

Contesting Heritage: A Political Analysis of Freedom Park and Voortrekker Monument in South Africa

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Keywords

Heterotopia, Freedom Pak heritage site, Voortrekker Monument, Heritage, Multiplicative model

Abstract

This study critically examines the political and social dimensions of heritage preservation in South Africa, with a specific focus on the contested sites of Freedom Park and Voortrekker Monument. The study is underpinned by a social constructionist framework, which acknowledges the multiplicity of realities and narratives in relation to public memory and heritage politics in South Africa. The research methodology encompasses a qualitative approach, including site visits, archival work, and qualitative content analysis. The theoretical framework draws on Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' to understand the emergence of national identities championed by various political actors in relation to heritage sites. The dissertation explores the role of public monuments in post-apartheid South Africa, the controversies surrounding the Voortrekker Monument, and the creation of counter-structures such as Freedom Park to challenge dominant colonial narratives. It also examines the political symbolism of Freedom Park in nation-building and its influence on visitor perceptions. Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process, particularly in conducting site visits and ensuring the integrity and reliability of the data collected. The findings of the study offer recommendations for further exploration of the articulation of heritage sites and the debate by other political actors, such as the Democratic Alliance (DA) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), to potentially illuminate the emergence of an imagined community. Overall, this dissertation provides a comprehensive and nuanced exploration of the political, social, and cultural dimensions of heritage preservation in South Africa, shedding light on the complex interplay of historical narratives, political ideologies, and social values within the country's heritage landscape.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACTAG	Arts and Culture Task Group
ANC	African National Congress
B-BBEE	Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment
CODESA	Convention for Democratic South Africa
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DACST	Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
EWC	Expropriation Without Compensation
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
FF	Freedom Front
FF+	Freedom Front Plus
FMF	#FeesMustFall Movement
GNU	Government of National Unity
HMC	Historical Monuments Commission
NA	National Assembly
NCOP	National Council of Provinces
NHC	National Heritage Council
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act 1999
NP	National Party
NMC	National Monuments Council
PHRA	Provincial Heritage Resource Authority
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Plan
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RMF	#RhodesMustFall Movement
SADF	South African Defence Force
SAHA	South African History Archives
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency

SONA	State of the Nation Address
SANS	South African National Society
UCT	University of Cape Town,
UNISA	University of South Africa
UP	University of Pretoria

Chapter 1: Introduction

I have always been aware of heritage sites and monuments. They form part of the social world we belong to and often shape our experience of public space. However, like most people, I had not thought too much about the politics that went into ‘heritage’ or the social formation of the buildings that we call monuments. My perspective changed in 2015. At the time, I was a politics undergraduate student at the University of Pretoria (UP), where we were encouraged to stay informed about current affairs. One morning, early in the year, I woke up with a news report from Cape Town: “UCT Rhodes Statue defaced, students call for its removal” (Independent Online News, 2015). After a protracted campaign, the university yielded, and Rhodes’ statue was removed from the campus.

The #RhodesMustFall (#RMF) campaign had a domino effect, and similar campaigns sprang up at other universities, sparking a countrywide debate over the presence of apartheid and colonial symbols in public spaces. Notably, that same year the #FeesMustFall (#FMF) Movement exploded into public life, calling for free and decolonised education. Inspired by the #RMF movement, #FMF also intensified the call for the removal of statues that honoured colonial and apartheid leaders and actively sought to rename university buildings. Importantly, #FMF linked the politics of public memory to broader socio-economic transformation in South Africa.

In this thesis, I show how recent problematisations of heritage sites are linked to deeper questions about the formation of national subjects. South Africa is a country with a long history of contestation over political, economic, cultural, and racial differences, often characterised by violent conflict. Our heritage sites are also a reflection of this history. The narratives and values that have become embedded within our monuments and heritage sites have been contested by various political and non-political actors who have advocated for their transformation. This contemporary terrain of public memory is, in fact, the central focus of my dissertation, and I attempt to uncover the narratives and values inscribed in the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage site, while also showing how these have been interpreted and contested by various political actors (with specific emphasis given to the African National Congress (ANC), Freedom Front Plus (FF+), and the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)).

The problem that this discussion opens onto, and which surfaces the deeper theoretical concerns of the dissertation, centres on the theme of national identity and the contested modes through which it is imagined and contested through heritage sites and policies. To be clear, heritage values are potentially unifying but can also become markers of political and social difference. Consequently, tensions have arisen between the government heritage institutions, heritage sites, affected citizens, and political actors. Political actors on multiple sides of the political spectrum have also seized the

opportunity to construct alternative national identities or community identities in relation to heritage sites or the values associated with them.

This study seeks to achieve the two related objectives:

1. To identify and explore the values that can be discerned within the Voortrekker Monument and the Freedom Park heritage site.
2. To examine how these values are constructed and presented in these sites, and how they have been motivated, interpreted, or contested by selected political actors.

In meeting these objectives, the thesis unfolds a historical and political account of the two sites that emphasises how they have come to reflect the particular post-apartheid heritage policy that is increasingly a source of contestation. As I show, with the advent of democratic dispensation, a key priority of the newly elected ANC-led government was economic development driven by international investment. In this context, the ANC, under Mandela, went further than its critics within the liberation movement would have liked in crafting a program of reconciliation and fostering democratic norms opposed to the destruction of colonial and apartheid monuments. Government policies and legislation, in fact, often overlooked the demands and values of the local communities as they worked to maintain colonial and apartheid heritage symbols, while at the same time constructing a new framework of official national heritage focused on the anti-apartheid liberation movement and its role in forging an inclusive national identity.

The two sites that this thesis focuses on, in their relation to one another and the urban landscape they imbue with symbolic meanings, are emblematic of the story of heritage practices and policy in the post-apartheid era. But they are also more. These sites form part of the history of South Africa's administrative capital as visible symbols of political power. The Voortrekker Monument, Freedom Park, the Union Buildings, and the University of South Africa (UNISA) building campus are situated on the hills of Pretoria, symbolising power exercised by their creators in strategically choosing prominent locations to reflect their distinct identities (Michelle 2014, cited from Mare 2007). As I show, the Union Buildings once marked a historical representation of colonialism, the Voortrekker Monument projected the ideals of National Party and Afrikaner nationalism as well as representation of its political power, and the UNISA building showed a linked image of intellectual power. The visible inclusion today of Freedom Park in this 'political landscape' represents then an image of ANC's post-apartheid power and its attempt to re-signify these sites. In this study, in order to investigate the contested framework of heritage policy and practices, I provide both a historical and a politically focused study of the Voortrekker monument and Freedom Park.

As demonstrated, the Voortrekker Monument stands as a vigorously contested symbol in South Africa, both in political and cultural contexts. Despite this, in 2012, the monument received National Heritage status from the South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA). In this thesis, I have analysed whether the Voortrekker Monument still holds its “founding values”. I go on to explain how actors have tried to reinvent the monument in the post-apartheid period in order to change its narrative from an exclusively Afrikaner community monument to ‘everyone’s’ monument. Rehabilitation programs discussed include the preservation of Afrikaner media culture, converting the monument into a research centre, erecting a Wall of Remembrance (ironically as a direct response to Freedom Park’s resistance to include former SADF soldiers in the Wall of Names). Additionally, the monument has been utilized for occasions such as weddings and other events, bolstering its popular status as a heritage tourist destination. However, since the advent of democracy, the monument’s political significance has declined, as reflected by the insignificance of its 150th anniversary. But I also show how, in this context, conservative Afrikaner groups like FF+ have emerged to defend and protect the ‘founding ideals’ of the Voortrekker Monument, resisting its reconciliation and social cohesion efforts. Like apartheid’s founding fathers, the FF+ have used the Voortrekker Monument to reinforce an exclusive Afrikaner identity.

In contrast, Freedom Park embodies the political values enshrined in the post-apartheid era. Positioned as a new monument born out of the recommendation of the TRC to construct a uniting and inclusive heritage site to counter the narrative of the Voortrekker monument, part of the symbolic meaning of the site is closely linked to its proximity to the latter. In this thesis, I trace the political and historical evolution of the Freedom Park and closely examine its components and their relationship with the surrounding environment or community. I also evaluate the inclusivity and contentious aspects of Freedom Park, focusing on the exclusion of South African Defence Force (SADF) soldiers from the *S'khumbuzo Wall of Names* and the inclusion of Cuban soldiers who participated in the Angolan conflict. However, I also point to apparent contradictory elements that can be associated with the site.

For instance, while Freedom Park represents an idealised projection of the South African community, it sits close to the Salvokop community as a representation of the reality of the poverty faced by many South Africans. As Bryne et al. (2013) have argued, heritage professionals and policy-makers often attribute less weight to social values expressed by and in relation to contemporary communities than to scientific, aesthetic, and educational values. As such, the curated social values recognised by Freedom Park heritage site reinforce a particular ANC centric narrative of the liberation struggle while relegating local communities and their values to the periphery of its symbolic representations. This is perhaps one of the reasons that Freedom Park

has not been accepted by the majority of the population, as reflected by its low number of tourist visits and the fact that few people, particularly around Pretoria, are not aware of the site.

Structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 serves as the introductory section of the study, presenting the primary objective of the study and elaborating on the central research problem.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the theoretical framework and the diverse methodologies employed within the study. I explained and motivated the framework that I have developed in researching heritage values, while also emphasizing the specific methods I have employed during my research. Social constructionist theory in this study is premised on the idea that historical and the current context have resulted in the creation of multiple realities in relation to public memory and heritage politics in South Africa. Then I move to the second part where my research question and its sub-questions are laid out. I also explained the research paradigm that informed my approach, followed by a discussion of broad design of the research project. Having presented a global view of the project, I then explain in greater detail the various components of the research that was undertaken and my method for collecting data. Following that, I discuss the process of analysing data, followed by a brief discussion of the ethical implications that arise from my approach.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to literature review, which is divided into three sections – political symbols, heritage sites and the politics of contestation; the imagined community and heritage; and approaches to heritage values in South Africa.

Chapter 4 traces the political developments that influenced the policy and the practice of heritage values in South Africa. The Union of South Africa and the Bushmen Relics Act influenced the first legislation policy that focused on protecting colonial statues and the remains of early humans from the European scientists. It wasn't until the 1948 that the state, under the National Party, used heritage to legitimize its function. The heritage institutions were even empowered to enforce removals where necessary for the purpose of heritage 'preservation', making the subject of political symbols or heritage inexorably linked with land removals in South Africa. The end of apartheid and democratic dispensation saw different actors attempt to shape heritage discourse, however a multiplicative approach was taken by the government, underlining a commitment not to destroy colonial symbols, but to extend liberation struggle heritage. However, given the context and the political conditions at the time it was impossible for South Africa to adopt a radical approach to heritage management as it attempted to position itself globally to gain investment and promote its 'reconciliation leader' values. This was relevant in 1993 when Nelson Mandela stated that the future of South Africa's foreign policy will be based on "promotion of human rights and democracy", indicating that at the international level South Africa has adopted Western democratic state values. However, almost 30 years after the democracy, the majority of South Africans have

still not enjoyed the economic benefits of democracy, the inequality gap has widened and poverty is still rife.

Chapter 5 Introduces the case study of Voortrekker monument and Freedom Park heritage sites, traces their origins, contestations and values embedded within the sites.

Chapter 6 seeks to understand how various political actors respond and articulate heritage values that currently drives the practice of heritage / public memory symbols in South Africa. The chapter focus on the EFF and FF+ as the two political actors that are currently driving public memory debate in South Africa.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework and research methodology

This thesis is based on a qualitative exploration of heritage values linked to the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park and adopts a social constructionism framework to understand the forms of contestation that have developed in relation to them. Considering the close relationship between the methods employed in investigating heritage values and the theoretical framework informing the perspective developed on them, I have chosen to outline and motivate both aspects of my project in this chapter.

The first section of this chapter, I begin by explaining social constructionism and its implications for my research centering on heritage values. In this respect, I show how this theoretical framework established a preliminary roadmap, structure, and vision that has guided my research (Grant and Osanloo 2014). Within the adopted social constructionist approach, I also employ Anderson's concept of an 'imagined community,' which I argue provides an appropriate framework for understanding the emergence of national identities championed by various political actors, such as the EFF and FF Plus, discussed in this thesis.

In the second section, I then turn to explaining my research question and its sub-questions before giving an account of the practical processes through which I attempted to answer them. In this respect, I explain the research paradigm that informs my approach, followed by discussing the broad design of the research project. After presenting a global view of the project, I then explain in greater detail the various components of the research undertaken and the methods used in collecting data. I also discuss the process of analysing data and conclude with a brief discussion of the ethical issues that arose during my research.

2.1 Social Constructionism

This study, as stated above, is informed by social constructionism, a theoretical framework that emerged after the seminal work of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann in 1966, titled "*The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*". The main assumption of social constructionism is the concept that reality is not an objective truth, but rather a socially constructed idea Ritzer (1983). This perspective suggests that there are multiple subjective truths, as each individual or group construct their own version of reality based on their experiences and social interactions (Creswell 2003). Heritage sites, including the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park, as well as annual commemorations such as the 16 December events discussed in this thesis, can be seen as constructed in particular ways, producing social effects that might have

been otherwise. Assuming such a perspective means not taking for granted what is given as reality, but rather trying to understand how diverse conceptions of reality are constructed and contested.

In line with this stance, Grønstad (2009) paraphrase *Schwandt (2000)* and asserts that knowledge is shaped through social interaction, involving discussions and disputes over what is deemed right or wrong, giving rise to shared ‘truths’ that subsequently influence social actions.

According to Dickerson and Zimmerman (1996), social constructionism challenges the notion of singular, authoritative narratives that dictate a universal reality and asserts that these narratives contribute to the framing of societal issues. It contends that individuals’ personal narratives are often ignored, oppressed, and disregarded in support of the prevailing dominant belief systems, which tend to pathologise those diverging from these norms. This perspective emphasises the need to critically examine and question established truths, norms, and essential beliefs in order to collectively work towards a more equitable and sustainable future (Dickerson and Zimmerman, 1996 :13).

This perspective has important implications for a study like mine. It means going beyond simply accepting or rejecting discourses on the social world, but instead trying to understand them in relation to their effects on how people come to accept a particular conception of reality as ‘their reality’. For instance, in this thesis, I show how Afrikaner nationalists shaped a powerful discursive framework for imagining the past, and how monuments like the Voortrekker Monument were constructed as a way of communicating a ‘myth of origin’ to support a particular political project. I also demonstrate how it became possible, or even necessary, for the ANC or democratic government to oppose the details of the ‘myth’ in constructing an alternative conception of the past and national community.

This approach is therefore not necessarily focused on the rejection of the historical accounts of Afrikaner nationalists. Instead, it aims to bring to light other historically and culturally situated stories and to show the conditions under which they come to be seen as legitimate and valid within their own contexts (Gergen 2009: 13). For our discussion in this thesis, what is relevant is how various monuments and historical events are interpreted by different actors and the political consequences that follow from the circulation of these interpretations. Social constructions give meaning, understanding, and coherence to social life, and are necessary for making sense of the world.

In line with social constructionism, in this study, sites like the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park are read as social constructs in the sense that they are given meaning and value by people. In fact, the ways they reflect values constructed by the apartheid state or the democratic

state, or even particular communities, groups, or individuals, are what make both the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage sites. Moreover, the values reflected in heritage sites can change from one cultural context to the next and from one period to another in relation to different social practices that assign meaning to them.

Aligned with this theoretical framework, is the idea that the preservation of heritage holds impact on the community in which it is located, and reciprocally, it is influenced by the demands and conditions of that society (Avrami et al. 2000:3). From this perspective, heritage invariably represents an ideological and symbolic formation shaped by historical, political, and social conditions. Adopting a social constructionism perspective on heritage values in this project therefore means paying close attention to the historical, political, and social circumstances in which the two sites were established and developed.

Imagined Community

One critical aspect of this study involves grappling with the relationship between the heritage values that are reflected in particular sites and the ways in which the national community is constructed and contested. Benedict Anderson's work, *"Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread Nationalism"*, published in 1983, provides an insightful frame for understanding how language and narrative contribute to the establishment of national communities as imagined communities. Poole (1999) builds upon *imagined community* concept, suggesting that it allows for the adaptation of national ideas in response to socio-economic changes. Blacke (2020) quotes Poole emphasises the role of culture in envisioning a community, proposing that it is collectively owned and anchored in a "gallery of meaningful...", interpretable and assessable by individuals with the requisite cultural knowledge and identity. He emphasises that these "cultural objects", such as heritage or memory, are not fixed entities but are instead the outcomes of a continual process, capable of being constructed and reconstructed over time.

Anderson (2006:4) contends that the concept of community, or shared identity, necessitates an act of imagination, as it is improbable for every member of the community to have direct personal interactions with one another. He underscores that within the consciousness of each individual resides the mental image of their belonging to a collective entity. Furthermore, Anderson (2006:6) emphasises the pivotal role of language in shaping *contemporaneous community*¹. Language serves as the medium through which individuals are either united or divided, harnessing the potent

¹ Contemporaneous community refers to a group of individuals who exist and interact with each other during the same time period. This term is often used in sociology and anthropology to describe the social dynamics and relationships within a specific group of people living in the same era. In the context of contemporary society, a contemporaneous community can be seen as a group of individuals who share common experiences, values, and cultural norms within the current time frame.

influence of the imagination. Additionally, he highlights the significance of historical context in the formation of imagined communities, elucidating evolution of these constructs and their profound emotional legitimacy in contemporary society. According to Anderson (2006:6), the evolution of imagined communities encompasses dimensions such as culture, national consciousness, language, and patriotism, all of which contribute to the complex and dynamic nature of these imagined entities.

Extending from a social constructionism framework, this thesis draws on Anderson's concept of the nation as an 'imagined community' (2006) that is fostered by particular symbols and narratives, while also drawing on Hobsbawm and Ranger's (1983) concept of the 'invention of tradition' to explore how sources of history, myth, and genealogy have been used to support discourses of identity in South Africa at different moments in its history. These constructed discourses are often ambivalent and opaque, given the number of competing discourses that have arisen.

South Africa is today in the position of a post-colony, which means that the state must disentangle itself from colonial and imperial configurations of culture and politics. Despite South Africa gaining official independence in 1910, the configurations of white cultural, political, and economic hegemony persisted until 1994. Given this starting point, a conceptually informed study of heritage values requires a research methodology focused not only on the ways in which meaning is assigned to particular sites in relation to specific social practices, but also on how meanings come to be challenged and shifted in relation to different social practices.

2.2 Research Methodology

Broadly speaking, research methodology include the deliberate selection and implementation of strategies, plans of action, processes, and designs, all aimed at achieving specific objectives (Crotty 1998).

This section explains the methodology that was deployed in this study in relation to my research question and its sub-questions.

Research question and sub-questions

This study addresses the following overarching question: "How does South African heritage policy and practices interpret and reflect 'heritage values'; and how do these values promote national identity?"

In answering this question, I tackle a number of specific sub-questions:

- How do political actors, such as the ANC, FF+, and EFF, understand and frame heritage values in South Africa?
- What are the values discerned within the Voortrekker Monument and the Freedom Park heritage site, and how are they constructed, presented, and contested by selected political actors?
- How has the preservation and interpretation of heritage sites, such as the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park, reflected the changing political and social landscape in post-apartheid South Africa?
- What are the challenges and controversies surrounding the representation and preservation of heritage sites in South Africa, and how have they evolved over time?

With these questions, I attempt to investigate the power relations that exist between various actors involved in South Africa's changing public memory landscape. Moving from a social constructionism framework, I undertake a form of qualitative content analysis with respect to each of the chosen sites to shed light on the heritage values they reflect and the contestations that have developed in relation to them.

Research Paradigm

This thesis adopts an interpretivist paradigm that entails a descriptive-exploratory approach towards the contestation of values and national identity by various actors within the heritage and political symbols debate in post-apartheid South Africa. It examines how the memory or heritage debate – centering questions about the destruction and rehabilitation of old monuments, and the construction of the new ones - emerged and developed amongst various civil society actors and political elites. This study is descriptive in nature. However, the study is also exploratory in that it explores the emergence of new interests, values, and changes to these, as well as the identities reflected in the heritage debate. This descriptive-exploratory approach is epistemologically situated within the theoretical framework of social constructionism outlined above, and is expanded to include national identity and other forms of imagined communities. .

Through an interpretivist paradigm, I have systematically analysed the socially constructed meanings of heritage sites and public memory through detailed direct observation, aiming to understand and interpret the assignment of meaning to these sites. Furthermore, I also link the narratives that emerge through these sites to the construction and maintenance of their reality by political actors (Neuman 1997:68).

I studied and visited the heritage sites under investigation in order to understand the values embedded in the narratives communicated through them and in relation to their surroundings. The

data collected during site visits formed the foundation for theorising and generated additional concepts. Interpretivism, in addition to conducting site visits, encompasses hermeneutics, which involves the analysis of texts, communication, and visual representations to cultivate a nuanced comprehension of embedded meanings and potential interconnections arising from these sites, thereby revealing the social reality as experienced by individuals (Neuman, 1997). Furthermore, interpretivism underscores the primacy of ideational aspects over material considerations, while acknowledging the significance of the latter (Neuman, 1999). As Hay (2011) highlights, it is essential to consider the intricate interplay between material and ideational factors, as the material reality acquires meaning within an ideational framework that is viewed and framed by political players. In this context, social constructionism aids in comprehending the construction of political elites, heritage sites (memory), and national identity (values) by positioning them as subjects of scholarly inquiry.

Research design

Having explained the interpretivist paradigm that informs this study, the following section will explain the design of the study. The study is based on a descriptive-exploratory design, which comprises five components. Firstly, I undertook a systemic literature review centred on heritage values and the politics of heritage in South Africa. Secondly, I focused attention on specific archives. This archival work focused on government heritage policies, Hansard documents concerning heritage debates and policies, and the party and political manifestos of different actors involved in the construction of public heritage. Thirdly, I undertook a series of site visits to Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park over the course of two years of the study. Fourthly, I undertook a discursive analysis of statements made by political actors in relation to the heritage sites under investigation.

Literature Review

Broadly, three areas of literature were reviewed in this study.

Firstly, the global view concerning heritage values was narrowed down to South Africa's existing literature (a number of fields intersect with the study of heritage sites and memory – including Heritage Studies, History, Built Environment, and Architectural Studies). My reading therefore went beyond political sciences, where minimal work has been done regarding the politics of heritage or public memory.

Secondly, since both Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage sites are national heritage sites, I reviewed scholarly literature separately that focuses on these respective sites. Many texts about the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage sites were able to offer reflections

on forms of public memory and heritage legislation, both pre- and post-apartheid. Foucault's essay '*Of other spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*' (1967:3) prompted me to develop another interest, that is the relationship between memory and socio-economic effects, and this also aided in another area of observation during the site visits (relationship between heritage site and the surrounding areas - explained in more detail in the site visit section below).

Thirdly, I reviewed literature centered on policy development with respect to public memory, including scholarly literature on public policy of heritage in South Africa, and government policies on heritage values and public memory.

Archival Work

As the study developed, I identified five key political developments around which aspects of my archival work centered.

The first is the passing of the Bushman Relics Act, which forms the foundation of South Africa's cultural conservation legislation and marks the continuation and domination of colonial symbols since South Africa became a state. This meant I had to revisit documents in the South African History Archives (SAHA) to gain a deeper understanding of the Bushman Relics Act of 1911 and the associated policy documents. The documents and policies were retrieved online, such as from South African History Online.

The second political development pertains to the period of 1948 with the rise of the National Party (NP) to power, marked by its implementation of policies aimed at segregating African heritage and memory. The NP was instrumental in the construction of the Voortrekker Monument; therefore, I revisited documents and speeches by former apartheid leaders and political actors to analyse the values that underpinned the monument leading up to and during the apartheid era. The documents and policies were retrieved online, such as from South African History Online.

The third key development I looked at was the era of the 1960s, accompanied by economic development and decolonisation in the global south. The international movements during the 1960s generated public awareness about cultural protection and the need for expanded measures. South Africa was also not left behind as liberation movements intensified their liberation struggle internally from the 1960s. On the other hand, the National Monument Council (NMC) was founded under the National Monuments Act of 1969 to prevent damages of 'white memory'. The archival work in this regard includes the international policies that inspired the National Monuments Act, the NMC documents, and the documents of the liberation movements.

The fourth political development involves the establishment of the democratic government in 1994, driven by the anticipation that it would lead to the resolution of the discourse surrounding heritage and public memory. In this respect, I studied democratic transition documents (CODESA) and discussions related to heritage preservation. SAHRA documents and policies that are available online were also revisited, as it has been the body that governs national heritage in post-apartheid South Africa. Presidential Legacy Project documents were also analysed because it was the very project that tasked the construction of the Freedom Park and other post-apartheid national heritage sites. Moreover, I have obtained a substantial number of documents from government departments and their online archives.

The final political development is marked by the inclusion of the EFF in the political landscape in 2013 and the #RhodesMustFall student protests in 2015 because they were pivotal in successfully placing the unresolved political or heritage symbols as the focus of national discourse. As a result, I reviewed the Hansard documents concerning the heritage and political party manifestos and policies. The discussion of the heritage discourse is then expanded to examine the progression from 1994 leading up to the heritage debate of 2013-2015. This section concludes by highlighting the role of the political actors as a significant group engaged in the post-1994 memory discourse.

Site visits

In order to explore the research question, I conducted site visits in the form of ‘flexible’ observations to Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park Heritage Sites. The site visits that I conducted were one of the methods to obtain primary data. The site visits allowed me to gather information directly about the past and present representations in these heritage sites that I might not have been aware of and that may not be visible to the public. Furthermore, the visits presented an opportunity to offer comprehensive, detailed descriptions of the social context, enhance interpretation, and formulate new inquiries, as noted by DeMuch and Sobo (1998). I observed the descriptions and elements of Freedom Park and Voortrekker Monument heritage sites to investigate how values are narrated within these sites. As I made regular visits and paid closer attention to narration by tour guides, another interest that was worthy to be observed emerged – that is, the relationship between the heritage sites and their surroundings, and public memory and socio-economic impact.

Subsequently, I analysed the collected data with the aim of critically interpreting its meaning, specifically in relation to the memory debate of heritage sites constructed by political actors, their intentions, practices, and how this resulted in the communication of values and a national identity.

Prior to data collection and observational activities, authorisation was obtained from relevant authorities, including the managers of the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park sites. Specific dates when I visited the sites were arranged. I personally documented the observational data in my notebook. Additionally, certain photographs were taken as a contingency measure, following permission from the tour guide. To guarantee the reliability of the data, the transcribed observations were cross-referenced with the captured images and information sourced from the monuments' websites, thus validating and affirming the content of the observations.

Data Analysis

This second part of the design will explain the process of data analysis employed in this study. The data analysis employed in this study is qualitative. I gathered and transcribed observed data collected during site visits, reviewed government policies concerning heritage and public memory, political party manifestos, Hansard documents, and debates. Through qualitative analysis of this data, I reconstructed narratives associated with the sites as well as the perspectives and perceptions of political actors, in order to identify patterns, themes, categories, and common features (paraphrased from Blake 2020). This aligns with the assertion made by Gibbs (2007: 1) that through the application of analytical processes, qualitative data is transformed into understandable, insightful, trustworthy, and even original analysis. The qualitative content analysis used in this study entailed identifying the themes related to 'memory' or political symbols debate as they were expressed by political actors in the post-1994 period. The aim was to examine the social construction of heritage sites, the interconnected national identity associated with these heritage sites, and the prevalence of social cohesion, diversity and conflict.

Qualitative Content Analysis

There are a variety of approaches and scholars in the publication of content analysis work, such as Krippendorff (1980), Watling and James (2012), Drisko and Maschi (2016), Saldana (2013), and Smit (2022). According to Neuman (1977), content analysis encompasses the systematic examination of data materials to discern both explicit and implicit meanings conveyed through written words, spoken language, or visual depictions. Krippendorff (2004) adds that this methodological approach involves several key processes, including unitising, sampling, recording or coding, reducing, inferring, and narrating, with the ultimate aim of progressing from textual data to analytical outcomes through iterative refinement and adjustment of data interpretation. Unitising entails identifying relevant texts that serve as carriers of ideas pertinent to the discourse on heritage, often manifested as symbols, icons, and visuals that qualitatively convey meaning. The deliberate selection of data that, to the greatest extent possible, represents the target population is sampling. In the context of this study, the process involved the identification of substantive

categories of analysis: the views of a set of political elites with their vested interest in the memory debate. In this respect I looked at ANC leaders for the way that they have framed the memory debate and placed it at the heart of political and national discourses since the democratic dispensation in 1994; FF+ leaders because they actively sought to preserve aspects of colonial heritage at the political level; and the EFF since its entrance into the political dispensation in 2013, advocating the destruction of old monuments and calling for political symbols that acknowledge the memory of 'black people'. As I show, both the EFF and the FF+ present an alternate view to the 'multiplicative approach' adopted by the ANC in 1994.

Furthermore, the coding procedure was employed to discern patterns distinguished by similarities, differences, frequencies, sequences, correspondences, and causal relationships, and it encompasses descriptive coding methods. Descriptive coding involves the reduction of data to identified descriptors and its techniques were utilised in the analysis (Saldana, 2013: 4&6-7).

Qualitative content analysis, as the specific methodological approach employed in this thesis, draws upon hermeneutics to enable the consideration of diverse voices, alternative perspectives, conflicting viewpoints, and varied textual usage, thereby facilitating multiple interpretations (Krippendorff, 2004:88). In the context of qualitative content analysis, the analytical process involves the interpretation, comprehension, and explication of emerging or substantive patterns, themes, or theories, as articulated by Smit (2022:66).

2.3 Ethical Considerations

In conducting this research, ethical considerations were paramount in ensuring the integrity and reliability of the study. Although the research did not involve human subjects, the observation of heritage sites (site visits) still required adherence to ethical principles. Prior to the site visits, I wrote to relevant authorities, including the managers of the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park sites. Specific dates for the visits were arranged, and all observational data was meticulously documented. Additionally, photographs were taken with permission from the tour guide, and the reliability of the data was ensured through cross-referencing with captured images and information sourced from the monuments' websites.

I also acknowledged the importance of respecting the heritage sites and their surroundings, ensuring that the observations were conducted with sensitivity and respect for the cultural and historical significance of the sites. Furthermore, I was committed to upholding ethical standards in the analysis and interpretation of the data, ensuring that the findings were presented with accuracy and integrity.

Additionally, I recognise the potential impact of the research on the communities and individuals associated with the heritage sites and am dedicated to presenting the findings in a responsible and respectful manner. The ethical implications of interpreting and analysing the narratives and values communicated through the heritage sites were carefully considered, with a commitment to conducting the research with integrity and respect for all stakeholders involved.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to explain the framework and research methods deployed in this thesis. I began the chapter by detailing social constructionist theory and its relevance in studying heritage values. Social constructionism challenges authoritative narratives that impose singular interpretations of reality and contends that individuals' personal narratives are frequently marginalised, oppressed, and disregarded in favour of prevailing dominant belief systems, which tend to pathologise those diverging from these norms. This perspective has important implications for a study like this, which means going beyond simply accepting or rejecting discourses on the social world, but instead trying to understand them in relation to their effects on how people come to accept a particular conception of reality as 'their reality'. This was followed by the research question and sub-questions that guide the study. Then, I also emphasised interpretivism - a research paradigm that entails a descriptive-exploratory approach towards the contestation of values and national identity by various actors within the heritage and political symbols debate in post-apartheid South Africa. Through the interpretivist paradigm, the socially constructed meanings of heritage sites and public memory were systematically analysed through direct, detailed observation of heritage sites in order to arrive at an understanding and interpretation of how meaning comes to be assigned to these sites.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

In this chapter, I detail the literature review undertaken as part of this study, focused on the public memory debate in South Africa. The chapter is divided into three sections. I begin by looking at literature focused on political symbols and heritage sites, synthesising the views of various experts globally. I then connect this literature and the various approaches detailed in my two case studies and the views of local political actors. I then turn to questions of nationalism and heritage, with a particular focus on the concept of imagined community coined by Anderson and its application in analysing heritage sites. The last section of this chapter is titled “Approaches to Heritage Values in South Africa,” and it focuses on how heritage sites in South Africa have been analysed, with a specific focus on studies that have been conducted regarding the Freedom Park heritage site and the Voortrekker Monument.

3.1 Political symbols, heritage sites and politics

In the “*Introduction Symbolism and Politics, Politics, Religion & Ideology*,” Gill and Angosto-Ferrandez (2018) explore the role of symbols in a political community. According to them, symbols are integral components of the functioning of society and human life because they shape our perception of the world. Within any community, the interpretation of symbols is not monolithic; rather, diverse groups and individuals imbue symbols with various meanings, reflecting their unique capacities to construct virtual realities within which they operate. (Gill and Angosto-Ferrandez 2018: 429). This multifaceted nature of symbols transforms symbolic discourse into a contested arena, where differing interpretations fuel individual and group struggles over political issues, with each side vying to assert dominance over the symbolic discourse to further their own agendas. This introductory statement is important in understanding the role of symbols within a political community, and in this thesis, it helps understand the practices of political actors like the ANC, EFF, and FF+ in their relationship to various politicised symbols.

Following a visit to Freedom Park, it became evident that while the site embodies diverse meanings, the relationship between this heritage site and its surrounding area remained subject to inquiry. To gain a more profound understanding of the nexus between heritage and community, Crook’s (2010) “*The Politics of Community Heritage: Motivations, Authority, and Control*” was instructive. Crook describes the site as a ‘contact zone’ where assorted assumptions and aspirations are expressed by the community. As different interest groups interact within a heritage site, a new dynamic emerges. It is therefore important that the relationship between the community and the heritage site be examined from multiple perspectives - the perspective of the government, the interests of the heritage sector, and the interests of grassroots initiatives. Crook’s work thus adds deeper understanding of the interests and values that prevail within these heritage sites.

In their study, Ashworth and Tunbridge (1999) show that politically constructed heritage conservation can be attributed to changes in the political system, ideology, and public planning system of Eastern Europe. A conflict between political and tourist-economic uses of heritage reflects the post-Soviet period, characterised by the removal or renaming of communist remains and the adoption of these sites. New political systems have facilitated commercialism and diminished national responsibilities. Over time, the roles and responsibilities of federal state, and local governments have changed. Social and regional cohesion are said to be the goals of the new heritage policy. Ashworth and Tunbridge (1999) inspired me to revisit different political dispensations in South Africa (Union of South Africa – 1910, Apartheid South Africa after 1948, Democratic South Africa after 1994). The framework of heritage policy with respect to each dispensation is discussed. I try to demonstrate how South Africa has commercialized heritage discourse over time – by focusing on tourist attraction and using symbolic value to attain economic value.

Furthermore, Ashworth and Tunbridge (1996) examine the social impact of heritage when it is used to generate economic value in “*Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict*.” They argue that heritage preservation can lead to conflict, especially in areas where there is heritage dissonance. Conflicts can negatively affect heritage development, distribution, and consumption. Heritage is viewed from a market science perspective as a project that has been carefully selected for public consumption. Hence, the inconsistent and disagreeable nature of heritage demand management (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1996). If heritage preservation involves diverse interests, then how is this policy negotiated by different actors with different expectations?

An examination of Foucault's (1986) “Of Other Spaces” essay offers a valuable framework for illustrating the transformation of heritage sites into heterotopias. In his seminal essay, Foucault delineates the concept of ‘heterotopias’ by contrasting them with utopias, emphasising their distinctive nature as counter-sites that simultaneously represent, contest, and invert real sites within a culture. Utilising Foucault’s concept, I conducted an analysis of the heterotopic nature manifested in both Freedom Park and the Voortrekker Monument.

Bell (2013) emphasises the significance of recognising the inherently political nature of heritage preservation, highlighting its tendency to favour an elitist interpretation of heritage sites while marginalising or even damaging their significance. Both Voortrekker monument and Freedom Park heritage sites show signs of elitist approach. Moreover, Bell (2013) points out that structures representing subsequent cultures, yet deeply tied to the place, are frequently undervalued, under-interpreted, or intentionally eradicated from the landscape. Taylor (2009:56) describes democratic values as being integrated into heritage preservation as an effort to protect diversity. According to

Taylor (2009:60), there is an internationalisation of norms in the local heritage sites. At the local level, these promote peace, democratic values and sustainable development, all of which can be problematic. Freedom Park's elements are composed of structures that were purposefully collected from the parts of the continent and from outside the continent. Internationalisation of norms was also relevant during the planning phase as the competition to construct the site invited the applications across the globe. Consequently, according to Taylor (2009), "Projects pursuing international norms therefore incorporate actors on a number of levels who come together provisionally to activate relationships with funders (and other resources) by slotting into" places of recognition (Taylor, 2009: 61). This became important in analysing how different funders within Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park Heritage sites are able to construct their preferred values or recognition.

Chirikure, Mukwende, and Taruvinga (2016) posit that the conservation frameworks applied in post-colonial Africa remain influenced by colonial legacies and at times by external concepts that do not align with indigenous knowledge systems that have historically governed heritage management. Their perspective aligns with Taylor's depiction of the internationalisation of norms at the local level, particularly evident in countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Botswana, where Western consultants were engaged to implement international best practices and train local conservators (Chirikure, Mukwende, and Taruvinga, 2016). These consultants appear to have imparted principles from the Venice and Burra Charters to these nations, offering limited scope for the integration of local values. Consequently, heritage preservation, rooted in a Western conceptualisation of heritage values, appears to serve scientific, aesthetic, research, social, and economic purposes. South Africa has thus been acclimated to the internationalisation of norms concerning landscape memory.

Other scholars such as Mason (2002) aggregate or construct a typology of heritage values that are based on political, economic, artistic, preservation and social values. Preservation of heritage promotes national cohesion and succession, making it of political value. Patriotism and national identity are often closely associated with it. As in any post-colonial society, political concerns more than aesthetic assertions motivate preservation in South Africa and are frequently used to address social issues. In general, it focuses on fostering national identity or patriotism, as well as supporting cultural diversity. By disregarding sustainability or transformation, preservation values differ from other values. Heritage values based on acceptance and support of all kinds of values can be interpreted as a lack of ulterior motives, like economic profit or ideology. Generally, those who are primarily involved in promoting preservation values rarely interpret historic properties or sites but are normally involved in making decisions concerning preservation or protection of these sites. In order not to damage historic sites and properties, they must understand their significance.

During the nineteenth century, patriotism drove many historic preservation efforts; however, the economic benefits of heritage preservation soon attracted attention, as what Barthel (1996 : 20) describes as a “culturally specific responses to industrialisation”. The preservation and development of intangible heritage have provided economically invigorating opportunities for many declined industrial areas (Graham et al., 2000). Organised efforts of various groups have appeared on account of this interest, and these efforts appear to be related to community revitalisation through heritage tourism.

Moreover, they argue that at both national and international levels, heritage is recognised for its artistic value, even though art and heritage are often considered as separate fields. In South Africa, the country's heritage policy places value on both tangible and intangible heritage. ‘Social value’ represents an additional dimension of heritage value, encompassing various facets such as community identity, territorial attachment, symbolic import, spiritual connections, and social capital. For the sake of this research, social value refers to collective attachment of a community or communities to a specific area, reflecting significant meanings and values (Jones and Leech, 2015). Mason (2002) asserts that social values underpin social relationships, networks, community affection, as well as communal unity and identity. According to Mason (2002), this concept is closely linked to “place attachment,” signifying the communal unity, communal identity, or other forms of belonging that people derive from their visits to certain heritage sites.

3.2 Nation and heritage.

The study of Benedict Anderson in approaching questions of community and national identity is important in this study because I used it to analyse how the ANC, FF+, and the EFF have managed to construct community identity using elements of public memory. Anderson discusses the concepts of nation, nationality, and nationalism in his imagined community theory. Nationality is treated as a sociocultural concept in his *Imagined communities* (1991:4). Anderson further writes that cultural artifacts are not universally accepted and shared in South Africa (Anderson, 1991). In the context of this research, Anderson’s theories on the national identity formations are considered in relation to the factors outlined above. Notably, the establishment of social and cultural concepts necessitates mutual sharing, and cultural artifacts must elicit profound emotional legitimacy among all members of the community (Anderson, 1991). Thus, the two cases attempt to create separate ‘imagined communities’ reflecting different regimes (Apartheid and democratic dispensation) that include previously marginalised and ignored groups, such as Afrikaners during the Apartheid era and Africans during the democratic dispensation. However, Freedom Park also attempts to create an inclusive community, in line with the concept of the ‘*rainbow nation*’. For instance, Freedom Park incorporates elements representing all South Africa’s official languages and commemorates eight pivotal historical conflicts. To scrutinise this aspect, a comparative

examination of analogous elements at each site is imperative, encompassing the surrounding community dynamics, proximity to other historical sites, and the symbolic significance attributed to these elements..

3.3 Approaches to heritage preservation in South Africa

Annie Coombes, in her publication *“History after apartheid: Visual culture and public memory in a democratic South Africa”* (2003), delves into the complex challenges encountered by South African museums as they confront the legacy of apartheid. Coombes (2003) extensively examines the status of colonial and apartheid monuments, as well as the underlying agendas associated with newly established democratic commemorative monuments. Her central contention revolves around the dual purpose of these new monuments, aiming to serve as reminders of a fractured past while concurrently fostering national unity. The insights provided by Coombes regarding the evolution of public monuments, both past and present, hold significant relevance within the scope of this study, particularly in analysing Freedom Park and the Voortrekker Monument.

Sabine Marschall’s study, *Landscape of Memory* (2010), is explicitly framed as a continuation of Coombes’s work and is linked to *History After Apartheid* based on its central focus on reclaiming the past and addressing associated controversies. In her view, monuments play a crucial role in cultivating a collective consciousness and shaping a shared memory that serves as the foundation for the formation of group identities.

Autry (2012) describes how the Voortrekker Monument has become an ‘acceptable site’ by transitioning from its original image to a more inclusive narrative which protects ‘minority rights’ in cultural preservation. By transforming itself into a repository for Afrikaner material culture, the Monument has reinvented itself as a repository for national culture and history that no longer fits easily into mainstream museums’ exhibitions. The evolving landscape of the Voortrekker Monument serves as a testament to the politicization and depoliticization of public memorials over time (Autry, 2012:161). According to Autry (2012:156), the alterations observed at the Voortrekker Monument reflect a broader aspiration to govern the site's post-apartheid transformation, shielding it from political interference. Autry (2012:161) concludes that the Voortrekker Monument’s evolution and preservation indicate that those monuments holding the greatest symbolic power will likely be preserved, even while new memorial sites are being established, like Freedom Park.

Brand and Coombes’ book, *“Hybridity and its discontents: Politics, science, culture”* (2000) contends that the Voortrekker Monument remains contested in democratic South Africa because of its close ties with the apartheid regime. Brand and Coombes (2000) posit that, for some retaining the monument represents upholding of a separatist system historical value, and advocate for its removal. Brand and Coombes (2000) seek to propose methods for the ‘rehabilitation’ of this site,

which encapsulates the legacy of apartheid and propagates the myth of the Voortrekkers as the chosen people.

In “*The Voortrekker Monument: The birth of apartheid and beyond*” (2001), Crampton traces the Monument’s role in constructing a heroic Afrikaner identity in the 1940s and the reinforcement of an apartheid political identity. Crampton situates these discussions in relation to post-apartheid nation identity construction and nation building.

In the book “*A Cultural Conundrum? Old Monuments and New Regimes: The Voortrekker Monument as Symbol of Afrikaner Power in a Post-apartheid South Africa*” (2001) by Grundlingh, the Voortrekker monument is utilised as a case study to investigate the evolving symbolism of Afrikaner nationalism in the aftermath of apartheid. The study emphasises the monument’s depiction of the ‘Great Trek,’ pivotal in the colonisation of inland South Africa, immortalised through twenty-seven marble panels portraying the Voortrekkers as heroic civilisers and Africans as savages. While some South Africans perceive the monument as insensitive due to its association with Apartheid, negotiations persist regarding its current role as a tourist attraction.

In “*Monument, Ruin, and Redress in South African Heritage: Heritage, Culture, and Politics in the Postcolony*,” Herwits (2012) asserts that the country is in the pursuit of a national identity capable of articulating and unifying official state culture and its citizens (Herwits 2012:80). Herwits proceeds to analyse a range of heritage sites in South Africa, commencing with the Voortrekker Monument, constructed by Afrikaner nationalists (partly associated with the National Party) to commemorate Afrikaner identity and heritage. According to Herwits, this monument played a pivotal role in establishing an Afrikaner identity distinct from other groups - such as Africans and the British. Following the end of apartheid, Thabo Mbeki endeavoured to redefine African heritage by formulating a national narrative centered on the African Renaissance. As part of the democratic government's initiative of ‘demonumentalisation,’ Afrikaner heritage underwent redefinition, exemplified by the Voortrekker Monument.

In “*Public History/Heritage: Translation, Transgression or More of the Same?*”, Kros (2010), uses the Voortrekker Monument as an example and situates it within larger debates regarding the importance of heritage and the identity of contemporary Afrikaners. Kros suggests that the monument presents Afrikaners as victims of the British, as a result of South African War suffering in concentration camps, and it justifies ethnic and gender inequalities.

According to Mare (2002), monuments are public structures that serve as memorials for specific communities and groups. In his paper, Mare examines monuments in terms of their purpose and meaning, as well as whether they are neglected, appropriated, or transformed. Mare also suggests that the new South African monuments present singular narratives. In his remarks, he refers to the

ANC's proposal to turn the Voortrekker Monument's first floor into a memorial commemorating the party's liberation struggle, before it decided to create a separate monument in the form of Freedom Park. A comparison is made between Freedom Park and the Holocaust Museum in Germany regarding the difficulty of representing the past.

In "*Freedom Park and Postcolonial Monumentality*," Oliphant (2013) contends that Freedom Park's spatial layout is deliberate, serving to commemorate two pivotal historical epochs from the colonial past: Afrikaner nationalism and British Imperialism. The park is conceptualised as a counter-structure, drawing from African monumental aesthetics and demonstrably environmentally friendly. The author suggests that challenging European misrepresentations of African culture and success stories is a crucial form of engagement with colonial and imperial monumentality. Furthermore, the restoration of an all-encompassing African past is indicative of a postcolonial monumentality. Overall, Oliphant's analysis highlights the importance of considering the historical context and cultural significance of monuments and public spaces. By creating a counter-structure that celebrates African culture and history, Freedom Park challenges the dominant narratives of colonialism and imperialism. However, it is important to note that the creation of such counter-structures is not without controversy and can be seen as a form of political resistance. As such, it is crucial to continue to critically analyse and engage with the ways in which public spaces and monuments shape our understanding of history and culture.

In the article titled "*Nation-building-premises in Freedom Park, South Africa*", Shulze (2012) argues that Freedom Park serves as both a symbolic construct and a meticulously designed configuration of specific societal frameworks, serving as a form of redress for past injustices. Shulze's analysis highlights the complex nature of Freedom Park and its role in nation-building. The author's argument that Freedom Park is an illusory space is supported by research on the securitisation of public spaces. Additionally, research on the impact of market-oriented policies on poverty supports Shulze's argument that Freedom Park's immediate environs speak of impoverishment.

In "*Freedom Park, A Heritage Destination': Tour-guiding and visitor experience at a post-apartheid heritage site*", Jethro (2016) explores ways in which particular knowledge is utilized within Freedom Park to validate the establishment and influence visitors' perception of post-apartheid South Africa. As per Jethro (2016), Freedom Park serves as a significant locus for the active construction, negotiation, and renegotiation of post-apartheid identity, authenticity, and legitimacy. In "*Site of struggle: the Freedom Park fracas and the divisive legacy of South Africa's Border War/Liberation Struggle*", Baines (2009) examines the tensions and debates around whether the former members of SADF should be in Freedom Park's Wall of Names. Baines (2009)

contends that this controversy and ensuing discord exemplify the dynamics of memory politics within transitional societies.

In “*Commemorating 'Struggle Heroes': Constructing a Genealogy for the New South Africa*,” Marschall (2006) argues that the construction of a national identity relies on shared memories, particularly those linked to the commemoration of anti-apartheid heroes. This commemoration contributes to the establishment of a new heritage that accentuates resistance against the apartheid system, thereby cultivating a more favourable national identity. In a related work, Marshall (2010) delves into public memorialisation and democracy in post-apartheid South Africa, highlighting the inherent limitations of sites of memory, particularly public memorials, in preserving memory for future generations. While not explicitly addressing the number of heritage sites inscribed, the research seeks to explore the political, economic factors, and potential biases in value that may have influenced the selection of these sites. As a result, this study will adopt Harrison’s assertion that in contemporary society, the ability to control heritage translates to the authority to reshape the past in a manner that facilitates specific actions or perspectives in the present (Harrison, 2010).

3.4 Conclusion

In this literature review chapter, various scholars have explored the role of political symbols and heritage sites in shaping public memory and national identity in South Africa. It elucidates the concept of multivocality within symbols, portraying them as contested terrains where divergent ideas and interpretations clash, thereby fuelling individual and group struggles over political matters. Scholars have also examined the relationship between heritage sites and the surrounding community, highlighting the need to examine this relationship from multiple perspectives. Notably, the discourse emphasises the persistence of colonial legacies and external paradigms within conservation systems in post-colonial Africa, which diverge from indigenous knowledge systems historically governing heritage management. Emphasis has been placed on the significance of social values in heritage preservation, encompassing community identity, territorial attachment, symbolic importance, spiritual connections, and social capital. Finally, the study of Benedict Anderson's imagined community theory has been used to analyse how political actors in South Africa have managed to construct community identity using elements of public memory.

Chapter 4 Contesting Public Memory: The Making and Unmaking of South Africa's Past

The present chapter is dedicated to examining the nature of public heritage in the context of South Africa. In doing so, I have selected five key political developments that have influenced and continue to influence South Africa's public memory. The central argument is that historical and political factors, emanating from the Union of South Africa, apartheid South Africa, and the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) negotiations, have shaped the multiplicative model adopted by post-apartheid South Africa in its efforts towards reconciliation. With endemic poverty and inequality, particularly among black the population in South Africa, new actors (such as the #RMF) have emerged, calling for 'decolonisation' instead of 'reconciliation' in relation to monuments in South Africa. As demonstrated, the careful approach by the South African government follows from the lessons of the National Party in dealing with the public memory of Anglophone South Africans when they came into power in 1948. It is also argued that, given the political climate that existed in 1994 in South Africa and its attempt to position itself within the global community, it was impossible for South Africa to adopt a radical approach in dealing with colonial and apartheid symbols. Nationalists also emerged in 1994 to protect Afrikaner interests and have come into conflict with the removalists regarding the public memory debate. It is evident that the question of national subjects also extends to the public memory debate in South Africa.

The chapter is organised around five key political developments. Firstly, I explain the Union of South Africa as the first political development, which, from the heritage perspective, enacted and formalised the first legislations regarding heritage and marked the continuation of colonial domination of public memory. I then turn to the rise of the National Party (NP) as the second political development that affected public memory because its leaders and civil society organisations used public memory to forge and give rise to Afrikaner nationalism – portraying Afrikaners as victims during the Anglo-Boer War and the suffering they faced in coming into power. The third political development that I look at centers on the decolonisation in the global south and the rise of social movements, which led to decolonisation in most African countries in the 1960s. South Africa was not spared in this regard. South African government entrenched policies to protect historic sites and public memory as liberation movements intensified their struggle against the apartheid state. I then turn to the fourth political development, which is the transition to a democratic dispensation in the 1990s and the post-1994 dispensation. Here, I explain the debates of CODESA negotiations in relation to public memory and the view and policies that were put forward by different political parties. I also explain how the process of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) affected the memory debate. The section ends with the

identification of – the emergence of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and the #RhodesMustFall Movement questioning the existence of colonial symbols while the very figures are responsible for the socio-economic challenges experienced by South Africans today. The chapter concludes by stating that the calls for removal and the damage of colonial and apartheid monuments can be attributed to the diminishing of symbolic value used by South Africa during the early dispensation in order to cash in economic value.

4.1 The Union of South Africa

The history of political contestation in late nineteenth-century South Africa, characterised by territorial and resource disputes, significantly contributed to the emergence and formalisation of heritage in the country. The discovery of diamonds in 1869 precipitated urbanisation, industrialization, and heightened racial segregation. The Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) saw British colonial forces vying for control over economically lucrative areas, meeting resistance from the Boers, resulting in widespread land destruction and the internment of many Boers in refugee and concentration camps. The aftermath of the war and the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 marked the ascendancy of Afrikaner nationalism, which adversely impacted the status of black individuals, leading to disenfranchisement, land ownership restrictions, and residential segregation.

During the early to mid-nineteenth century in Britain, the concept of heritage encompassed ideals of public ethics, cultural property, nation, and race, which were subsequently adopted by ‘loyal unionist progressive’ coteries’ in South Africa following the Anglo-Boer War (Merrington 1995: 132-134). This elite group of influential Unionists embraced heritage as a tool to envision and disseminate South Africa’s new national identity and within the global framework of the British Empire. This entailed a focus on antiquarianism, aesthetics, mysticism, and aristocratic gestures, including attitudes towards nature, and land, as well as concerns about the management and conservation of material culture reflecting the shared history of English and Afrikaner nations (Merrington 2002).

The early 20th century marked a significant expansion of the concept of heritage as material culture in South Africa, facilitated by the enactment of key legislations such as the National Historical Monuments Act of 1923 and the Natural Monuments and Relics Act of 1934 (Davidson, 2001; Skotness, 1996). These laws empowered the establishment of oversight bodies tasked with cataloguing and conserving South African material cultural heritage. The Historical Monuments Commission (HMC), established by the Natural and Historical Monuments Act of 1923, compiled a register for monuments and enacted protective (Artefacts South Africa, 2022). Subsequently, the jurisdiction of the Commission was further reinforced through the enactment of the Natural Monuments and Relics Act of 1934, which established national monument status as the most

esteemed form of recognition for a heritage site within the country. Additionally, the state-driven institutional practice introduced the Bushmen Relics Act of 1911 to prevent the trafficking of artifacts and human remains from South Africa to Europe (Rassool et al, 2010). This legislation was influenced by the South African National Society (SANS), established in 1905, which sought to preserve public memory and heritage, particularly the colonial heritage. This narrative aligns with the colonial perspective that South Africa's history and civilisation commenced with the arrival European settlers (Department of Arts and Culture, 2007). This selective conservation of European cultural heritage shaped legislative frameworks that endorsed the division and disintegration of heritage management resulting in the marginalisation of indigenous experiences.

The concept of heritage in South Africa emerged from practices related to material culture, reflecting the dominance of white nationalism following the establishment of the modern South African state in the early 1900s. This policy aimed to regulate the movement of cultural artifacts and ideas of black indigenous peoples, while promoting the aesthetic preferences of the white elite minority. This thesis seeks to disrupt this particular genealogy by examining the formation of heritage at a different political moment, specifically during the incorporation of the South African nation in the democratic era.

4.2 The Emergence of National Party and Afrikaner Nationalism 1948

The construction of public memory and heritage in South Africa has been intricately intertwined with party politics, functioning as a political asset for the construction of national identities and forms of power. During the apartheid era, the National Party (NP) utilised heritage to justify and celebrate privilege, as highlighted by Ashworth et al. (1996), who emphasised that heritage interpretation was purposefully crafted by the ruling or aspiring power elite to legitimise the regime. This sentiment was echoed by Herwitz (2010), who noted that the unveiling of the Voortrekker Monument was a means of commemorating Afrikaner identity and heritage, establishing a separate identity for the Afrikaners in contrast to other groups.

The NP, formed by Afrikaner nationalists in 1914, came into power in 1948 and instituted the apartheid policy, which endured for nearly fifty years, promoting complete racial separation and constructing Afrikaner identity. The apartheid regime enforced laws to ensure the complete separation of races and to restrict the movement of black people, entrenching earlier laws that were designed to segregate races in personal, cultural, social, and political life. The Group Areas Act of 1950 exemplified the government's efforts to create a national identity and heritage exclusively for white people, leading to the forced removal of non-white individuals from designated areas to make way for white settlement (South African History Online, 2022).

The National Monuments Act of 1969, which remained the primary heritage law until 1999, reinforced a nostalgic interpretation of settler history and its associated material legacy,

concurrently endorsing the acceptability of apartheid governance (Deacon, 164; Shepherd, 2007:121). The act authorised the establishment of regulatory institutions tasked with cataloguing and preserving material cultural heritage, resulting in the designation of approximately 3500 sites or buildings as National Monuments, predominantly reflecting white minority values and experiences (Hall, 2006). This racial bias in monument designation perpetuated white supremacist stereotypes of indigenous South Africans and marginalized the cultural heritage of the majority of the nation's population.

Frescura's (1992) quantitative analysis of the declaration of national monuments in South Africa between 1934 and 1988 sheds light on the racial bias inherent in the designation of these monuments. His findings reveal a clear pattern of exclusion of the cultural heritage of the majority of the nation's population, perpetuating white supremacist stereotypes of indigenous South Africans. The categorisation of monuments by Frescura is as follows: Dutch (including Voortrekker, Boer, and Huguenot) at 33 percent, Afrikaner (twentieth century) at 17 percent, English (including 1820 settler, colonial, and Empire) at 37 percent, other white settler at 10 percent, and black at 3 percent. This categorisation underscores the disproportionate representation of white settler heritage in comparison to the heritage of the black population.

Frescura's (1992) analysis also reveals that in the fifty-four years studied, a total of 2,183 buildings, sites, and objects were formally declared monuments by the HMC/NMC. He argues that the policy of monumentalising the built environment was utilised to reinforce white political strategies and create a myth of white legitimacy, particularly during a time when indigenous groups were challenging political and economic repression. This assertion aligns with the historical context of South Africa, where the reinforcement of white legitimacy became evident with the rise of the National Party to power in the 1950s, leading to a surge in monument inscriptions. The subsequent two decades saw gradual increases in declarations, particularly from 1960 to 1969, a period characterised by the formalisation of colonial policies of land segregation and labour exploitation into an ideology of separate-but-equal facilities.

The spike in monument declarations in the 1960s coincides with the aftermath of the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960, a pivotal event that marked international scrutiny of apartheid and a trend toward steadily increasing declarations in the following years. This historical context underscores the political motivations behind the designation of national monuments and their role in reinforcing racial ideologies. Furthermore, Frescura's analysis highlights the European precedent underlying South African heritage laws of the twentieth century, which emphasised grand architecture and places associated with dominant leaders and groups. This Eurocentric approach to heritage preservation further perpetuated the marginalisation of indigenous South African cultural heritage.

The monologic model employed by colonial and apartheid leaders aimed to produce icons and representations of historical figures to glorify the achievements of the apartheid and colonial leaders, validate the dominance of the white rule, and promote a singular concept of the nation. This approach glorified the authority and influence of the minority rulers and endeavoured to justify and establish the supremacy of the white minority. Furthermore, it aimed to emphasise the unity and solidarity of the nation, primarily for the benefit of the white community, while dissuading alternative historical narratives that might indicate a diverse populace with collective political governance, inclusivity, and empowerment.

These findings underscore the deliberate use of heritage to reinforce white political strategies and create the myth of white legitimacy, perpetuating a veneer of political legitimacy for apartheid policies of land segregation and labour exploitation. The heritage laws of the twentieth century in South Africa were rooted in European precedent, emphasising grand architecture and places associated with dominant leaders and groups, thereby reinforcing white legitimacy and the apartheid regime's authority.

4.3 The Politics of decolonisation in the 1960s

The late 1960s and 1970s heralded a change in perspective for heritage preservation, which affected the area's values and scope. The politics of independence and decolonisation in the 1960s sparked several revolutions, growing awareness of social injustices, acknowledgment of globalisation and its effects, and the extensive and politicisation of culture (Waterton, 2014). The upheaval resulted in widespread movements for independence in the colonies of the Global South, as well as the affirmation of the civil rights of minority and subaltern groups. Additionally, it gave rise to post-structuralism and post-modernism, which are expansive intellectual movements that question traditional paradigms of understanding the interconnectedness of power and knowledge (Díaz-Andreu, 2017). The heritage preservation area was also reshaped by the politics that redefined and reinforced fundamental concepts to embrace values of authenticity and diverse conceptions of significance.

From the liberation movements' perspective, the suppression of culture and public memory contributed to the overall oppression of the majority of South Africa's population. The apartheid opposition felt strongly about the importance of a fair and balanced cultural policy. The 1955 Freedom Charter, a visionary document composed by the South African Congress Alliance demanded a non-racial South Africa. The Freedom Charter emphasised the government's role in fostering national talent for the enrichment of cultural life and advocated for open access to the world's cultural treasures through free exchange of books, ideas, and engagement with other nations (The Freedom Charter, 1955). Despite the South African government's branding of the

Congress responsible for the Freedom Charter as traitorous and the subsequent banning of the ANC, the Freedom Charter remained a significant document in the underground struggle against apartheid. Many of the demands articulated in the Freedom Charter were directly addressed in the new South African constitution adopted in 1996, including its call for an inclusive cultural policy.

Public memory and heritage were also at the heart of the liberation struggle and violent resistance from the 1960s. In opposition to the Day of the Covenant, the ANC established its military wing, known as '*Umkhonto we Sizwe*', on 16 December 1961, signifying the commencement of the armed resistance against apartheid (SAHO, 2023). According to South African History Online (2023), the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe was commemorated annually on the same day as the Vow/Day of the Covenant. Consequently, the historical context of public memory is implicitly associated with violence and aggression related to the liberation struggle, which has persisted into the post-liberation era, resulting in enduring conflicts. The unresolved public memory discourse in post-apartheid South Africa has perpetuated violence and aggression, particularly in relation to colonial monuments and symbols.

4.4 Democratic Dispensation in 1994

The advent of democracy in South Africa subsequent to the end of apartheid brought about significant discussions and debates regarding the politics of symbols and the heritage landscape. The formation of CODESA aimed to facilitate negotiations for the country's transition to democracy, with various political parties endorsing the Declaration of Intent for a united South Africa (Welsh, 1992). The heritage debate during this period reflected the diverse and, at times, opposing views held by different political parties, including the White Conservative Community, the ANC, the Pan African Congress (PAC), the Solidarity Party, and the Wentworth Party. Notably, the ANC acknowledged the necessity of a comprehensive strategy for heritage resource conservation and proposed the establishment of a National Heritage Council (NHC), which was later incorporated as a statutory body in democratic South Africa (ANC Draft National Cultural Policy, 1992). The ANC's approach to historical monuments and colonial symbols evolved from a removalist or radical approach to a more cautious and conservation-oriented policy, reflecting the complexities of the post-apartheid era.

The TRC played a crucial role in addressing the violations of human rights and promoting reconciliation for a *rainbow nation* (Bornman, 2006). The TRC's recommendations included the renaming of streets and community facilities, the building of monuments and memorials, and the declaration of a national day of remembrance, emphasising the themes of truth, reconciliation, and social cohesion (South African Government, 2003). Additionally, the *Arts and Culture Task Group* (ACTAG) furnished strategic recommendations, underscoring the significance of cultural heritage

in achieving human rights and nation-building objectives (Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, 1995). The ACTAG report expressed caution regarding the potential use of heritage as a tool for propaganda and suppression. To circumvent totalitarian models, the cultural policy should be founded on principles of autonomy, arm's length control, transparency, accountability, redress, participation, and equity (DACST, 1995). The *1996 White Paper on Arts, Culture, and Heritage* built upon the recommendations of the ACTAG report, emphasising the role of heritage in the transformation toward a democratic state, predicated on freedom of expression and critical thought. These reports and recommendations shaped new policies and guided the decisions of lawmakers, reflecting the ongoing discussions and developments in post-apartheid South Africa (DACST, 1996).

The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) of 1999 replaced the narrowly defined term 'monument' with 'heritage resources', reflecting a shift towards a more inclusive approach to heritage management. The NHRA aimed to include everyone's heritage and instituted the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) as the oversight institutions for executing the Act and overseeing the country's heritage. Additionally, the Act facilitated the realisation of liberation heritage by enabling the designation of the graves of conflict victims as national heritage sites.

In April of 1999, the National Heritage Council Act was enacted to establish an advisory body, the National Heritage Council (NHC), following the separation of its contents during the draft stages. The Council's goals, as outlined in the legislation, are comprehensive and encompass the overarching aim of developing, promoting, and safeguarding the national heritage for present and future generations (NHC, 2021).

Multiplicative oriented approach

The prominent role of the ANC within the Government of National Unity did not significantly impact the existing monument landscape in post-apartheid South Africa. Instead, the post-apartheid state opted for a cautious and conservation-oriented policy, deviating from its initial envisioned policy in the early 1990s. Contrary to popular belief, the government refrained from making significant alterations to the current public monuments, with only a few public monuments being removed from their original locations across the country.

The careful and multiplicative approach to the symbolic representations of the former system can be attributed to the fragile transition period, facilitated by the ongoing socio-political transformation process. This approach reflects the ethos of inclusivity, nation-building, and racial conciliation that characterised the nascent multicultural democracy in the early aftermath of the election. Throughout the Nelson Mandela presidency, this ethos of reverence served as the

ideological cornerstone of the widely acclaimed '*rainbow nation*,' which may have been influenced by Mandela himself. Nelson Mandela was seen making acts of reconciliation (some symbolic) to former key members of the apartheid regime on numerous public occasions, while also acknowledging the Afrikaners, their struggle for liberation, and their role to the nation's progress.

From an international relations perspective, respecting the old order's symbolic markers can be seen as a strategic political manoeuvre by the new administration to emphasise peaceful nature of the political transition and garner international esteem. Additionally, it may have been a prudent economic decision to avoid unsettling international investors. This approach aligns with Pierre Bourdieu's concept of creating 'symbolic capital' through honourable dealings with other groups, which can be converted into material benefits (Bourdieu, 1990: 112-21).

The commemorative practices evident in post-apartheid South Africa bear resemblance to those observed in Western democracies, where the acceptance of commemorative forms honouring historical regimes or contested values of monuments is notable. The redirection of the function of colonial monuments towards anti-colonialism and the retention of contentious monuments despite objections and litigation are common in these contexts (Mills and Simpson 2003: xxv). Examining the historical context of the Afrikaner Nationalists' treatment of British monuments during their governance in 1948 provides insights into the commemorative strategies of the post-apartheid government and the impact of political and economic considerations on decision-making processes.

Recent recommendations by the post-apartheid administration advocating for a more radical approach towards addressing the symbolic remnants of the previous system may suggest a reduced reliance on the cooperation of the white minority, as the new socio-political order has solidified its position and garnered international recognition over the past three decades. However, the obsession with foreign investment may sometimes compromise the integrity and intent of commemorative sites, turning them into commercialised tourist attractions. This phenomenon reflects South Africa's evolution from a racist dictatorship to a negotiated democracy influenced by globalisation, with the resultant sustained economic growth of marketable struggle symbols leading to "reconciliation" becoming a significant cultural export. (Coombes 2003:68).

4.5 The rise of removalists - the emergence of EFF and #RhodesMustFall

The emergence of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) onto South Africa's political stage in 2013 signalled a notable shift in the discourse surrounding social issues, including heritage debates. The party immediately focused on unresolved heritage discourse, particularly focusing on the eradication of colonial and apartheid symbols, as well as the expropriation of land without compensation. These issues were positioned at the core of the party's political agenda, advocating for land redistribution to disenfranchised black people without compensating predominantly white

landowners (Forde 2014:188). The party emphasised the inextricable link between the land question and heritage, citing instances such as the establishment of South African national parks, which entailed the forced displacement of local populations in the name of “heritage management”. The displacement of the Africans from their ancestral land to make room for heritage parks was highlighted, illustrating the loss of both land and cultural heritage for traditional custodians. The party’s focus on symbolic politics resonated with a wide scope of black African individuals, encompassing the unemployed, impoverished, academics and students.

The emergence of the #RhodesMustFall Movement, which garnered global attention following a student’s act of defacing the statue of Cecil John Rhodes on campus, played a pivotal role in shaping the EFF’s position on public memory . The movement called for the removal of the Rhodes statue as an initial step towards rectifying the university’s Eurocentric curriculum, faculty composition, and campus culture. The protests led to a broader student movement across the country, linking student grievances with the demonstrations of mineworkers in Marikana and the calls for land redistribution. The rise of these demonstrations signified a concerted political opposition to the fundamental commemorative approaches adopted in South Africa since the beginning of the 20th century, and the inadequacy of those approaches in generating symbolic restitution subsequent to the negotiated transition. The protests questioned the effectiveness of the multiplicative framework in effecting substantial change within newly amalgamated spaces, thereby repudiating the memorialization tactics employed during the transitional phase.

The contention surrounding these statues emphasises an inherent conflict concerning the representativeness of the symbolic structures post-multiplication process, and the manifestation of the negotiated transition from apartheid to democracy. The decision to adopt a multiplicative approach was intended to create a representative space and potentially challenge the significance and meanings of older monuments. Nevertheless, the widespread #RhodesMustFall protests demonstrated that this inclusive strategy has been inadequate for many. The repudiation of the multiplicative approach, as evidenced by the demand for the removal of statues, constitutes a critique and rejection of the memorialisation strategies employed during the transitional period.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained five historical and contextual themes that informs South Africa’s public memory landscape. The policies prior to 1999 were biased, ignoring the majority population’s heritage, and generally acting only to legitimise (unjust) colonial and, later, apartheid regimes. The plans for an inclusive cultural heritage policy began as early as the 1950s, when members of the anti-apartheid resistance recognised the injustice of the regime’s policy in the 1955 Freedom Charter. Nevertheless, it was not until the liberation movements were unbanned in 1990 that a

sophisticated discussion could begin during which the principles and objectives of a new policy for a new South Africa were articulated. However, being obsessed with the international recognition and the investment that comes with it, has obscured the purpose of commemoration which has now, with failure to address socio-economic challenges, given rise to removalists calling for total removal of colonial statues. The next section will introduce Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park Heritage site before turning to analyse how their respective values are received by various political actors (EFF and the FF+)

Chapter 5: Heterotopias: The Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park as spaces of contested values

At the opposite ends of the Union Buildings, at the southern entrance of Pretoria, there are two powerful symbols: the gigantic granite structure of the Voortrekker Monument and the Freedom Park heritage site. Taken together, these sites present an image of political power that draws our attention to a political history of symbolic contestation in South Africa. The Union Building was built to symbolise the British Empire's dominion status within colonial South Africa. The Voortrekker Monument is associated with Afrikaner nationalism and the cementing of Apartheid status by the National Party in 1948. Directly facing the Voortrekker Monument is a democratic presidential legacy project – the Freedom Park heritage site, born through the process of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a symbol of unity and emphasising African values. But what heritage narratives are presented by these sites? This chapter provides answers to this question by analysing the elements of both the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park. Building from the previous discussions, I have found that both sites are contradictory in their nature – stark between reconciliation and commemoration. In their effort to value heritage by encompassing multiple perspectives, drawing on Foucault, I contend that these monuments have become heterotopias in the sense that they have become alternate sites or other spaces. I extend from Schulze's (2012) argument in her essay "*Nation-building-premises in Freedom Park, South Africa*" that the securitisation and inaccessibility of Freedom Park can be considered in Foucault's terms in relation to the concept of heterotopia. I add other elements through the site visit that I have conducted to understand Freedom Park in Foucault's terms. I also add and argue that even the Voortrekker Monument has also proved to be the site that can be understood as an '*Other Spaces*'. Based on their design, choice of site, and symbolism, it is justifiable to view Freedom Park and the Voortrekker Monument as heterotopias.

I will start by giving background and motivations for these heritage sites. Then I will analyse and explain the values that make both the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage sites. From there, I will move on to explain the concept of heterotopia as proposed by Michael Foucault and its link to the politics of memory and space.

5.1 Political Context of Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Heritage Site

The following section will provide a political analysis of the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park Heritage Site within the historical context of South Africa, encompassing both the democratic and apartheid eras. This section will also offer a historical overview of these sites as influenced by the political landscape. The discussion will commence with an examination of the political

significance of the Voortrekker Monument, followed by an exploration of the political context surrounding the Freedom Park Heritage Site.

The political context of Voortrekker Monument

The Voortrekker Monument stands as the paramount symbol of apartheid, representing the pinnacle of Afrikaner nationalism and, for numerous individuals, epitomising the injustice of apartheid. The monument holds crucial historical and cultural significance, particularly in shaping the foundational myths of apartheid, its segregation policies and nationalistic ethos. It specifically embodies the notion that the Great Trek marked the genesis of Afrikaners as the primary ethnic group of a new nation (Coombes 2004:23). The Voortrekker Monument serves as a representation of South Africa's historical narrative, commencing with the Great Trek and validating the triumphs of the Voortrekkers during this period as a manifestation of divine will. With the rise of the Nationalist Party in 1948, the monument reinforces the legitimacy of Afrikaner power by emphasising their ethnic connection to the individuals who asserted dominion over the South African interior, under the belief that they were supported by divine providence (Pelzer, 2017).

Inaugurated on December 16, 1949, in observance of the Day of the Covenant, the Voortrekker Monument commemorates the voortrekkers who migrated from the Cape Colony into the Southern African interior between 1835-1852 (Lombard, 1993). According to Van Jaarsveld this was the first anti-colonial action against British rule by an 'African nation'. From the political symbol's perspective, the voortrekkers may not have realized the significance of their migration, but it has led to countless speeches, histories, and literary works, as well as countless music festivals and monuments across the country. Among these monuments, the Voortrekker Monument is the largest and most significant. The Voortrekker Monument played a pivotal role in legitimising a series of heroic narratives linked to an ethnic past, which served to unify Afrikaners and validate their political ambitions. By the time of its inauguration, the National Party (NP) had secured victory in the 1948 elections, with the Great Trek commemoration of 1938 influencing the NP's triumph.

The centennial celebrations of the Great Trek in 1938 solidified the Afrikaner identity and nationalism, later intertwined with apartheid policies. Labuschagne posits that the symbolic re-enactment of the Great Trek in 1938 inherently wielded substantial political and cultural influence over the marginalised Afrikaner community. Moreover, it instigated a political and cultural 'ripple effect' in numerous major towns along its path. Symbolically, the trek along the tributaries of the road network constructed a powerful cultural and political unit, thereby contributing significantly to the evolution of the Afrikaner identity (Marschall 2010:164).

The *Afrikaner Broederbond*, also known as the Bond, emerged during this period and had a significant impact on the development of the Voortrekker Monument, representing the greatest manifestation of Afrikaner nationalism in the 20th century. The *Broederbond* emphasised the issue of 'poor whites' to garner more support from the Afrikaners. In 1938, the *Afrikaner Broederbond* was responsible for the conception of the Great Trek (Streltsov, 2022). The *Broederbond's* responsibilities included facilitating employment for its members, providing education on the Union's political, economic, and social mechanisms, and promoting Afrikaans as a language and culture (Furlong, 2015). Additionally, the Bond established the *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge* (FAK), translated as the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Organisations, in 1929. The FAK was tasked with preserving Afrikaner culture and exerting influence over South Africa's politics (Furlong, 2015). In 1938, the FAK played a pivotal role in organising the Great Trek Centenary and the inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument in 1949, serving as the public and cultural voice of the *Afrikaner Broederbond*.

The triumph of the National Party (NP) and the inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument in 1948 aligned with Afrikaner nationalist ideals and facilitated the implementation of apartheid. The apartheid system aimed to enforce the segregation and 'separate but equal' development and cultural expression of different racial groups. This policy was rooted in the historical forced separation of racial groups, formalized with the Land Act of 1913. Apartheid intensified the marginalisation of non-white racial groups through physical segregation, effectively dividing black South Africans along tribal lines (Lombard, 2020). The Population Registration Act of 1950 categorised individuals into four primary racial groups: white, coloured, Bantu, and Indians (South African History Online, 2023). Land distribution under various Land Acts favoured the white minority, who gained control over 93% of the country's arable land. Additionally, the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959 compelled the relocation of Africans to Bantustans, or black homelands, thereby disenfranchising them from national politics (South African History Online, 2023). Despite its purported goal of maintaining equality, apartheid effectively restricted, divided, and limited people based on race, while also granting or denying privileges on racial grounds.

In the 1980s, South Africa faced a challenging period, and the Afrikaner bourgeoisie experienced embarrassment as the country became increasingly isolated from the global economy (SAHO, 2023). The exposure of the horrors of apartheid led to a diminishing number of Afrikaners willing to defend the regime past. It ceased to be a source of pride for them, and even the Voortrekker Monument was viewed as an episode of nationalist deception (Grundlingh, 2010). With the coming of democracy and the subsequent elections, the government endeavoured to foster unity

and promote the concept of the *Rainbow Nation*. As part of this effort, the decision was made to preserve old monuments, including the Voortrekker Monument.

The Voortrekker Monument, initially restructured as a non-profit private entity in 1993 by diverse Afrikaner organisations, underwent further modifications in the early 2000s. The appointment of Major-General Gert Opperman as CEO in 2000 was a response to political and economic pressures, with the aim of ensuring the Monument's financial independence (Baines, 2017). Under Opperman's stewardship, the Monument underwent a transformation from a symbol steeped in political overtones to a significant cultural icon, with a revised mission to commemorate the broader accomplishments of the Afrikaner community and dissociate their collective identity from the apartheid regime (Antonites & Nel, 2019). An event highlighting the Monument's transition towards reconciliation occurred when former president Nelson Mandela was invited in 2002 to partake in a wreath-laying ceremony and statue dedication. This conciliatory invitation encountered resistance from specific sectors of the Afrikaner population, who attempted to intimidate and coerce Opperman into calling off the event. Nevertheless, the ceremony proceeded without disruption, demonstrating the potential for change within the core constituency of the site.

The reconceptualization of the Voortrekker Monument is a testament to the ongoing transformation of South African society, where historical symbols are being reinterpreted to align with the principles of inclusivity and reconciliation. This realignment signifies a departure from the Monument's previous connotations of political dominance and apartheid-era ideologies, and instead emphasises the celebration of Afrikaner cultural identity within the framework of a diverse and unified country.

Political context of Freedom Park heritage site

The release of Nelson Mandela and the legal dismantling of apartheid in South Africa constituted a momentous turning point in the country's history. Prime Minister F. W. de Klerk emerged as a central figure in these transformative events. In February 1990, de Klerk lifted restrictions on opposition parties, initiating the process of dismantling apartheid. Subsequently, he released Nelson Mandela and other high-profile political prisoners, signifying a crucial step towards reconciliation and the end of apartheid (Carrión & Kaufman, 2018). This pivotal decision initiated a cascade of legislative reforms, ultimately leading to the repeal of significant apartheid-era laws such as the Land Acts of 1913, 1936, and 1946 by the end of February 1991 (Poewe, 1996). These legislative reforms were instrumental in paving the way for April 1994 South Africa's historic inaugural democratic election, characterised by nearly 87% voter turnout and resulting in the election of Mandela as a president, forming the Government of National Unity (GNU) (Graham, 2012).

In 1995, the GNU instituted the South Africa's TRC as a crucial instrument aimed at confronting the nation's tumultuous history and catalysing the processes of healing and reconciliation. The mandate of the TRC involved the thorough examination of human rights abuses that occurred during the apartheid period. This included creating an opportunity for victims to recount their ordeals and for wrongdoers to request forgiveness by revealing all details of their offenses in exchange for amnesty (TRC, 2003). The TRC's work was instrumental in uncovering the truth about past atrocities, acknowledging the suffering of victims, and promoting national reconciliation. The TRC put forth recommendations aimed at furthering the process of healing and remembrance in South Africa. One such recommendation led to the formation of a government task force with the objective of creating a monument that honours the often-overlooked heroes and heroines of South Africa's history (Van Zyl, 2000:53). The establishment of this task force underscores the government's commitment to recognizing and commemorating individuals who have made significant contributions to the nation's history but may have been marginalized or underrepresented in traditional narratives. This approach aligns with the TRC's broader objective of acknowledging the suffering endured by individuals and communities during the apartheid era and ensuring that their experiences are memorialised as part of South Africa's collective memory.

The establishment of the 'Legacy Projects' on 16 June 2000 marked a significant development in response to the transformative initiatives following the end of apartheid. Notably, former President Mandela played a pivotal role in announcing the creation of Freedom Park, which was envisioned as a potent symbol of national unity (Freedom Park Website, 2022). The commencement of the construction of the first phase of Freedom Park in July 2003, culminating in its completion in March 2004, represented a substantial undertaking entirely financed by the government, with an initial budget surpassing 700 million Rands. This significant initiative was expressly designed as a direct reaction to the TRC's plea for symbolic restitution, as documented on the Park's website (2023). The primary objective of Freedom Park, as articulated by the Freedom Park website (2022), was to actively foster reconciliation, social cohesion, and the overarching process of nation-building. This vision aligns with the broader national imperative of addressing historical injustices, promoting inclusivity, and commemorating the diverse experiences and contributions of South Africa's people. In line with this decision, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) was entrusted with overseeing the necessary work on the Freedom Park heritage site, underscoring the government's commitment to the realisation of this ambitious and symbolically significant project.

The vision of Freedom Park encompasses a multifaceted celebration of freedom, humanity, African civilisation, and culture, with the overarching goal of promoting and introducing these rich elements to the global community. Central to the park's mission is the intention to serve as a

platform for showcasing African history and heritage as custodians of enduring traditions and values. The foundational values shaping the spirit of Freedom Park are firmly grounded in African philosophy, indigenous knowledge systems, and the aspirations of the African Renaissance (Coombes, 2003). Within this framework, the concept of nation-building is conceptualised as a process of rebirth and regeneration, firmly situated within the context of African heritage and identity. In contrast to the realist style and imposing scale often favoured by other nations, which may neglect the cultural importance and historical accounts of their indigenous populations, Freedom Park's approach prioritises the preservation and celebration of African cultural heritage.

The establishment of Freedom Park on Salvokop, directly facing the Voortrekker Monument, holds significant symbolic value in South Africa. The park encompasses various elements, each strategically placed with symbolic links that determine their purpose and placement. One of the central elements, the *Isivivane*, acts as a sacred site for the souls of those who perished in the pursuits for human rights and liberation (Freedom Park, 2022). Another vital element, the *S'khumbuto*, serves as a commemoration for the different conflicts and wars that have influenced the country. It encompasses an eternal flame to commemorate unrecognised soldiers, a *sanctuary* for memorial events, a 2,000-seat *Amphitheatre*, and the *Wall of Names* bearing the names of individuals who lost their lives in eight South African conflicts (Freedom Park, 2022). Furthermore, the park houses *//hlapo*, a facility dedicated to the preservation of documents associated with the struggle for freedom (Freedom Park, 2022). These elements collectively contribute to the park's role as a site of remembrance, reflection, and commemoration, encapsulating the complex historical narratives and experiences that have shaped South Africa. The deliberate placement and design of these elements underscore the park's significance as a space for acknowledging and honouring the nation's diverse heritage and the individuals who have contributed to its history.

5.2 Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park values

This section aims to elucidate the inherent values preserved within the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage site. These values have been discerned through meticulous site observation, scholarly literature review, and the evaluation of pertinent documents, including research findings and annual reports available on the official websites of these sites. The comprehensive examination of these sources provides valuable insights into the historical, cultural, and symbolic significance encapsulated within these heritage sites, shedding light on their enduring importance within the broader context of South Africa's heritage and identity.

Afrikaner nationalism and Pan Africanism

The Voortrekker Monument stands as a significant symbol of Afrikaner nationalism, embodying and promoting the values associated with this ideology. One of its key features, the *Historical Frieze*, plays a crucial role in advancing Afrikaner nationalist ideals within the monument. The Frieze depicts events considered pivotal to the Afrikaner narrative of the Great Trek, emphasising conflicts with black South African groups and negotiations with indigenous chiefs, thereby asserting the Voortrekkers' perceived "proprietary right to South Africa". This selective portrayal serves to glorify the Afrikaner pioneers and assert their rightful ownership of the land. The *Frieze* also reinforces traditional gender roles valued in Afrikaner nationalism, depicting women in supportive roles while positioning men as the primary actors and heroes, thereby perpetuating Afrikaner nationalist ideals of womanhood. However, it is important to note that the *Frieze* presents a one-sided, Afrikaner-centric view of history, effectively erasing the perspectives of indigenous black South Africans, thus promoting the foundational myths and narratives that underpinned Afrikaner ethnic identity and nationalism during the apartheid era.

In contrast, Freedom Park draws on concepts from African indigenous knowledge systems and spirituality to ground the site in African traditions and perspectives, countering the Eurocentric narrative of the Voortrekker Monument. Indigenous knowledge systems encompass various fields of knowledge embedded in local history, including philosophies like *Ubuntu*, healing ceremonies, spiritual beliefs, and cosmologies (Freedom Park, 2022). The monument incorporates numerous elements that embody Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives. For instance, *Isivivane*, the sacred space within Freedom Park, stands as a prominent illustration, symbolising a spiritual sanctuary for those who contributed to the struggle for liberation. This space incorporates the *Lesaka* mist, emanating from the ground and encircling 11 boulders that represent the provinces and communities of South Africa. The boulders also symbolise burial sites of freedom fighters, where cleansing and return of spirits ceremonies were performed. Stones, trees, and the landscaping of *Isivivane* hold deep cultural and spiritual significance in African traditions. The semi-circular *Lekgotla* seating arrangement encircling the *Umlahlankosi* tree recalls the traditional African system of justice conducted under a tree. The nine surrounding *Umlahlankosi* trees, donated by each province, are meant to transport the spirits of departed heroes to *Isivivane*. These elements articulate a perspective distinct from the narrative at the Voortrekker Monument, emphasising the perspectives of South Africa's black majority that were marginalised during apartheid. In this way, the monument's incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems resists oppressive white minority rule by unveiling perspectives that apartheid suppressed.

Thabo Mbeki's address titled "I am an African", presented in 1996 during the inauguration of the democratic constitution of the emerging South Africa, has wielded a substantial impact on the heritage discourse of Freedom Park. The speech is recognised as a key document in the discourse on the African Renaissance, reflecting on the issue of homogeneity and heterogeneity among Africans, and emphasising the diverse and interconnected nature of African identities. Mbeki highlighted the historical contributions of various African leaders to the cause of freedom, contributing to the development of a pan-African identity (Ratele et al., 2018; Patel, 2016).

Freedom Park, as a symbol of Pan-African ideology, represents the struggle for freedom and the liberation of African nations, resonating strongly with the history of the struggle of other African nations against colonialism and slavery. Visiting Freedom Park allows African visitors to connect with their African roots and reinforces the ideals of African Renaissance and Pan-Africanism. Elements like *Lekgotla* reinforce the idea that countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, and South Africa share a common struggle for independence against colonial rule. These struggles, often referred to as 'freedom struggles', have shaped the history of these nations and are part of the collective memory of African people. The notion of the 'struggle' serves as common ground for African people, and visiting South African 'struggle' sites is a way for African tourists to construct and reinforce this sense of togetherness.

Therefore, the Voortrekker Monument, through the glorification of the Voortrekkers and reinforcement of traditional gender roles, promotes a narrative that bolstered Afrikaner ethnic identity and served as propaganda for the apartheid government and the Afrikaners. In contrast, Freedom Park counters the Voortrekker Monument by promoting Indigenous knowledge systems values through its privileging of Indigenous forms of spirituality, cosmology, and philosophy in the monument's design and narrative. Elements like *Isivivane* embed local cultural and knowledge systems to construct an African identity and history that counters apartheid's silencing of Indigenous perspectives (Ratele et al., 2018; Patel, 2016).

Justification of conquest and inclusivity

The *Marble Frieze* at the Voortrekker Monument serves as a representation of the Voortrekkers' sacrifices and struggles during the Great Trek, portraying their settlement of the South African interior as noble and heroic, thus justifying their claim to the land. This is evident in the depiction of events such as the death of Piet Retief and the Voortrekkers' journey across the Drakensberg mountains, framing their experiences as hardships that ennobled and legitimised their settlement. The *Marble Frieze*, therefore, promotes values of justification and conquest by portraying the Voortrekkers' sacrifices and struggles in a way that justifies their conquest and displacement of

indigenous peoples, serving as propaganda that bolstered Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid ideology.

In contrast, the //hapo museum within Freedom Park aims to provide a narrative of South African history from an 'African' perspective, seeking to be more inclusive by spanning further back in time (3.6 billion years) and encompassing the early human ancestors that evolved on the land. The museum's exhibitions cover eight historical periods, aiming to represent the full diversity of South Africa's history and people, fostering a sense of shared heritage and common identity. The museum's storyline, grounded in Mbeki's 1996 'I Am an African' oration, amplifies "distorted, suppressed, and silenced...African narratives" in order to facilitate South Africa's journey towards "becoming the nation we envisioned" (Freedom Park, 2022). It covers conflicts that have shaped South Africa, from "Earth" and "Ancestors" to "Struggle for Liberation" and "Nation Building," providing a comprehensive chronology that counters the narrative of the Voortrekker Monument. The museum's focus on inclusivity and representation of diverse historical periods and conflicts aligns with the aim of fostering a shared heritage and common identity, contrasting the exclusivity of the Voortrekker Monument.

Othering and remembrance

The elements and symbolism within the Voortrekker Monument, such as the altar in the *Cenotaph Hall* and the portrayal of the *Battle of the Blood River*, promote the idea that the Voortrekkers' conquest of South Africa was sanctioned by God. The altar, designed to resemble an altar, establishes a religious framework for understanding the Voortrekkers' story, drawing inspiration from biblical figures like Abraham to position the Voortrekkers as modern-day biblical heroes. The inscription "*Ons vir jou Suid-Afrika*" on the altar suggests the Voortrekkers' sacrifice was made for the higher purpose of establishing a new nation ordained by God. The portrayal of the *Battle of the Blood River* emphasises the Voortrekkers as defenders and the Zulu people (Africans) as aggressors, aligning with the prevailing narrative of the time. These elements perpetuate the narrative that the Voortrekkers' settlement of South Africa was justified and sanctioned by God, reinforcing racial and cultural biases prevalent during the apartheid era.

On the other hand, the *Wall of Names* at Freedom Park aims to commemorate those who shaped South African history, including those who suffered under slavery and apartheid. It lists the names of over 139,000 individuals who sacrificed their lives in various conflicts that shaped South Africa's history, seeking to establish a more comprehensive and inclusive collective memory of South Africa's past. However, there have been debates and protests regarding the commemoration of deceased combatants, highlighting the challenges in creating a sense of inclusiveness and unity while remembering the histories of violence and trauma. The act of commemorating deceased

combatants through the *Wall of Names* has ignited substantial controversy, particularly regarding the omission of South African Defence Force (SADF) soldiers. This exclusion led to protests and requests for inclusion from various groups, ultimately resulting in the construction of a separate memorial book in honour of the deceased SADF soldiers. This episode underscores the challenges faced by sites like Freedom Park in navigating the complexities of remembering histories marked by violence and trauma while endeavouring to promote unity and inclusivity within the public domain of post-apartheid South Africa. As articulated by Serote, former CEO of Freedom Park, “the contradiction lies in the nation, not the memorial” (Ntuli, 2004).

Transformational and reconciliation values

The Voortrekker Monument has undergone significant transformation over the years, particularly with the renaming of the Day of the Covenant on December 16th to the Day of Reconciliation. Former President Nelson Mandela acknowledged the need for this day to be recognised as a national holiday for all people, emphasising the bright future achievable through peace and reconciliation (South African History Online, 2022). The monument was inaugurated as a national heritage site in 2012, demonstrating the government’s commitment to establishing a society that is equal in all respects, including in the representation of history. Despite these efforts, the site is still associated with the repressive regime, and it no longer appeals to its original intended audience. Most visitors are international, particularly Chinese tourists, who are more interested in capturing photographs of the administrative capital than engaging with the historical realities of the site (Alfred, 2015).

In contrast, Freedom Park aims to promote reconciliation, fostering reflection on the past, building unity, and encouraging human understanding to overcome past distrust and enable society to heal and coexist. The reconciliation process at Freedom Park occurs in three stages: social transformation after the end of apartheid, truth-telling and establishing a collective memory, and envisioning a shared future (Freedom Park, 2022). The collective memory provides a basis for individuals and groups to move toward a shared future together, envisioning a ‘Rainbow Nation’ with equity, reconciliation, and multiculturalism. The monument seeks to forge social unity and a common national identity through the *Rainbow Nation* foundation myth as a means toward nation building (Jethro, 2013).

The *Reconciliation Road* that connects Freedom Park and the Voortrekker Monument was opened on South Africa’s Day of Reconciliation on December 16, 2011, to facilitate convenient access for visitors and foster a shared understanding and appreciation of the diverse historical perspectives offered by both sites. The physical establishment of this linkage serves as a symbolic representation of the amalgamation of two historically segregated communities, encapsulating a

nuanced interplay of historical representation. It juxtaposes the narrative of Black African history at Freedom Park with the white Afrikaner history embodied by the Voortrekker Monument, striving to harmonise and reconcile these divergent historical accounts (Jethro, 2013).

5.3 Heterotopia of Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage site

Foucault's concept of heterotopia provides a framework for understanding the social institution of physical environments, particularly heritage sites. Heterotopia refers to spaces that exist outside of normal societal norms and function as sites of otherness and difference, challenging and disrupting established social order and norms (Foucault, 1967). One aspect of Foucault's concept of heterotopia is the notion that these spaces have their own distinct rules and functions, serving as counter-sites that reflect and invert the norms and practices of society. For instance, prisons can be considered heterotopic spaces as they operate under a set of rules and regulations that differ from those of the outside world, functioning as spaces of punishment and discipline where individuals are subjected to a different set of norms and power dynamics (Cohen, 2019).

Moreover, heterotopic spaces have the capacity to bring together different elements that are typically separated in society, creating juxtapositions and encounters that challenge established boundaries and categories (Foucault, 1967). For example, hospitals can be viewed as heterotopic spaces that bring together diverse social groups, such as patients, doctors, and nurses, in a shared environment, potentially disrupting traditional hierarchies and roles of society, leading to the emergence of new social interactions and dynamics (Martin et al., 2015).

Another aspect of heterotopia in heritage sites involves the exclusion of marginalised or silenced narratives, as seen in the predominantly exclusionary representation at the Voortrekker Monument, perpetuating stereotypes and reinforcing a narrative of white victimhood and black aggression. Additionally, heritage sites and monuments can be sites of contestation and negotiation, where different stakeholders may have conflicting interpretations and interests, reflecting the complexities of historical imagination, tensions, and contradictions that arise in the context of these spaces.

The concept of heterotopia also underscores the role of power in the organisation and control of spaces, emphasising that heterotopic spaces are not neutral or apolitical but are shaped by power relations and social hierarchies (Foucault, 1967). The design and architecture of prisons, for instance, reflect the power dynamics between the state and the incarcerated individuals, while the layout and organisation of healthcare facilities can mirror the power dynamics between medical professionals and patients (Cohen, 2019; Martin et al., 2015).

The framework of heterotopia is highly relevant to Freedom Park heritage sites and the Voortrekker monument, as heritage sites and monuments often embody and represent specific historical narratives, cultural values, and identities, functioning as heterotopic spaces that reflect and shape social, political, and cultural dynamics. These spaces are not neutral or objective but are constructed and curated to convey specific narratives and ideologies, potentially excluding certain voices, perspectives, and histories while privileging others.

This study will utilise the concept of heterotopia in Freedom Park heritage sites and the Voortrekker monument to critically analyse and engage with these sites, aiming to gain a more nuanced understanding of the elements and narratives presented by these sites.

Rainbow nation and Great Trek

The concept of heterotopia, as articulated by Foucault, provides a lens through which to understand the Great Trek and the *Rainbow Nation* in South Africa. Heterotopias are spaces that both reflect and invert ordinary social relations, creating ‘*other spaces*’ that challenge and contest the broader social order (Foucault, 1967). The Great Trek has been elevated to a foundational myth of Afrikaner nationalism, serving to justify Afrikaner claims to the land and assert their identity as the ‘true’ South Africans. However, this narrative overlooks the displacement of indigenous peoples and reframes Afrikaner settlement as a heroic pioneer story, functioning as a heterotopia that inverts historical realities to serve Afrikaner nationalist ideology. Similarly, the Voortrekker Monument’s architecture reflects the ideals of apartheid and the glorification of the white Afrikaner past, reinforcing the narrative of white superiority and entitlement to the land.

In contrast, the *Rainbow Nation* metaphor, championed by Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela, envisions a multicultural South Africa united in diversity. However, studies have found that ethnic and racial divisions persist, challenging the ideal of the *Rainbow Nation*. Furthermore, the metaphor has been criticised for glossing over inequalities and power imbalances between racial groups, functioning as an aspirational heterotopia that attempts to contest and reshape South Africa’s racialised realities. Freedom Park, as a representation of the *Rainbow Nation*, seeks to amalgamate the unique experiences and symbols of the nation into a unified narrative of the struggle for humanity. However, it can be argued that postcolonial commemoration, exemplified by Freedom Park, can leave many citizens feeling alienated in their own country. The surrounding community of Salvokop reflects social realities of economic deprivation that contradict the values the park seeks to promote, revealing the existence of inequalities that contradict the ideals it seeks to uphold.

In Foucault's discussion of heterotopias, he presents the concept of 'either-or' as defining the functions of these spaces, suggesting that they can create a space of illusion or a space of compensation. It can be argued that the concept of Freedom Park and the *Rainbow Nation* functions as an illusion, as persisting levels of socio-economic inequalities result in 'two nations' – of haves and have-nots. The foundational myth of the *Rainbow Nation* embodied at Freedom Park operates akin to the founding narrative of the Great Trek, solidified by the Voortrekker Monument during the 1948 National Party's rise to power.

Gated monuments

The principles of heterotopias, as described by Foucault (1967), involve the control of entry and exit, often resulting in the exclusion of individuals deemed as 'other'. Heterotopias function by selectively including or excluding individuals based on social differences. The Voortrekker Monument, situated on the hills, embodies a heterotopic nature that isolates and makes it difficult to penetrate, creating a sense of detachment from the larger society. The permissions and behaviours required to enter the Voortrekker Monument demonstrate its heterotopic nature, serving as a memorial and pilgrimage site for Afrikaner nationalists, while also attracting visitors from diverse backgrounds seeking to engage with South Africa's complex history.

The Freedom Park precinct, demarcated by physical barriers and a mandatory entrance fee, operates as an exclusionary space. This exclusion takes various forms, ranging from the restriction of access based on failure to adhere to cultural and religious norms within the heterotopia, to the marginalisation of specific groups or cultures from the broader narrative. The exclusion from certain cultural and religious practices within both Freedom Park and the Voortrekker Monument serves to affirm their heterotopian attributes. Situated atop ridges overlooking Pretoria, these sites represent 'other' spaces set apart from the tumultuous world below, their isolation and fencing reinforcing their character as monuments of exclusion. The heterotopian nature of Freedom Park is also underscored by its lack of historical connection to its site, hindering the establishment of a link between memory and place, as commemorative monuments typically do (Marschall, 2006). Moreover, the lower visitation rates at Freedom Park in comparison to the Voortrekker Monument underscore its historical disconnect. The deliberate location of Freedom Park between the Union Buildings and the Voortrekker Monument reflects a political intention to eliminate historic ties between the Voortrekker Monument's historical dimension and Afrikaner political dominance, a move exemplified by the ANC government's occupation of offices in the Union Buildings.

Challenging established memorial norms

Foucault (1967) argues that heterotopic spaces have the ability to bring together different elements that are normally separated in society. They can create juxtapositions and encounters that challenge

established boundaries and categories. The Freedom Park heritage site reflects the heterotopia of spaces through its role as a heritage destination, its connection to indigenous knowledge systems, and its physical layout and design. As a post-apartheid heritage site, Freedom Park challenges traditional notions of consumption, positioning itself as a legitimate heritage venture. The incorporation of indigenous knowledge and religious concepts adds to its heterotopic nature, setting the park apart from conventional heritage sites. Furthermore, the physical layout of Freedom Park, with its managed openness and combination of natural and built environments, creates a space that resists institutional rules and deviates from traditional urban landscapes. Freedom Park's emphasis on indigenous knowledge systems serves as a deliberate counter to the prevailing narrative of South Africa epitomized by the Voortrekker Monument.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter examined the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park in South Africa as spaces of contested values. The Voortrekker Monument, constructed in 1949, is a symbol of Afrikaner nationalism and played a significant role in consolidating heroic narratives and legitimising the political aspirations of Afrikaners. It emerged as a symbol of national pride throughout the apartheid era, subsequently utilised to rationalise the exploitation and deprivation of fundamental human rights for the majority of the populace. On the other hand, Freedom Park was created in response to the call of the TRC for symbolic reparation. It serves as a powerful symbol of national unity and reconciliation, celebrating freedom, humanity, African civilisation, and culture. The park prioritises indigenous cultural traditions, African philosophy, and the principles of *Ubuntu* to highlight African identity and encourage moral regeneration. Various elements within the park, such as the *Isivivane* and *S'khumbuto*, function as memorials for those who lost their lives in struggles for freedom and democracy, representing different conflicts and wars that have influenced the country. Both the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park can be understood as heterotopias, as they emerge during times of social and political instability. The Voortrekker Monument represents a crisis of identity and the desire to preserve a specific cultural narrative, while Freedom Park emerged as a response to the crisis of apartheid and the need for reconciliation and healing. It deviates from the traditional approach of other nations by prioritising indigenous cultural traditions and promoting an authentic representation of African heritage.

Chapter 6: Political Actors and Construction of Values

The chapter focuses on exploring the responses and expressions of heritage values embedded in heritage sites and public memory in South Africa by various political actors, particularly the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and Freedom Front Plus (FF+), who are currently influencing the public memory discourse in South Africa from opposing ends of the political dimension compared to the ruling ANC. The EFF and FF+ have been selected because they offer alternative views on how the past should be remembered, differing from the multiplicative model adopted by the ANC government after 1994.

The EFF adopts a removalist approach towards monuments and heritage sites, advocating for the removal of ‘racist’ monuments and heritage sites from South African society. This approach reflects a recognition of the history of black people, creating a black nationalism that excludes other groups. Conversely, the FF+ uses heritage sites and public memory to construct a separate national identity exclusively for Afrikaners, rejecting the multiplicative model of the ANC government, which aimed to modify and rehabilitate apartheid (and colonial) heritage sites and monuments. Both the EFF and FF+ ideologies towards heritage sites reject the ‘rehabilitated’ Voortrekker Monument and multiplicative Freedom Park heritage sites, creating different ways of imagining community.

The chapter commences by defining the identity and policies of the EFF related to the heritage debate. It also defines the identity and policies of the FF+, and highlights interventions in various debates in parliament and media interviews.

6.1 Economic Freedom Fighters

Formed on 27 July 2013, the EFF is a political party advocating for radical economic liberation and the realisation of economic freedom (EFF 2017). The party seeks to bring together militant revolutionary activists, grassroots organisations, and advocacy groups, aligning with a broad Marxist-Leninist heritage and positioning itself as an international, anti-imperial, Fanonist, and leftist organisation that prioritises class conflicts in advancing economic liberation program (EFF 2017).

Since its establishment in 2013, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) has garnered substantial backing, particularly from the African youth and the economically disadvantaged segment of the populace. In the national election of 2014, within a year of its formation, the party secured 1,169,259 votes, constituting 6.35% of the total ballots cast, and consequently obtained 25 seats in the National Assembly (IEC, 2023). Subsequently, in the 2019 elections, the organisation witnessed a surge in backing, amassing 1,882,480 votes, which accounted for 10.8% of the overall ballots, and resulted in 44 seats in the National Assembly (Independent Electoral Commission,

2023). Despite being a minority party in comparison to the ANC, the EFF emerged as the third-largest party in 2019 elections, consolidating its position as an important player in the South Africa's political landscape.

The visibility of the EFF is undeniable; however, the party's political identity has been a source of confusion for many in South African society. The EFF members have been labelled as populists, fascists, Africanists, radical nationalists, and even graduates of the ANC, reflecting the diverse and at times conflicting interpretations of its political stance (Ngqakamba, 2018). The party leader, Julius Malema, has been the subject of various interpretations, some of which have been vilifying and demonising. Despite these challenges, the EFF remains a formidable presence in South African politics, shaping and influencing the national discourse on a range of critical issues.

Dynamics on heritage: EFF

The policy document of the EFF, *EFF 1st National People's Assembly (NPA) Discussion Documents: People's Power for Economic Freedom* (EFF, 2014), serves as a cornerstone for the party's approach to heritage debates and understanding the EFF's perspective on heritage. Penned in anticipation of the party's inaugural NPA in December 2014, the document articulated several declarations that have been central to the heritage discourse advocated by EFF leaders. Notably, the policy document's segment on arts and culture played a prominent role in the NPA deliberations. The matter of heritage and colonial symbols surfaced in nearly all discussions and warranted its own dedicated section titled "*Arts and Culture*". Subsequently, the ensuing examples represent instances of heritage within the document:

"Twenty five years in the democratic dispensation, symbols of apartheid and colonialism continue hold a place of prominence in our society. Die stem is still part of the National Anthem, public facilities such as roads, airports and schools are (named after murderous and criminals who are responsible for genocide, dispossession and impoverishment of African masses). It is best astonishing that the Simon Der Stel building is still the benchmark of iconic public memory in a new South Africa" (EFF 2014)

During the session of the National Assembly on 4 June 2015, Mr. Paulsen, a member of the EFF, delivered a concise and insightful overview of the party's position and principles concerning colonial symbols as he proposed a motion for the elimination of colonial symbols and statues. He stated:

"Calls upon the parliament to take courage and inspiration from the UCT "Rhodes Must Must Fall Movement" and remove all colonial and apartheid monument in our public

spaces, starting with Louis Botha, Jan Smuts and Queen Victoria in the precinct of democratic Parliament...Further notes that the EFF has long argued that these monuments that continue to inspire white people to think that they are superior and have the right to celebrate their murderous and racist past even 21 years after 1994” (RSA, 2015)

The EFF's 2014 election manifesto, unveiled on 22 February 2014, is an extension of the 2013 founding manifesto, and underscores the assertion that “the black majority are still hopeless” two decades into South Africa's democracy (EFF, 2014). It also add that cultural and colonial symbols remain unaddressed, leading to the continued absence of dignity for black people (EFF, 2014). To that end, the EFF advocates that “all statues, museums, and national monuments, streets, and public facilities that memorialize colonialism and apartheid, as well as those who oversaw the oppression of the black majority, must be removed from public sites and, where necessary, destroyed” (EFF, 2014).

The 2019 election manifesto of the EFF extends the themes of ‘marginalised’ and colonial symbols into a particular election focus, “OUR LAND AND JOBS NOW”. The inclusion of the term ‘now’ imparts a sense of immediacy, mirroring the discontent stemming from unmet expectations among black South Africans after 25 years of democratic governance (EFF, 2019:5). Among these expectations is heritage and the removal of colonial symbols, alongside the building of monuments that celebrate black people. The manifesto highlights that the “EFF government will remove apartheid statues and take them to a dedicated apartheid museum as a reminder to future generations under the theme: ‘NEVER AGAIN’” (EFF, 2019:145) in transforming South African society.

The EFF contends that the persistence of colonial symbols in the current South African scenario perpetuates “the colonial crime” that continues to strip the majority of black people of their identity (Ndlozi, 2018). This assertion aims to foster a collective sentiment among black people, portraying them as victims of a criminal act and thus deserving of restitution. By employing the term “crime,” the party invokes the concept of an unlawful deed committed by a perpetrator, thereby galvanising the black community around a shared pursuit of justice and retribution against the perceived wrongdoer. The discourse on ‘colonial monuments’ thus becomes a powerful tool for fostering a sense of unity and solidarity, as well as for reinforcing a binary opposition between the privileged white ‘other’ and the marginalised black ‘self,’ thereby reinforcing a discourse of otherness through the use of loaded language such as ‘criminals’ or ‘murderous’.

The construction of heritage values by the EFF.

The concept of an imagined community, as expounded upon in Chapters 2 and 3, emphasises the notion that collective identity and shared emotions serve as defining characteristics of specific social groups or communities, distinguishing them from others. The party constructs a social community based on identity and agency, leveraging both institutional and non-institutional frameworks to establish a cohesive social identity. By emphasizing liberation, reclaiming land, and African culture, the EFF forges a distinct social community that appeals to a broad cross-section of society, particularly the disenfranchised black population. The party's significant presence on social media, with a substantial Twitter following, allows it to independently engage with its supporters and drive the discourse on heritage, further solidifying its influence in shaping the heritage debate.

Central to the EFF's collective identity is a commitment to dismantling colonial legacies, with a particular emphasis on the removal of colonial and apartheid monuments that evoke negative sentiments. The party garners support from a diverse spectrum, encompassing social movements, civil society organisation, landless, homeless, youth, students unemployed individuals, and professionals, primarily attracting members of the black population who have been disenfranchised in terms of their cultural heritage and economic opportunities due to the legacies of colonialism and apartheid. The EFF functions as a distinct social community with a specific appeal, placing emphasis on unity in the discourse surrounding heritage, particularly in relation to colonial symbols.

The party's identity is characterised by a focus on liberation and the association of the liberation struggle with the reclaiming of land, African culture, and heritage. The EFF establishes a cohesive social community that possesses clear internal unity and external differentiation in the context of discussions surrounding heritage, utilising linguistic symbols and indexes. The party's substantial Twitter following, which has reached 1 million followers, serves as evidence of its influence in the digital sphere, surpassing the reach of certain traditional media outlets. This robust online presence enables the party to cultivate independent intra-social networks, particularly targeting the youth demographic within its support base. The EFF leverages social media as a tool to engage with its followers and steer the discourse on heritage towards its social community, as demonstrated by its advocacy for the removal of colonial statues and symbols, as well as the commemoration of African heroes.

In 2014, the EFF made a significant demonstration of its rejection of reconciliation with the Voortrekker Monument by rejecting the Heartfelt Arena, located in the vicinity of the monument, as the venue for a land hearing. The party's decision to reject this venue was based on the argument

that the area is predominantly inhabited by white people, which would consequently limit access to the land hearings to white individuals. This instance illustrates the utilisation of the relationship between land and heritage to oppose the reconciliation with a former symbol of apartheid. Furthermore, in its Heritage Day statement on 24th September 2022, the EFF referred to the presence of colonial and apartheid monuments, including the Voortrekker Monument, to support its assertion that South Africa has inherited a culture of subjugation. The party emphasised that these monuments serve as tributes to individuals who engaged in genocidal and racist actions, thereby stripping Africans of their dignity and rightful place in the land. The EFF also highlighted the pervasive nature of this culture by pointing out that the names of those who exploited the country and colonised the continent are still commemorated through street names and statues, occupying positions of significance within the society (The Citizens 2022).

The EFF's actions demonstrate the strategic use of historical context to assert influence in establishing a social community centered on the concept of heritage dispossession. The party's social media presence and engagement with heritage-related issues contribute to the construction of a social community with a distinctive identity and a strong voice in the heritage debate.

6.2 Freedom Front Plus

Following the end of apartheid in 1994, the privileged status of the white population ceased, and the rights of minorities were safeguarded within the newly negotiated political framework. Despite these changes, lingering suspicion and distrust contributed to a resurgence of Afrikaner nationalism. The Freedom Front was founded on 1st March 1994, led by General (retired SADF) Constand Viljoen, with the initial objective of establishing a *volkstaat*, an autonomous community for Afrikaners based on the principle of self-governance. The party underwent mergers with other political entities in 2004 (*Afrikaner-Eenheidsbeweging*) and 2006 (Federal Alliance), subsequently rebranding as the FF+ (News24 2022). While the party's original focus was on advocating for a *volkstaat*, its current emphasis lies in safeguarding the rights and interests of Afrikaners, including the preservation of colonial symbols and monuments.

From 2013 to 2019, the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) experienced an increase in electoral support, although it remains a minority party in comparison to the ANC and the EFF. In the 2014 elections, the party secured 0.9% of the total vote, resulting in four seats in the National Assembly (NA). However, in the 2019 elections, the party's support surged significantly, garnering 2.38% of the overall vote, which resulted in the acquisition of 10 seats in the NA (IEC, 2019).

The emblem of the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) has been construed as reminiscent of *Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek's* flag led by Paul Kruger from 1852. The party's name, represented by

the Afrikaans abbreviation VF (*Vryheidsfront*), symbolises its advocacy for the interests and ambitions of the Afrikaner community.

Dynamics on heritage: Freedom Front Plus perspective

In their national manifesto of 2014 election, FF Plus emphasised that South Africa serves as the ancestral homeland for Afrikaners, a cultural community distinguished by their language (FF+ 2014).

Groenewald presented his own version of historical events in 2014 to explain how white people acquired land and established their heritage. Despite acknowledging past wrongs related to dispossession and heritage, he maintained that colonial and apartheid figures did not steal anything, including land (Groenewald 2014). His perspective acknowledges varied historical interpretations, as documented by the RSA, NA in 2018. On 1 December 2016, during a session in the NA, he expressed frustration by highlighting instances where tribal chiefs and kings willingly granted land to the Voortrekkers, refuting the notion that all land was acquired through war.

Groenewald consistently endeavours to contest the notion of unlawful land acquisition by whites, particularly voicing concerns over what he perceives as a “populist, unfavourable,” and biased portrayal of history, which depicts Afrikaners and whites as perpetrators within their own nation (Groenewald 2016; Republic of South Africa, National Assembly 2018). Groenewald asserts that this narrative is false and must be dispelled. He believes politicians are irresponsible for distorting history and portraying Afrikaners as criminals and murderers. During the budget debate of the Department of Arts and Culture in the NA, then the leader of FF+ addressed the NA as follows:

“The ANC’s struggle history is an important part of South Africa’s history. It is however only part of the history which stretches from the establishment of the ANC in 1912 to 1994. There is also the Khoi and San’s struggle history, the Griqua’s; the Afrikaner’s struggle history against the British and many more...The same goes for statues. It is important that statues should reflect our whole history. One cannot have only Afrikaner statues or just ANC struggle heroes and hide the rest of our history as if they did not happen at all. This is why Afrikaners left colonial statues such as the Queen Victoria or Rhodes following their victory in 1948” (RSA, 2015)

Groenewald's construction of the social community around heritage and political symbols is notably Afrikaner, with broader applicability to the white population in general. He asserts that the FF+ proudly advocates for the rights of Afrikaners and, by extension, for the white people of South Africa. Groenewald emphasised the contribution of Afrikaners to South Africa, citing the

Constitution and Freedom Charter, stating that South Africa belongs to all its inhabitants, and highlighting the significant historical role played by Afrikaners in the nation's formation and development. He encouraged Afrikaners to take pride in their constructive contributions without feeling the need to apologise (PoliticsWeb).

Referencing the principles enshrined in the South African Constitution and the Freedom Charter, Groenewald emphasises to his social group that they have a legitimate claim to South Africa and have made substantial contributions to the nation's progress and advancement. Mulder, however, maintains that this community risks part of its history being erased "...Now the youth, who have only been raised with ANC struggle history and heroes, is storming statues of President Kruger, my hero and other heroes from struggle of Afrikaners against British imperialism and European colonialism" (PoliticsWeb 2015). Groenewald goes on to argue that this can be categorised as "...black domination" and this is what Mandela fought against (RSA, NA 2018).

According to Groenewald, this social community faces threat from both the EFF and the ANC. In a column piece that Groenewald wrote on the Heritage Day in 2020, he states that "Afrikaner nation must ensure that its heritage is protected and that at present...Afrikaners is being infringed upon ...and the so called colonial and Afrikaner-history statues as well as the need to get rid of them seem to be on the agenda of the ruling party and EFF yet again" (PoliticsWeb 2020)

By drawing on Afrikaners' narratives of their shared historical roots, as well as their culture and traditions, internal cohesion is promoted, contributing to a sense of collective identity connected to heritage and monuments. In 2018 when the EFF Gauteng marched to Pretoria and demanded the removal of Paul Kruger Statue, the FF+ leader responded that *"When are people say they are pained by the history of these monuments, then how long will they carry that pain? ...we can talk about the great pain inflicted on the Afrikaner people by the English during the Anglo-Boer War, but because we can't change the past, we choose to focus on the present and future"* (Pretoria Rekord 2018)

On 8 April 2015, Groenewald and FF+ supporters marched on defaced Paul Kruger Statues in Pretoria, confronting Zuma regarding his perceived lack of efforts in fostering national unity and promoting division by suggesting that South Africa's issues stemmed from Jan van Riebeeck's arrival in the country. Their slogans included "hands off our heritage. This is genocide and if colonial statues aren't safe. Are we?" (News24 2015). Again, in the debate on the relevancy of colonial symbols in democratic South Africa debate in NA, Mulder argued that the current approach being undertaken is wrong, in that it is exclusionary.

“The problem with that is that no government is permanent. Let us, for example, accept that PAC will be the next government. Then Hani and Zuma’s statues must be removed and replaced with Sobuke and Mokwetu. Then the EFF comes to power and statues of Malema and Ndlozi should be erected the others removed. Here we also see that there’s also mistrust feature been constructed by EFF+ towards its supporters regrading heritage or political symbols” (PolityOnline 2015)

Groenewald, in a march to Pretoria in 2015, emphasised the imperative for unity on matters of heritage and public symbols, particularly emphasising the involvement of the white community:- “we say action should be taken against vandalism because we are here to build and we are here to stay” (News24 2015).

Construction of heritage values by the FF+

The Freedom Front Plus (FF+) is a conservative Afrikaner party that opposes affirmative action as part of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) policy, which they perceive as negatively impacting their members. While advocating for the right to self-determination, the party has recently shifted towards a federalist approach. The FF+ emphasizes the conservation, remembrance, and protection of Afrikaner culture, rather than its rehabilitation. The party holds a strong stance on the Voortrekker Monument and Reconciliation Day, asserting that discrimination against Afrikaners and white people persists in South Africa, necessitating the protection of Afrikaner culture due to its perceived threat of extinction, as stated in their 2019 election manifesto.

The FF+ adopts a nationalist approach to the Voortrekker Monument and heritage, as evidenced in their 2019 election manifesto, where they called for the establishment of Afrikaner Councils to safeguard and preserve Afrikaners’ heritage across the country, enabling them to exercise their cultural rights. Additionally, the party aims to establish some form of Afrikaner state, although they have recently shifted towards a federalist approach.

The FF+ does not acknowledge efforts towards reconciliation in relation to the Voortrekker Monument. In an article published on the FF+ (2022) website titled “Reconciliation Day: do not make the Afrikaner scapegoats,” party leaders argue against compelling Afrikaners to observe Reconciliation Day. Instead, they suggest celebrating the Day of the Covenant or the Day of the Vow, closely linked to the Voortrekker Monument. The FF+ demands the right of minorities, such as the Afrikaner, to exercise their internationally recognized self-determination and minority rights by making decisions about their cultural property, rejecting proposals to relegate these to a “Boer

Jurassic Park” and supporting the addition of memorials for those who suffered in the past without dishonouring history (FF Plus 2022).

The FF+ asserts a sole right to make decisions about the Voortrekker Monument, creating tension and reinforcing the monument as an emblem of their identity, heritage, and imagined community. The party’s emphasis on the monument’s private ownership and the absence of state intervention underscores its exclusivity to the Afrikaner community. The FF+ aims to establish an imagined community at the expense of a unified South Africa, aligning with the goals of their apartheid-era ancestors. The Voortrekker Monument symbolizes Afrikaner nationalism and superiority, leading the FF+ to advocate for its celebration without alteration, emphasizing the need to respect and conserve historical value as part of South Africa's history and heritage landscape (FF Plus 2022)

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has delved into the responses and articulations of heritage values by political actors in South Africa, particularly the EFF and FF+. The EFF espouses a radical approach towards monuments and heritage sites, contending that 'racist' monuments and heritage sites are incompatible with South African society. The party's stance on heritage acknowledges the history of black people, fostering a form of black nationalism that excludes other groups. Conversely, the FF+ has leveraged heritage sites and public memory to fashion a distinct national identity exclusively for Afrikaners, rejecting the ANC government's approach of modifying and rehabilitating apartheid (and colonial) heritage sites and monuments. Both the EFF and FF+ repudiate the 'rehabilitated' Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage sites, thereby engendering separate imagined communities.

Chapter 7: Summary and Discussion

Upon conducting my research, it has become evident that the discourse surrounding heritage sites in South Africa is intricately linked to broader questions concerning the formation of national subjects. Following the country's transition to democracy, South Africa adopted a multiplicative approach to heritage conservation, particularly with regard to public monuments. This approach entailed the enactment of policies and legislations aimed at safeguarding colonial and apartheid symbols. Concurrently, the ANC government embarked on the construction of new monuments designed to reflect an inclusive national identity, aligning with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). This approach stood in stark contrast to the monologic model previously embraced by the National Party, which sought to legitimise its rule through exclusionary nationalistic public memory. The nature of the multiplicative model adopted by the ANC necessitated substantial international investment, as South Africa endeavoured to position itself within global politics.

In Chapter 2, I expounded upon the social constructionist approach and the research methods underpinning this study. I incorporated Anderson's perspective on the Imagined Communities theory within the social constructionist approach, which proved pivotal in elucidating how various actors have cultivated distinct national identities in relation to heritage sites.

Chapter 3 synthesised a range of scholarly articles and books that informed the arguments presented in this study, encompassing three key sections: political symbols, heritage sites, and the politics of contestation; the imagined community and heritage; and approaches to heritage values in South Africa.

Chapter 4 delved into the historical and political factors that have shaped the contemporary discourse surrounding heritage and commemorative sites in South Africa. I elucidated how the Union of South Africa and the National Party formalised the heritage debate, basing their heritage values on the interests of the white population, and subsequently, Afrikaners. Legislative measures were even implemented to displace black individuals for the purpose of heritage management. I underscored how the majority of statues and colonial symbols celebrated the ideals and memory of white individuals. Furthermore, I expounded upon the impact of the democratic transition on heritage values and public memory in South Africa, detailing the perspectives of various political actors involved in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) negotiations and their stance on heritage preservation. Notably, the ANC shifted from its initial policy of removing colonial and apartheid symbols to adopting a more inclusive approach, influenced by the restorative justice path chosen by South Africa in addressing the effects and consequences of apartheid. This shift was also partly motivated by the new government's desire for global

acceptance, driven by economic incentives. Despite these developments, the aforementioned factors have not translated into upliftment for the majority of the population, with poverty remaining prevalent and the inequality gap widening. Consequently, movements such as #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall have emerged, linking unfulfilled socio-economic transformation to the presence of colonial symbols.

Chapter 5 delved into the values embodied by the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage site, both situated at Solvokop Hill directly facing the Union Buildings. I expounded upon the contrasting symbolism and historical narratives encapsulated by these sites, with the Voortrekker Monument signifying the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism and apartheid, and Freedom Park emerging as a symbolic reparation to the victims of apartheid and a representation of a more inclusive commemorative site. I highlighted the contentious exclusion of South African Defence Force (SADF) soldiers from Freedom Park, which sparked disapproval from conservative Afrikaners. Additionally, I underscored the influence of Thabo Mbeki on Freedom Park, which espouses Pan-Africanism and hosted African heads of states in 2016. I concluded the chapter by positing that both the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage site serve as heterotopic spaces, and their longevity and relevance hinge on their success as tourist heritage destinations.

In Chapter 6, I delved into the roles of the FF+ and the EFF as key drivers of the contemporary heritage debate in South Africa. These political actors were selected due to their alternative approach to the prevailing multiplicative model adopted by the government in addressing the politics of the past. I expounded upon the emergence of the EFF as a Marxist-Leninist-Fanonist party, advocating for the nationalisation of critical assets and the expropriation of land without compensation. The EFF contends that the unresolved land issue precludes the existence of heritage for black people, apart from the heritage of oppression. The party rejects the TRC and CODESA, asserting that these processes were designed to compromise the aspirations of black people. The EFF has been a vocal proponent of the #RhodesMustFall Movement and has actively participated in protests to remove colonial statues. Conversely, the FF+ has emerged as a proponent of protecting Afrikaner values and statues, rejecting the removal of colonial and apartheid statues and advocating for the comprehensive presentation of all historical versions. The FF+ has rejected the rehabilitation of offensive statues, particularly the Voortrekker Monument and 'the Day of Vow', which can be interpreted as a rejection of reconciliation efforts and the principle of ubuntu underpinning South Africa's '*rainbow nation*'. Consequently, the FF+ utilizes heritage and commemorative sites to construct a separate nationalism – Afrikaner nationalism, akin to the original founders of the Voortrekker Monument. Thus, black nationalism and Afrikaner nationalism are constructed by these respective political actors.

Findings : exploring imagined political community, citizenship and the construction of values

The concept of a political community is a complex and multifaceted one, encompassing various dimensions of identity, belonging, and governance. Marquez (2008) defines political community as a group of individuals who are united by a shared sense of belonging, common values, and a collective identity, and who are organized within a specific political framework or system. This community is characterised by its members' participation in political processes, the sharing of common goals and interests, and the establishment of institutions and structures to govern and regulate their collective affairs (Marquez, 2008).

In the context of South Africa, I have found that the political community is shaped by the country's history of colonialism, apartheid, and the struggle for liberation. The heritage debate, particularly as articulated by the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and the Freedom Front Plus (FF+), provides insight into how these political actors construct and frame the political community and citizenship within the South African context.

The EFF, established in 2013, advocates for radical economic emancipation and the realisation of economic freedom. The party's approach to the heritage debate reflects a recognition of the history of black people, creating a form of black nationalism that excludes other groups. The EFF's policy documents and public statements emphasise the removal of colonial symbols and monuments from public spaces, highlighting the persistence of colonial symbols as a perpetuation of "the colonial crime" that continues to strip the majority of black people of their identity. The party's construction of heritage values is grounded in the idea of dispossession of heritage, fostering a sense of collective identity and common feelings among the black population.

On the other hand, the FF+ represents a conservative Afrikaner party that emphasises the conservation, remembrance, and protection of Afrikaner culture. The party's perspective on heritage values is rooted in the belief that South Africa is the country of origin for Afrikaners, who belong there as a cultural group distinguished by the language they speak. The FF+ rejects efforts towards reconciliation in relation to the Voortrekker Monument and advocates for the establishment of Afrikaner Councils to safeguard and preserve Afrikaners' heritage across the country.

The construction and framing of political community and citizenship by the EFF and FF+ through the heritage debate reflect divergent approaches to collective identity, belonging, and historical narratives. The EFF's emphasis on the removal of colonial symbols and the celebration of African heroes contributes to the construction of a social community with a distinctive identity and a strong voice in the heritage debate. Conversely, the FF+ promotes a narrative that emphasises the

preservation and protection of Afrikaner heritage, fostering a sense of collective identity and internal cohesion within the Afrikaner community.

These responses and articulations of heritage values by the EFF and FF+ in the South African political landscape illustrate the diverse and at times conflicting interpretations of heritage, identity, and belonging within the context of the country's complex history. The heritage debate serves as a lens through which the construction and framing of political community and citizenship shed light on the competing narratives and visions of collective identity and belonging within South Africa.

EFF and FF Plus conflicting constructions on Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park

I have found that the Voortrekker Monument, a symbol of Afrikaner nationalism, promotes values of conquest and justification through its depictions of the Great Trek, justifying the Voortrekkers' claim to the land and perpetuating Afrikaner nationalist ideals. In contrast, Freedom Park counters this narrative by incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems and perspectives, resisting the erasure of black South African perspectives prevalent during the apartheid era.

The political community constructed by the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) aligns and conflicts with the values narrated by the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park heritage site in South Africa. The EFF advocates for radical economic emancipation and the realisation of economic freedom, emphasising the removal of colonial symbols and monuments from public spaces. This aligns with the values narrated by Freedom Park, which draws on concepts from African indigenous knowledge systems and spirituality to ground the site in African traditions and perspectives, countering the Eurocentric narrative of the Voortrekker Monument. But it also contradicts some of the values such as recognition of Anglo Boer war heroes and the concept of *Rainbow Nation*. On the other hand, the FF+ represents a conservative Afrikaner party that emphasises the conservation, remembrance, and protection of Afrikaner culture, aligning with the values narrated by the Voortrekker Monument, which stands as a significant symbol of Afrikaner nationalism.

Conflicting perspectives on post-apartheid heritage constructions

The political community constructed by the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) on heritage conflict with the approaches adopted by post-apartheid South Africa on heritage due to their differing perspectives on the treatment of colonial symbols and monuments. As mentioned, the EFF advocates for a removalist approach, calling for the removal and destruction of colonial and apartheid monuments, while the FF+ seeks to preserve and protect Afrikaner heritage, including colonial symbols and monuments. These conflicting approaches

stem from the divergent historical narratives and identity constructions of the two political parties, reflecting their distinct visions for the future of South Africa's heritage landscape.

The EFF's perspective on heritage is rooted in the recognition of the history of black people and the need to dismantle symbols of colonial and apartheid oppression. The party's policy documents and public statements emphasize the persistence of colonial symbols in South African society and advocate for their removal as a means of addressing historical injustices and reclaiming the dignity of the black majority. The EFF constructs a social community based on identity, agency, and community categories, appealing to a cross-section of society, particularly the marginalised black population, and utilising social media to shape the heritage debate and foster a sense of unity around the removal of colonial symbols.

On the other hand, the FF+ prioritizes the preservation and celebration of Afrikaner heritage, including colonial symbols and monuments, as integral to their cultural identity and historical narrative. The party rejects the portrayal of Afrikaners as criminals and murderers and advocates for the protection of Afrikaner culture against perceived threats of extinction. The FF+ constructs an imagined community centered on Afrikaner nationalism and the preservation of their historical roots, emphasizing the exclusive right of the Afrikaner community to make decisions about their cultural property, including the Voortrekker Monument.

The EFF and FF+'s differing approaches to heritage also reflect broader societal divisions and historical grievances, highlighting the complexities of navigating South Africa's heritage landscape in the aftermath of apartheid. The multiplicative model adopted by the ANC government, which aimed to modify and rehabilitate apartheid and colonial heritage sites and monuments, has faced challenges in reconciling these divergent perspectives and addressing the legacies of historical oppression. Addressing these conflicts requires a nuanced understanding of the diverse historical narratives and identity constructions within the nation, as well as inclusive approaches that seek to reconcile competing visions for the future of South Africa's heritage.

Recommendations and Future Research:

Based on the findings, the recommendations for this dissertation include:

1. Further exploration of the articulation of heritage sites and the debate by other political actors, such as the Democratic Alliance (DA) and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), to potentially illuminate the emergence of an imagined community. This would involve examining the perspectives and contributions of these political actors to the discourse on heritage sites and their impact on the construction of an imagined community.

2. Continued research into the politics of heritage and public memory in South Africa, with a focus on the intersection of various fields such as Heritage Studies, Political Science, History, Built Environment, and Architectural Studies. This interdisciplinary approach would provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding heritage values and their political implications.

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