting Jacob van Campen presenting his design for the City Hall to Amsterdam's *burgomasters* is one of the very few in this ensemble, all designed by Cuypers himself, that represents a scene from a period later than the Middle Ages.[28] Cuypers had been appointed architect of the *Rijksmuseum* (1876–1885) as a direct result of his close association with Victor de Stuers, who was responsible for the project on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Arts and Sciences. Cuypers had also earlier been appointed design architect for the new Amsterdam Central Station and thus became the architect of the two most prestigious building projects of the state in the capital, two buildings that were to function, literally and symbolically, as the gateway of a renewed Amsterdam, then recovering from a long period of stagnation.[29] Both buildings were to be designed in the *Oud-Hollandsch* (Old Dutch) style, effectively the official style of the nation. There had never been, among both architects and patrons, much of an agreement, or even clarity of the exact characteristics of this style, or about its appropriateness for any public buildings. However, with these two projects under construction, it became evident to many that Cuypers' eclectic Neo-Renaissance style was not *Oud-Hollandsch* as they had envisaged it and, nor, in their opinions, an appropriate style for the Central Station and the *Rijksmuseum*.[30] The discussion reached fever pitch. *Architectura et Amicitia*, (Architecture and Friendship) an organisation brought to life by architects to promote and debate on architecture, lashed out at, what they labelled, the Gothic Revivalists.[31] At the time the *Rijksmuseum* was even commonly referred to as a 'Bishop's Palace'. The monarch at the time, King William III (1817–1890) refused to lay the foundation stone. It eventually transpired that the, admittedly eccentric, king shared the opinion that the building was too papist and he declined to be present at the opening gala of the *Rijksmuseum*.[32] It was a turbulent political time in which the Dutch people established their identities through different denominations yet tried to find common ground in their mutual history. Architecture, along with the rest of Dutch society, became split into the three factions that would dominate the nation for the next one hundred years, the Protestant, Catholic and the Free Thinking alliances of followers.

God's chosen people

One of the more ludic actions undertaken during the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902), was when, in 1900, on orders from the British Military, a large heap of stones located outside the town of Krugersdorp were loaded onto wagons and transported to Vereeniging on the banks of the Vaal River 100km away. Some think that the stones were dumped into the Vaal River, once the border of the ZAR. Others proposed that the stones were transported from Vereeniging by rail to Durban and dumped into the Indian Ocean.[33] Their final location is not the point of discussion. The rocks themselves were significant. They came from under the Paardekraal Monument (figure 02.15), a commemorative needle built over the cairn of stone that commemorated the re-birth of the South African Republic through the courageous daring of its burgers in taking up arms against the British Empire. This led to Boer victory in the First Anglo-Boer War (1880–1881), a war in which a small force of farmers wrested back control of the Transvaal from the mighty British Empire.

The Paardekraal Monument is the only memorial Wierda's Department of Public Works, on instruction of the ZAR government, had the opportunity to execute. The sandstone commemorative needle has a vaulted base that once arched over the historic cairn that had been packed at an eight-day long meeting of Transvaal Boers in December 1880. At this meeting the decision was taken to fight the British occupation of the ZAR. At this meeting at Paardekraal these Boers also elected one of their commanders, Paul (SP) Kruger (1825–1904), as Vice President for their newly re-constituted Republic, a move which effectively put him on the path to becoming the iconic president of the ZAR.

Like much of the Second Anglo-Boer War, the destruction of the Paardekraal stone cairn was an act of vengeance for the humiliation of the successful rebellion of 1880–1881 which brought in the British. For the Boers of the ZAR, the memorial was much more than a commemoration of their successes against British Imperialism. The cairn was packed on 14 December 1880 but was enlarged on 16 December 1881, a date commemorating the 1838 Voortrekker victory over the Zulu Nation at the Battle of Blood/ Ncome River, itself won after a vow made to their Calvinist God. This effectively made the stone cairn a symbol of the 'holy alliance' between the Boers and their God; an alliance which gave them, in their eyes, a holy right along with privileges bestowed by the divinity. The fight against English oppression was, the Paardekraal cairn reminded them, a war with God on their side, an epic that they as God's chosen people, like the biblical Israel, had been assured to win from the outset. The memorial was the thorn to the paw of the British Lion, hence its irrevocable destruction.

26 Brouwer, 2011: 313–315.
27 Oxenaar, 2009: 513–516.
28 See about the iconographic programme of the Rijksmuseum: Bank, 1991–1992: 43–59; Spijkerman, 2013.
29 Oxenaar, 2009: 461.
30 Oxenaar, 1989, 39–43. Some thought the Oud-Hollandsche architecture unmonumental or anachronistic; Perry, 2004: 120–122. This controversy continues to the present day; Van der Woud, 2008: 10.
31 Schilt and Van der Werf, 1992: 38, 56.
32 Perry, 2004: 215.
33 Potgieter and Du Plessis, 1970.

Similar to the C16 to C17 Dutch Revolt, the First Anglo-Boer War was a war of a minority against a world power, a strife that pitted a small poor rebellious Protestant territory against a powerful Spanish Catholic hegemony. Like the Dutch Revolt against the Spanish the First Anglo-Boer War moulded the scattered the pastoral Boers into a union and gave birth to the second ZAR, itself a 'Golden Republic', not only because of the abundance of gold discovered on the Rand in 1886. This event had a decisive influence on the country's history.[34] The South African Republic's economy boomed. The consequential gold rush set off a wave of immigration. State revenues rose from 276 000 Rand equivalent in 1887 to over 3 million Rand equivalent in 1889.[35]

The unprecedented Boer victory over the British at the Battle of Amajuba on 23 February 1881 underscored the perspective that God was indeed *their* right and not that of Britain. It also underscored the Boer way of life as unique and their independence as being sacred. This was the message of the Paardekraal Monument, itself a relatively sophisticated architectural statement of a new Republic finding a new architectural language. It guarded over the stone cairn, symbol of the simple but pure past of the nation. During December 1891, a festival was held to inaugurate the monument at which not only the events of ten years earlier were commemorated, but also the Day of the Vow of 1838, the promise made before the Battle of Blood/Ncome River. Thus the Great Trek, their Exodus, entered Boer national mythology.

The Dutch and the Boers

Before the First Anglo-Boer War, Dutch influence in the ZAR was very limited. News of the existence of an unknown Calvinist farming nation, in the hinterland beyond the borders of the British Cape Colony who traced their ancestry back to the Netherlands, standing up against to British came as an 'electrical shock' to the Netherlands in 1880.[36] The revolt of the Boers coincided with the revival of the Dutch economy and trade, and the Dutch sense of inferiority mutated into a revived nationalism. By then the Dutch had long lost their military and economic power and its leading role in international politics. The British were by that time in control of most of the international trade routes and London had replaced Amsterdam as the main commercial centre. According to the leading

34 Muller, 1981: 283-285.
35 Van Jaarsveld, 1971: 163–167.
36 Schutte, 1968: 17.

02.14 The *Rijksmuseum*, c.1890, designed by Pierre Cuypers, shortly after completion.

02.15 (Above) The inauguration of the Paardekraal Monument, 1891.

02.16 (Right) Pretoria, c.1880.

historian of the time, Robert Fruin (1823–1899), the Dutch had lost themselves amongst the bigger and more powerful nations surrounding them. The Dutch Republic was history,[37] and it was the ZAR that was seen by many in the Netherlands as the legal and moral heir to the Dutch Republic.

Some Dutch saw the Boers struggling against the British Empire as a resurrection of the ideals and aspirations of the Dutch Republic of yore, because of their courage and their apparent unity. The Great Trek was seen as a contemporary exodus from Egypt, and the Boers were compared with the C16 *Geuzen* (Sea-beggars), the instigators and heroes of the Dutch Revolt. As the First Anglo-Boer War broke out, a campaign backing the Boers stirred up wide public support across the traditional party lines in the Netherlands.[38] The military successes of the Boers against the British certainly contributed to this wave of Dutch public sympathy.

In an historic address in 1882 to the *Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* (Dutch Literary Society) Fruin expressed his regret about the loss of Dutch cultural influence in former colonies, such as New Amsterdam (New York today) and the Cape Colony, *But fortunately, it turns out that what we let die, lives on in South Africa*, referring to the successful revolt of the Boers and resurrection of the ZAR.[39] In a similar tone CB Spruyt (1842–1901), a professor in Philosophy at the University of Amsterdam, saw the Netherlands in its autumn, and, as the memory of the old Republic would inevitably fade as the Dutch nation became a plaything of the great European powers, but its culture and language was to be kept alive in the Transvaal Republic, by *the more vigorous and industrious elements of our people*. Others pursued this line of thought even further and saw the Transvaal as the only remaining place in where this *remaining shoot of the old race could develop into a forceful tree*, according to dr N Mansvelt (1852–1933).[40]

'Our own blood'

President Kruger travelled to Europe repeatedly, first to negotiate with the British, but later also to visit other European countries, campaigning for support for his Republic's fragile independence, but also actively seeking economic investment for the ZAR. He became a popular figure, not only in the Netherlands, but also in Belgium, Germany, France and Spain.

During the build-up to the Second Anglo-Boer War and charged by Kruger's visits, a wave of sympathy with the Boers swept the Netherlands. Most Dutch towns of size built a *Transvaalbuurt* (Transvaal Quarter) or *Afrikanderbuurt* (Afrikaner Quarter), in which the streets were named after the Boer heroes. Many Dutch saw the independent Boer Republic as vehicle for their own patriotic independent future, which in turn contributed to a revival of Dutch imperialism. When Paul Kruger went to the Netherlands in 1884[41] to raise support for the Boers, Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920), the later Prime Minister, addressed him in public:

> *When the tidings came to us of a young, new Netherlands, that had hung its head, the rumour of a people speaking the old language, of our own blood, that was inspired by a youthful fervour, and amazed the world with its conquests, yes, then we have greeted in you our own ancestry, then you became a part of our own history [...] who come not here to tell, but to show us how and who the Beggars of Brielle's stronghold were, how and who the Marnixes and the Van der Werves.*[42]

By that time the, still extant, *Nederlands Zuid-Afrikaanse Vereniging* (Dutch South African Society), or NZAV, had already been founded to intensify Dutch-South African relationships.[43]

That many in the Netherlands looked back in nostalgia, comparing the struggle of the Boers against the British Empire with the Dutch Revolt against Spain, is well illustrated in a brochure published in the Netherlands with the aim of raising funds for the Red Cross in South Africa when war with Britain had

37 Fruin, vol. X: 413–418, cited in Schutte, 1968: 21–22.
38 Van Koppen, 1992: 69–132.
39 Fruin, vol. X: 413–418, cited in Schutte, 1968: 21–22.
40 Ploeger, 1945.
41 It is during this visit the Kruger convinced the young architect Klaas van Rijsse Jr. to relocate to South Africa. Van Rijsse had attended a public lecture by Kruger, held in the Reformed Church, Zaandam, designed by Van Rijsse's mentor, Wierda and the young architect engaged with the statesman. The rest is history. Rex, 1974: 329.
42 Schutte, 1968.
43 Wypkema, 1945: 115–154.

become a forgone conclusion in 1899. This document was dedicated to:

> *... the piety, the heroism and the love of freedom, the best qualities of our ancestors, that live on and resurrect in the strongest shoots from our stock, the people from the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.*

In it, representatives from the worlds of science, arts and politics pronounced their support for the ZAR, and compared it to the historic Dutch Republic:

> *In the 16th Century, this small race faced the most powerful state of its time to rise from this struggle as a sound, youthful republic. Now, this race again faces the most powerful empire of the time.*[44]

According to the authors of this brochure, the ZAR embodied the virtues that the Dutch had lost 'in this time of half-heartedness and ambiguity'. The traits that enabled our fathers to persevere the struggle against Spain, is to be recognized unimpaired in the Boers', in their Calvinist, freedom-loving struggle against 'the capitalist greed and lust for power.' Even the religious tolerance for which the Dutch Republic was credited, was now attributed to the Boers, as

44 Van Harpen, 1899: dedication.

02.17 (Left) The State Printing Works, *Staatsdrukkerij*, ZAR DPW, 1896.

02.18 (Below) The State Artillery Barracks, *Staatsartillerie* in Pretoria, ZAR DPW, c.1898.

02.19 Middelburg Station, Mpumalanga, South Africa (2013).

… the ZAR government has called to arms all the able-bodied men, Catholics, Jews and Protestants alike, in defence of their fatherland. Herman Verkouteren (1856–1930), member of parliament and editor-in-chief of the Reformed newspaper *Het Nederlandsche Dagblad* foresaw an even bigger future for the Republic of the Boers: the

> *… old Dutch elements, joined with the noble descendants of the Huguenots and the honest outlanders […] form the core of a new and powerful Afrikaander race […] that will rule all of South-Africa, and will one time play a key role in world history*.[45]

But the nationalist rhetoric about the historical bonds between the Dutch Republic and the new Golden Republic in the Transvaal met with distrust among the Boers. Many of them believed the Dutch wanted to 'Hollandize' or even colonize their country. With the Republic almost facing bankruptcy in 1885, Paul Kruger felt the only way out was through a program of modernization. Industrialization and railway construction asked for highly trained technical and administrative personnel, which was not to be found among the Boers. When gold was discovered in the Witwatersrand in 1886, the need for qualified civil servants grew by rapid degrees.[46] Fortuitously for Dutch seeking a closer cooperation with the Boer ZAR, a severe skill shortage forced the State President, Paul Kruger, to look beyond his borders for teachers, clergymen, lawyers, administrators and architects. Kruger mistrusted the Cape Boers and had to actively, of necessity, invite Dutch professionals to the ZAR. Kruger's *Hollanderpolitiek* (Dutchman politics) was not motivated in the first place by any special affinity for the Dutch, but by pragmatism and his insights into the interests of the ZAR.

45 Van Harpen 1899: 13.
46 Schutte 1968: 17–41.

The arrival of 'Kruger's Hollanders' was looked upon with mixed feelings: modernization of the Boer Republic was considered a necessity, but it was also felt by the devout and conservative Boers that the new Dutch immigrants were second-rate citizens. Conversely the Dutch immigrants often held the same opinion of the C19 Boers. After the arrival of Dutch in the Transvaal around 1884, a wave of *Hollanderhaat* (Dutch hatred) followed. Many Boers disliked the priggish, know-it-all Dutchmen taking over the administration of their country. Some even objected to the government itself.[47] Hence, when Dutch architects were entrusted with the design of government buildings 'Dutch' architecture could therefore not be applied at will and different solutions had to be found to represent the fledgling nation.

The single most important symbol of Dutch investment in the ZAR was the *Nederlandsch Zuid-Afrikaansche Spoorwegmaatschappij* (Netherlands South African Railways Company, NZASM), a company based and floated in Amsterdam which had been awarded the concessions for the construction and exploitation several railway trajectories in the ZAR. In reality the NZASM were instruments of economic policy. Secretary of State WJ Leyds (1859–1940) described the NZASM project as 'a political railway'. It served not only to open the Transvaal region to trade and industry, but also to move the leaders of the Republic into a position supportive of Dutch interest. One way in which the roll-out of the new network served Dutch economic purposes was that it acted as market for Dutch railway materials at a time when the great railways building boom in the Netherlands was coming to an end.[48] Therefore, it is not surprising that the NZASM was despised by many Boers for being a Dutch stronghold in their Republic. The undisputedly Dutch-styled brick and bluestone architecture of the NZASM, with its stepped gables, steep roofs and traditional detailing (figure 02.19), is an obvious testimony of the cultural policy of the NZASM.

In the aftermath of the Second Anglo-Boer War, under an emergent and rapidly growing Afrikaner Nationalism, resistance to Dutch involvement increased,[49] but in the short time between the discovery of gold and the Second Anglo-Boer War, the time of strong economic growth in both ZAR and the Netherlands, elicited dreams of a 'Golden Republic' as an historical model for both economic and moral aspirations. It was not only an aspiration to re-create the glories of the past, the 'Golden Republic' in the Transvaal and the Netherlands was a justification of the right to existence and national independence.

A country in the making: Sytze Wierda and the *Departement Publieke Werken*

By the latter half of the 1880s, many departments of the ZAR government, especially technical departments, such as those of the Public Works, the State Printing Works, Postal Services, the Mining Department and the Telegraphy Department were controlled and staffed by Dutch immigrants. Approximately twenty percent of government employees were Dutch immigrants and Dutch influence on the structuring and functioning of the departments was substantial.[50]

47 Schutte, 1968.
48 Schutte, 1968: 60–61.
49 Jansen, 1998: 677–683.
50 See the table in Schutte, 1968, 48.

02.20 The *Westergasfabriek* Gas Works in Amsterdam, by Isaac Gosschalk, 1883–1885.

02.21 The *Raadzaal* in Pretoria, ZAR DPW, Sytze Wierda, 1889.

From its foundation, the ZAR *Departement Publieke Werken* was staffed and managed by Dutch immigrants and headed by Sytze Wierda. When Wierda left the Netherlands, the *Staatsspoorwegen* railway construction programme was reaching its end. Many of the temporary staff had to be let go and Sytze Wierda, on a contract only for the period of construction, received the long-expected letter in which announced his redundancy.[51] Wierda must also have confronted the fact that could not compete commercially against the likes of Van Gendt, Cuypers, Salm, Gosschalk or Godefroy as architect (See Chapter 1, *The making of an architect*). These were all household names in the Netherlands of the day while he was, to all intent and purposes, unknown. He was also too old to find gainful employment. At the time, architecture in the Netherlands was a polemic and severely politicised profession. Surviving as a professional required the architect to present an intellectual basis and show proficiency in presenting theoretical ideas to the press, for instance, by taking part in public discussions. Wierda, as a self-trained carpenter-architect, was not equipped to deal with the level of eloquence of his contemporaries. Having realised that opportunities for further practice as architect in the Netherlands were limited, he had already engaged with the administration of the ZAR in 1882 hoping for an appointment as a railway engineer and architect in service of that government.[52] His decision might have further been influenced by the fact that the ZAR was an overt Protestant state seeking to protect its Protestant nature. It was common knowledge at the time that the Constitution of the ZAR only allowed for Protestants to hold civil positions, a condition that must have resonated with the conservative, Reformed Wierda.

In the end five years were to pass before Wierda and his family were to arrive in Pretoria, the capital of the ZAR, appointed as the only government engineer and architect. Due to the NZASM concession positioning the development of rail infrastructure in the private corporate realm, Wierda, railway architect and engineer, was never to work on railways again.

At that time, Pretoria was rapidly developing from a mainly agrarian *kerkplaats* (literally a church place, so named because of the church and communion square at its centre) into the modern capital of the ZAR, under Kruger[53] but yet, in a letter to his family 'back home' Wierda described his new home town, as *zeer landelijk* (extremely rural) (figure 02.16).[54] This was no exaggeration and even though written material describing the ZAR was freely available in the Netherlands, Wierda could only on arrival have realised what a large task he had taken on.

51 Rex, 1974: 340.
52 Rex, 1974: 325 52 See about the urban development of Pretoria in Kruger's time; Holm, 1998: 55–77.
53 Rex, 1974, 325.
54 Rex, 1974: 343 citing a letter Wireda wrote to his brother and sister in the Netherlands in 1887. (From the HM Rex collection. 'Wierda-Stukke, VI, I, A, 21').

When Wierda, *Gouvernements Ingenieur en Architect* (Government's Engineer and Architect), took office on 1 November 1887 he was the only engineer or architect in the employ of government.[55] So unprepared was the ZAR administration for his coming, that in the first letter Wierda wrote to his employers on the 12th of that month, he had to request some office supplies in order to start fulfilling his role.[56] Yet he was expected to transform Pretoria from a village into a modern capital, to build a new network of infrastructure, with many new roads and bridges, and to build a great number of government buildings, offices, hospitals, police stations, toll booths, powder magazines, prisons, schools, factories, asylums, barracks, staff residences, and many more types of buildings all over the Republic. Even at a time of economic boom this had to be carried out in a country with virtually no manufacturing or building industry nor any modern infrastructure. Over and above all this was the political circumstances and climate that was unknown to Wierda.

In the period that followed, Wierda, assisted by an able staff, was to transform the ZAR, endowing it with many commodious buildings and engineering projects, a surprising number of which are in daily service to this day. In 1888, Wierda proposed to create a new department for the construction of buildings and upkeep of roads within the ZAR, the *Departement Publieke Werken*. The *Volksraad* (literally 'Council of the People' or Parliament) went along with his plan. In the years to follow Wierda selected Dutch engineers, architects, draughtsmen and supervisors for employment in the new department he created.[57] The Department, like the administration the South African Republic as a whole, was designed from scratch and thus not comparable with the *Dutch Rijksbouwmeester's* (Chief Government Architect) Office, or the *Dienst der Publieke Werken* of the City of Amsterdam, both of which had a long history and were the result of amalgamations through a continual process of institutional reorganisations, laden with inefficiencies and political intrigue. However Wierda

55 Rex, 1974, 357.
56 Rex, 1974, 373.
57 Rex includes a list of staff, naming 15 permanent and 18 temporary staff: Rex, 1974: 375–376.

02.22 The *Paleis van Justitie* (Palace of Justice) in Pretoria, by the ZAR DPW (Attributed to Sytze Wierda and Klaas van Rijsse as design architects).

must have had many contacts with, and knowledge of the Amsterdam Public Works Department while working for the *Staatsspoorwegen* on the Amsterdam Central Station. With his *Staatsspoorwegen* background, Wierda was able to create his Public Works Department according to the insights he had gained into its efficient administration. Under his able leadership the ZAR DPW executed a large and impressive body of work in a very short time. The ZAR government was characterized by an extreme centralization.[58] Documentation held in the South African National Archives shows that this applies to the ZAR DPW, where Sytze Wierda seems to have micro-managed everything, from large building projects, the supply of materials, the distribution of office supplies and even hand-cuffs throughout the Republic.

The construction of a new centre of government was one of the ZAR DPW's main assignments. Around Church Square, the *Gouvernementsgebouw* (Government Buildings, commonly referred to as the *Raadzaal*), the *Paleis van Justitie* (Palace of Justice) and the Annex to the Government Buildings (now Compol Building) represented the different branches of government and housed a growing number of civil servants. Apart from these buildings, central to the government and embodied the state, the ZAR DPW executed many buildings of lower status, including many utility and military buildings of diverse character. Industrial and military complexes like the *Staatsdrukkerij* (Government Printing Works) (figure 02.17) or the *Staatsartillerie* (State Artillery Barracks, the ZAR military headquarters, figure 02.18) constructed towards the late 1890s, are Dutch in their architecture, to the extent that they are hardly distinguishable from their typological equals in the Netherlands. This stylistic association might have become acceptable to the Transvaal Boers as they looked more and more towards Europe for support in the, seemingly inevitable looming war with Great Britain. Wierda and Van Rijsse are sure to have known the works of Isaac Gosschalk (1838–1909) in Amsterdam, whose ambition in the field of industrial building, in the words of Eugen Gugel, was to show 'that the character of utilitarian buildings did not, by nature, need to be nondescript or repulsive' and many of whose works were inspired by the C17 Dutch Renaissance architecture of Hendrick de Keyser. His large-scale industrial complexes, such as the Amsterdam *Westergasfabriek* (Gas Works, commenced in 1870, figure 02.20) and the Heineken Brewery complex (also 1870), were built while Wierda lived in Amsterdam and drew much public attention at the time.[59] At the same time, the firm of father and son GB (1831–1897) and A (1857–1915) Salm built factories and other utilitarian projects in Amsterdam, such as the stables and garages for the *Amsterdamsche Omnibus Maatschappij* (Amsterdam Omnibus Company), in a rich but utilitarian Neo-Renaissance brick and stone architecture.[60] Any of these buildings can serve as precedent for the ZAR Government Printing Works and the Military Headquarters, both located in Pretoria.

Two of the most important building projects by Wierda's ZAR DPW occurred at the extremes of his establishment of the ZAR DPW and at its demise as consequence of the Second Anglo-Boer War. They stand facing each other on Church Square and best embody the architectural ideals that Wierda developed as representative of the ZAR. The *Raadzaal* was the first to be designed almost at the moment Wierda arrived in Pretoria. The *Paleis van Justitie* was not yet complete by the time the British invaded Pretoria in July 1900. Standing together as they do on Church Square they contribute to making it into arguably one of the finest examples of late C19 European-inspired urban space. The *Raadzaal* and the *Paleis van Justitie*, representing the government and the judicial system of the South African Republic, were built in a much more international eclectic-styled architecture than the bulk of the ZAR DPW oeuvre. These two opposing palaces were designed in a monumental Neo-Renaissance style, with symmetrical five-bay façades, strong columned central *avant-corps*, corner pavilions, super-positioned rows of arched and pedimented windows, balustrades, balconies, all topped with French-style Mansard roofs with fish-scale tiles and finished with typical iron faience, towers, lanterns and cupolas. In their evaluation today it must be borne in mind that the eccentric location on one side of Church Square is due to the 1904 demolition of the church that used to occupy the eastern half of what is today Church Square.

Setting the stage: The *Raadzaal*

When Sytze Wierda arrived in South Africa, Pretoria contained hardly a single multi-storeyed building. Church Square was the result of the town plan laid out by the surveyor AF du Toit in 1854 and lay at the geographical centre of the settlement on the crossing of the two main arterials, *Kerkstraat* (Church Street) running east-west and *Markstraat* (Market Street, now Paul Kruger) Street, running north-south. On its eastern half stood the Dutch Reformed Church, the western half was unoccupied. At the time, as today, the square was edged by buildings, some in the process of demolition so as to allow for the first multi-storeyed buildings to be erected. This was where the first *Raadzaal* (Council Hall) was located and thus the site where a new building, for which an architectural competition was issued, was to be erected.

The first *Raadzaal*, a thatched, mud-walled building or *grasdakgeboutjie*[61] as seat of government was no longer adequate for the rapidly developing ZAR during the 1880s which consequently felt the need for international recognition. We can compare it to Amsterdam's medieval Town Hall that preceded the Van Campen building. In 1638, Maria de Medici

58 Schutte, 1968: 50.
59 Weissman, 1907: 329–331. Gosschalk was trained at Gottfried Semper's architectural firm and was familiar with his architectural theory. The authors quotes Eugen Gugel: *Gosschalk heeft er zich op toegelegd, te toonen, dat zoogenaamde utiliteits-gebouwen niet uit hun aard een onaanzienlijk of afstootend karakter behoeven te dragen.*
60 Kuyt, Middelkoop and Van der Woud, 1997: 58–59, 62, 83, 92.
61 Small thatched building. Holm and Viljoen, 1993: 13–15; Hartdegen, 1988: 83–85.

(1575–1642), the widow of the French king Henry IV (1553–1610), mother of Louis XIII and mother-in-law of three other European kings, visited Amsterdam. This visit emphasized the importance of Amsterdam as the major city of the emerging Dutch Republic, but at the same time made painfully apparent that the status of the city was in no way represented by its government building. Although Barlaeus (1584–1648), the first professor at Amsterdam's *Athenaeum Illustre*, praised it as a monument to the modesty of the government and found that it was respectable, because of its age and dilapidated state, plans to replace it were drawn up directly after Maria de Medici's departure, an effort to stave off future embarrassment.[62] Likewise, when in 1889, State President Paul Kruger laid the foundation stone of the new *Raadzaal* on Church Square, he stated that the appearance of the building should be in accordance with the status and dignity of the ZAR.

The first architectural task of the newly appointed government architect was to design the most important building of his new homeland, the new Government Building (*Raadzaal*) on Church Square (figure 02.21). A competition had earlier been called to prepare designs for a building to replace the single-storeyed mud-and-thatch *Raadzaal* (Council Hall) on Church Square and other *ad hoc* accommodation utilised by the government at the time. Klaas van Rijsse, asked to comment on the winning design by J Leslie Simmonds (birth and death dates unknown), pleaded strongly for the commissioning of a new design. As a consequence Klaas van Rijsse had been appointed as acting government architect and went so far as to prepare a counter-proposal to the design by Simmonds.[63] Kruger was visiting the Orange Free State Republic and in his absence no final decision was taken on Van Rijsse's proposal.

During this interval Wierda arrived in Pretoria, Van Rijsse's appointment was terminated, and the task to design the government buildings were delegated to the government architect. However Wierda quickly motivated for the re-instatement of Van Rijsse as his second-in command because of his architectural skills – which he for the greater part had acquired as a private pupil of Wierda's in the Netherlands.[64]

Just like Cuypers' *Rijksmuseum*, the footprint of the *Raadzaal* has its antecedent in the Amsterdam's City Hall (figure 02.01), but it also fits the typical *Beaux-Arts* layout for large buildings employed by Semper for his Viennese museums. However both Wierda and Van Rijsse had drawn the plan of the Palace on the Dam many times in their proposals for Dam Square and the Exchange from 1880, 1884 and 1886 (the latter being attempts by Van Rijsse) and were well aware of its republican origin in the Dutch Golden Age.

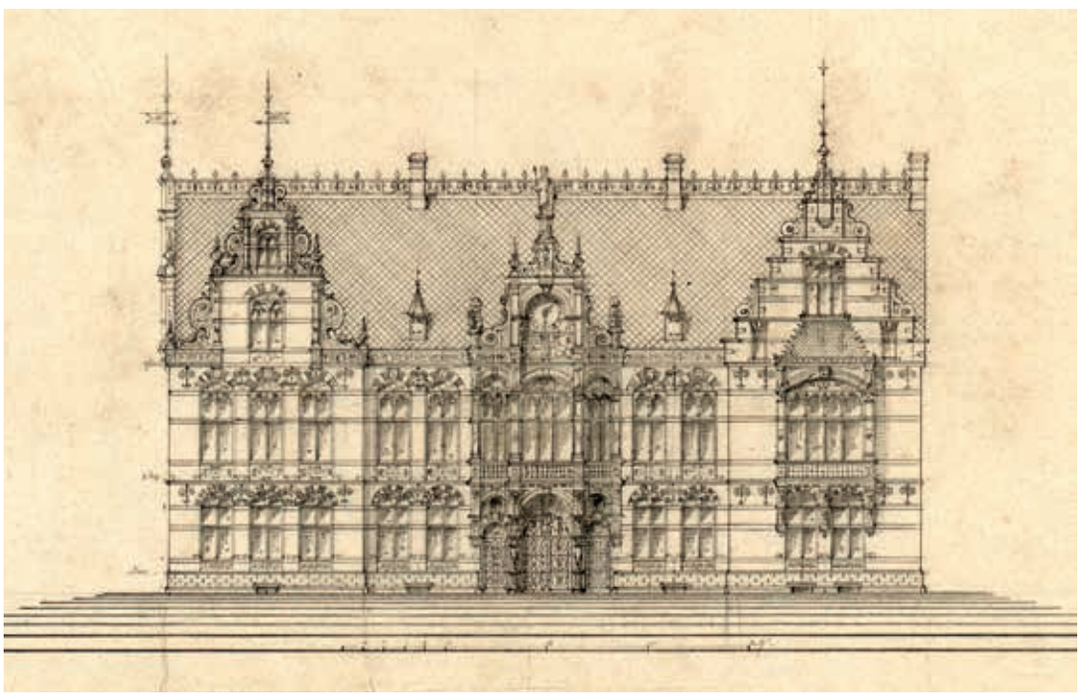
02.23 (Below) The Gallery of the P*aleis voor Volksvlijt* in Amsterdam, by AL van Gendt, undated photograph.

02.24 (Bottom) The Amstel Hotel, by Cornelis Outshoorn, 1867.

62 Vlaardingerbroek, 2011: 15–21.
63 Rex, 1974: 370–372. Van Rijsse was hired on the basis of a resolution of the Volksraad of 24 June 1887, which stated that the Government was authorized to hire an engineer who was also an able architect.
64 Van Rijsse was back at the Department by 28 November: Rex, 1974: 374. In his motivation for the appointment of Van Rijsse, Wierda mentioned the fact Van Rijsse was an active member of the Reformed Church, and a member of Paul Kruger's congregation in Pretoria's *Kerkstraat* (now WF Nkomo Street), for which he designed a new church building in 1896.
65 See the text of Kruger's speech at the laying of the foundation stone of the *Raadzaal* on 6 May 1889; Minnaar, 2000: appendix A.
66 Chipkin, 1993: 15–20.

02.25 Hugo Pieter Vogel's design for the Ministry of Justice in The Hague, 1875.

The Renaissance style swept through Europe from the 16th Century onwards, with the Dutch Republic as an important cultural hub. While it was used for many public and government buildings, it was international by nature. In the *Raadzaal* we can see Italian and French Renaissance elements, but also the influence of more recent Renaissance-style buildings, such as the works of AL van Gendt, Cornelis Outshoorn (1810–1875) and GB & A Salm and the *Reichstag* building in Berlin. The buildings on Church Square were meant to show the modernisation of the Republic and to raise support for the Boer cause among the European powers. However the work of Van Gendt was the most pervasive. In the words of Kruger, the *Raadzaal* was meant to represent 'the prestige and the dignity of this State'.[65] Therefore, these buildings were to be European in style.[66] This position is clearly illustrated by the discussions about the design of the Palace of Justice.



02.26 CH Peters' design for the Ministry of Justice in The Hague, 1876–1883.

The *Raadzaal* was to the ZAR what the Amsterdam City Hall had been to the Dutch Republic; a symbol of its newly won freedom, wealth and power. The likeness between the buildings is striking as are their locations on, what was the most important urban space in their individual contexts. The *Raadzaal* embodied the ZAR State and contained the office suite of its President. This suite was located on the ground floor, leading directly off the entrance foyer. This was in itself a neat spatial configuration to impress the accessibility of the President to all the citizens of the country.[67] It might have been connected to the lay-out of City Hall, that was famous for its entrance through seven small, unadorned arched gates right on Dam Square and the absence of a monumental stairway. This symbolized the accessibility of the *burgomasters* of Amsterdam.

A problem of character: the case of the Palace of Justice

The notions of 'truth' and 'character' were central to Sytze Wierda's approach to design, as they were to any of his architect contemporaries. Truth, to paraphrase Wierda's own words, was the expression of the meaning of the building through its exterior. When one of his competition designs for a church was published in 1870, Wierda wrote that he designed a building with 'the appropriate character', he strove for 'truth, and simple dignity' in the façade, which would be intensified by adding a cupola – which he did in most public buildings.[68]

Character was an important aspect of the new buildings on Church Square, as they represented the Transvaal Republic.[69] The design of the *Paleis van Justitie* (Palace of Justice) is an interesting case (figure 02.22). In the controversy that arose between State President Paul Kruger and Chief Justice John Kotzé (1849–1940) about the architectural design of the Palace of Justice in Pretoria, the notion of 'character' seems to have been the main subject.

At first, the intention had been to accommodate the three branches of government in one single building, the newly completed *Raadzaal*. Kotzé objected to this plan, because he thought the independence of the judiciary was to be expressed by housing it in a separate building. Kruger gave Wierda the assignment of designing a new building for the Supreme Court on the most prominent site in Pretoria, on Church Square opposite the *Raadzaal*. Kotzé set up a building commission, consisting of members of the legal community. They informed the architect of the operational requirements of the building, but also took it upon themselves to comment on the 'character' of the architecture. The *Paleis van Justitie* was designed in Neo-Renaissance style, with a combination of a

67 Noting of course that the issue of citizenship was sensitive in the ZAR where neither foreigners, who could only achive franchise if they had been in the country for over 14 years and were still under the age of 40, nor inhabitants that were not white had no such rights.
68 Lübke and Falke, 1870: 51–53.
69 About the architecture of the *Paleis van Justitie* and Church Square, see Holm, 1998: 55–77. For a very interesting article about the relations between the evolution of the judicial system and its architecture see: Le Roux, 2003: 55–63.

02.27 The Old Netherlands Bank seen through the portico of the *Raadzaal*, Church Square represents the ideals of C19 Wilhelmiens town planning in an ensemble of a scale unknown in Europe at that time.

classic temple front with columns and pediment, towers on both sides and a Mansard cupola on top. It can be compared with the Amstel Hotel by Cornelis Outshoorn (figure 02.24), but also resembles the architecture of Van Gendt's Gallery of the *Paleis voor Volksvlijt* (Palace of National Craft) (figure 02.23) and many other Dutch examples of Neo-Renaissance buildings.

When Wierda presented his first design, Kotzé and his commission objected. In their view, Wierda's design was inappropriate for it did not reflect the status of the Supreme Court; or in other words, its 'character' did not meet their demands. For Kotzé, the programme and character of the Palace of Justice had to represent the professionalization of the judicial system that took place under his direction. Kotzé requested that the design be amended in the *Oud-Hollandsche* or Dutch Renaissance style, specifically citing the Ministry of Justice building in The Hague as an example (figure 02.26). That way, the building would express the fact that Roman-Dutch law was in force in the South African Republic.

The Ministry of Justice building in The Hague had itself been the subject of a dispute strikingly analogous to that concerning the Palace of Justice in Pretoria. The first designs for the ministry building were drawn up in 1875 in a Neo-Renaissance style by the architect-lecturer Hugo Pieter Vogel (1833–1886).[70] Vogel's design (figure 02.25) however, was adjudged by the commission of advisors to the government to be, quite frankly, 'ugly, inharmonious and tasteless'. Vogel, understandably, did not want to discuss his design with the commission and was discharged from the assignment. Through the agency of Victor de Stuers, it was granted to CH Peters (1847–1932), who was trained in the architectural firm of Pierre Cuypers – then an advisor to Government. Peters' design (figure 02.27) obviously combined the monumentality desired for such a building with a specific 'national' character. In the words of JA Mulock Houwer (1857–1933), the Ministry of Justice building was 'a product of true art, grown from the soil that it stands on'. It was monumental to the point that it 'dominates everything that is built in its surroundings, without being presumptuous in any way'.[71] Catholic Cuypers' teaching of the Protestant Peters had paid off and the Ministry building was the breakthrough of the *Oud-Hollandsche* style.

In the South African Republic however, Kotzé might as well have run into a metaphorical brick wall when calling for a building in Dutch Renaissance style. Sytze Wierda argued that the Dutch Renaissance style was inappropriate for the South African Republic, and that, the cost of construction would far exceed the design his department had presented. He in effect dismissed Kotze's request as being unfeasible.

In the literature concerning the design of the Palace of Justice, this last argument is mentioned as decisive. It might have been an argument easily supported by the pragmatic Boers, economising in the face of a looming war. However for a pragmatist like Wierda, 'character', design and feasibility were very much connected. But in the discussion that Wierda and his employers were engaged in at that exact moment in time, the architectural design itself must have been more important. Wierda must have been convinced that the more historical Dutch-oriented style, which was closer to Cuypers' contested designs for the *Rijksmuseum,* was inappropriate for the buildings that were to represent the independent South African Republic and its judiciary to the world. His more internationally oriented Neo-Renaissance designs were intended to do just that. Wierda must have realized that an attempt to build the *Paleis van Justitie* in the Dutch Renaissance style, would very likely have met with weighty opposition, not just from the government, but also among the Boers, who might have seen it as an attempt at 'colonial' architecture. Wierda's argument as to costs carried the day and a public outcry against an overly Dutch building was avoided at a time when national solidarity was the imperative in the build-up to the second war with the British Empire. Seen in the light of his involvement in the discussions about Dam Square, Wierda must have concluded that Church Square required an architectural unity which could only be attained through a certain level of concordance within the ensemble of the *Raadzaal*, Church and the Palace of Justice. These buildings not only represented the tripartite alliance of judiciary, church and state; as an ensemble, they symbolized the unity of the South African Republic in its 'Golden Decade' at a time when international relations were of vital importance.

Epilogue

The dream of the 'Golden Republic' was shattered by the outcome of the Second Anglo Boer War, and the creators of its architectural representation scattered. These architects continued to practice both in Europe and the Dutch colonies. The influence of their South African years has not yet been mapped. The influence of the built residue in South Africa did not end in 1900. The buildings of the ZAR DPW became symbol for the ideal of the resurrection of an independent Republic, Church Square with its C19 ensemble, the encapsulation of the independence lost. The role of this heritage in the process leading towards independence of South Africa from Britain deserves further study, as does their role today in a new, democratic Republic.

Note: The authors would like to extend their thanks to Jos Bazelmans, Christian Bertram, Petra Brouwer, Anton Kos, David Mulder, Wilfred van Leeuwen and Aart Oxenaar for their contributions.

70 HP Vogel was a renowned architect, who also built the Royal Stables in The Hague. He ended up second after Cuypers in the 1876 Rijksmuseum competition. This seems to have been one of the reasons for Vogel to not alter his Ministry of Justice designs on the basis of Cuypers' advice. See about the Ministry of Justice: Rosenberg, 1995: 267–299; Perry, 2004: 200–206. Vogel was the author of a book for architectural training purposes, in which he combined a history of styles from the Egyptians up to his time, with discussions of style and truth. See Vogel, 1888.

71 Mulock Houwer, 1926: 4–10, 24–29. Mulock Houwer was the municipal architect of Groningen, the birthplace of Peters and the place where some of his works were realized.