

Chapter Three: 'The Struggle for Krugersdorp': Boer–British Rivalry and the Inscription of Ideology into the Built Environment, 1887–1906

Introduction

The field of urban studies is a necessarily interdisciplinary domain and this chapter draws on architecture, town planning, sociology, economics, political science, cultural anthropology, physical and cultural geography – as well as new fields such as urban semiotics – to shed light on Krugersdorp's evolution during a period of rapid, bewildering and violent change from 1887 to 1906. It will be argued that Krugersdorp passed through five phases during this period: a 'mosaic' phase, a Boer Republican phase, a 'tense social equilibrium phase', a British Imperial phase and an 'embryonic South Africanist' or 'hybrid' phase.

These phases reflected intense ideological struggle at the national level as Kruger's Transvaal Republic confronted Imperial Britain, leading ultimately to a prolonged and bloody war followed by a phase of Anglicisation of the Transvaal under the Milner regime and, finally, a phase of reconciliation and the development of a nascent South Africanism. In each of these phases, the supporters of British Imperialism confronted and then [became](#) reconciled [to](#) the proponents of Boer Republicanism. This ideological struggle and the social harmony and disharmony that accompanied the various phases, became imprinted onto Krugersdorp's built environment in a way that both reflected and influenced local Boer and British residents' moods and attitudes to one another and towards their respective nationalist projects.

The major developments during this period were: the development of the town as a 'mosaic of' British mining town and Boer 'dorp' lying side-by-side in a state of mutual tolerance and harmony; the shattering of this harmonious state by the Jameson Raid of 1895; and the advent of a Boer Republican phase in the development of the town, which was followed by a period of tense social equilibrium by 1898–99 as Boer and British residents of the town became reconciled to one another. This phase of paradoxically 'tense social harmony' was, again, shattered, this time by the South African War of 1899–1902 that ushered in the 'jingo imperialist' Milner Administration of 1902–1905 and a corresponding 'jingo' phase in the development of the town.

Finally, social harmony was again restored in the town between the British and Boer residents, as both populations concentrated increasingly on local rather than national issues while a nascent 'South Africanism' began to develop in the town. This phase concludes with the onset of the era of the gentler, more conciliatory administration under Selborne that began in 1906 and [which](#) marked a phase of national reconciliation.

It will be suggested in this Chapter that social harmony was Krugersdorp's 'natural state' and although it was interrupted by conflict on two separate occasions, it was sufficiently robust to ensure restoration after each period of conflict. This social harmony was, however, altered by the intervening periods of conflict and each stage was different to the preceding phase: the first 'mosaic' phase was one of mutual indifference where Boer and Briton simply tolerated one another while the second phase of 'social equilibrium' was one of a cautious reconciliation and mutual respect founded on the recognition that the two groups needed one another and that war would devastate the town. The third and final phase discussed here was one where Boer and Briton grew much closer upon the realisation that their destinies were intertwined, leading to a tentative merging of these social groups into a new hybrid community during which the first, halting steps were taken towards the development of a new South African identity.

This Chapter will make further use of theoretical works [such as](#) Rappaport's non-verbal communication (NVC) approach,¹ Lynch's 'psycho-biological' approach², and the 'pragmatics' branch of urban semiotics employed by Gottdiener and Lagopoulos³, which were discussed in [Chapter One and Two](#). These studies will be

¹ A. Rappaport, *The Meaning of the Built Environment, a Non-Verbal Communication Approach, (Meaning)*, 2nd edition, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, [1990](#).

² K. Lynch, *The Image of the City, (The Image of the City)*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1960.

³ M. Gottdiener and A. Lagopoulos (eds.), *The City and the Sign: an Introduction to Urban Semiotics, (The City and the Sign)*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1986.

used to explain 'environment-behaviour relations' and the meanings that mainly white residents attached to their surroundings in Krugersdorp during this period.

An attempt will be made to discern meaning out of the 'sociocultural qualities encoded into environmental elements'⁴ that reflected Boer-British rivalry over the 'soul' of the town, during the transition of the Transvaal from a Boer Republic to a British Imperial colony and finally to a quasi-independent British Dominion. The built environment of Krugersdorp provided cues that serve as a mnemonic device triggering certain kinds of behaviour patterns and attitudes, particularly when a range of different stimuli reinforces the same 'message' to produce the effect of 'redundancy'.⁵

The contortions and distortions in the town's layout, architecture, monuments and the distribution of its residents in space were produced by a struggle over the ideological 'soul' of Krugersdorp. This abusive and intrusive inscription of nationalist chauvinism into the built environment simultaneously both reflected and influenced a British-Boer rivalry and the shift in power relations at distinct periods from 1887 to 1906 as control over the Transvaal was transferred from the Transvaal Republic to the British Empire. This Chapter is an attempt to re-assert the importance of place which has been 'marginalized within the discourses of modern social science and history'⁶ by combining a sense of *location* (a site of ideological struggle), *locale* (the 'setting for everyday routine social interaction') and a *sense of place* that is 'engendered by living in it'.⁷

⁴ Rappaport, *Meaning*, p. 38. 'Behaviour' is interpreted widely here to incorporate attitudes, beliefs, what people say or write, not merely as physical activity. It is informed by the meaning that is derived from the cues sent by the environment but it does require the schemata of the 'sender' matches that of the 'receiver'. Reactions to environments tend to be global and affective rather than analytical and specific.

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 84.

⁶ J. A. Agnew and J. S. Duncan, 'Introduction', in J. A. Agnew and J. S. Duncan (eds.), *The Power of Place: Bringing Together Geographical and Sociological Imaginations*, Unwin Hyman, Boston, 1989, p. 2.

⁷ *ibid.*

Krugersdorp as Mosaic: A Boer 'Dorp' and British Mining Town: 1887–1895

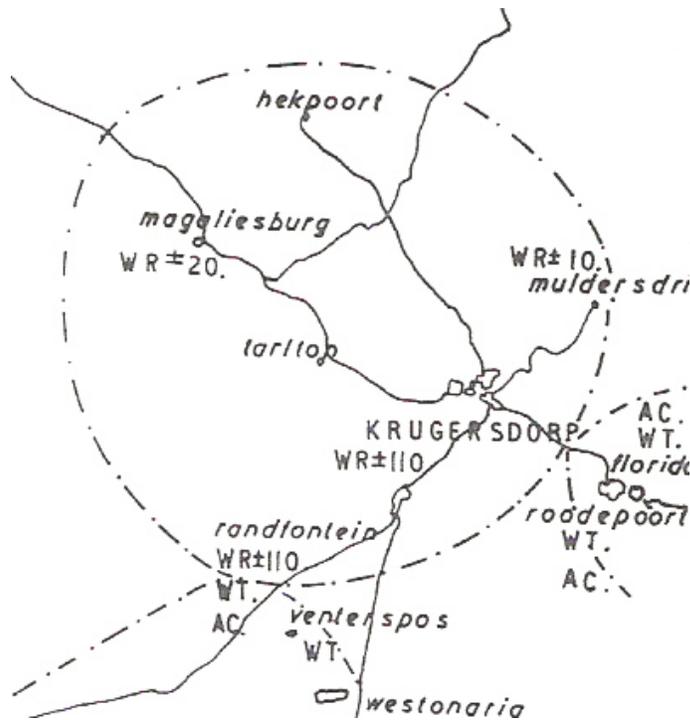
At first Krugersdorp was overwhelmingly a British mining community where a thin veneer of relatively civilised middle-class shopkeepers and professionals lived in the town proper and attempted to stabilise a large, roughneck group of transient, violent miners scattered across the town and mines (see Chapters One and Two). The local ruling class during the ZAR period, however, was a Dutch-speaking coterie of Boer officials like the Mining Commissioner, the District Surgeon and the *landdrosts*, reinforced by a few Dutch-speaking professionals and shopkeepers. Boer and Briton lived side-by-side [in the town](#) but did not really interact, except here and there, at the social margins of their respective groups. The Boer officials and middle class came from a background that was quite different to that of the British miners and [British middle class](#), and as they had little in common, they tended to tolerate rather than embrace one another.

A symbiotic economic relationship existed, however, between British townsmen and Boer country folk. The British residents of the town depended upon supplies from the Dutch farmers in the surrounding countryside and these farmers, in turn, benefited materially from the development of a local market for their produce. A degree of symbiotic or mutually beneficial interdependence emerged that allowed the two groups to live side by side in a mosaic but their differences prevented meaningful social dialogue and interaction between these two groups.

Krugersdorp was unusual for the degree to which it was a 'mosaic' town that was simultaneously both a 'British mining town' *and* a 'Boer dorp'. This was not the case for contemporary Johannesburg and the East Rand towns. While all Rand towns had a component of Dutch-speaking people, they formed an isolated minority in poor working-class areas. Johannesburg, for example, had a distinct 'poor Burgher'

community at the Braamfontein Brickfields and at Vrededorp. In Krugersdorp's case, however, the town was divided from early on, in 1894, into an English-speaking 'Stand Township' and a Dutch-speaking 'District Township'. The former was essentially a 'mining town' that served the mining area in the south while the latter was basically a 'dorp', situated in the north and designed to serve [a](#) large agricultural area comprising the Magaliesburg and Hekpoort [v](#)alleys (see map Four).

Map Four: Map of Krugersdorp and its Rural Hinterland of the Magaliesburg and Hekpoort



Source: 'Plan showing the approximate area served by the West Rand Mineral Works and by Adcocks Chemist & by the West Rand Times', no date, in J. Henning, 'The Evolution, Land Use and Land Use Patterns of Krugersdorp', BA Honours dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1963, p. 114.

Although divided only by a small 'spruit', these urban spaces were so culturally distinct from one another and served such different purposes that they might [well](#) have been located in separate countries. It was these stark differences located in

distinct geographical places and associated with specific national groups that gave Krugersdorp's built environment an exceptionally high level of semiotic potential, a canvas so impregnated with meaning that ideological 'brushes' merely had to wait for the right confrontation to occur to 'paint' the town in the right ideological 'colour'.

The Stand Township was occupied mostly by a small English-speaking middle class of professionals and shopkeepers together with a larger working class of English-speaking miners, mostly from Britain and Australia. These residents would have identified themselves as 'British' and the town was infused with sights, smells and sounds of transplanted 'Britishness'. As the previous [Chapter](#) pointed out, the essentially 'British' character of the town was reflected in the architectural design of its commercial buildings with their late-Victorian shop frontages, the layout of its streets (the standard Imperial grid layout with broad streets and 50 feet x 50 feet 'English' stands), its 'Wanderers' sports fields and its Anglican and Methodist churches. Large parts of Krugersdorp looked and felt, with some imagination, like Grahamstown, the archetypal British settler town, though still rough with dusty, unpaved streets and crowded with unkempt and aggressive miners.

The District Township had an altogether different purpose and atmosphere. As pointed out, it was established in 1894, to serve the mostly Dutch-speaking white farmers in the rural hinterland. This was the result of pressure from farmers from the surrounding area that took the form of a petition ('memorie') in 1893 that initially demanded the transformation of the Stand Township ('standsdoorp') into a District Township ('districtsdoorp') with conversion of stands into erfs ('erven').⁸ The Volksraad recognised the need for such an administrative centre because,

...a large portion of the residents of Potchefstroom and Rustenburg lived too far away from the main centres and belonged to the Church Community of Krugersdorp.⁹

⁸ *Notulen van de Eerste Volksraad*, 1893, Art. 307, p. 142.

⁹ *ibid.* Art. 1181, p. 399: '...een groot deel van de inwoners der districten Potchefstroom en Rustenburg ver van de hoofdplaatsen hunner districten afwoonden en tot de Kerkelijke gemeente

Chapter Two outlined how plans were made to establish a Nederlandse Gereformeerde church from the early 1890s and how it was eventually established in Krugersdorp's Stand Township to serve this community, in 1894. This can be seen as an attempt to transform the Stand Township into a District Township to serve the Dutch-speaking agricultural community, and the 250 wagon loads of families that attended the church's consecration must have taken on the look and feel of an invasion by the town's English-speaking residents. The white, English-speaking residents may have been relieved when the decision was made to establish a separate township to the north of the Stand Township to serve the Dutch-speaking rural hinterland and they certainly raised no objections to the government's plans.

The legislation that enacted the District Township into existence was Article 1182 which carved a new 'Krugersdorp District' out of Pretoria, Rustenburg and Heidelberg districts. The area encompassed by this District was enormous comprising of 500 farms and a population of 18 450 whites. No other Rand town became a centre of a District and in this regard Krugersdorp was unique on the Rand, rendering it a patchwork of two distinct urban forms, stitched uncomfortably together.

A key reason for choosing land north of Krugersdorp's Stand Township was its proximity to the ideologically-charged site of the Paardekraal monument. The District Township was located at the foot of this monument and its layout meant that its streets pointed deferentially up a gentle slope as if paying homage to this beacon of Boer Independence like the fingers of an outstretched hand (**Map Five**). The Mine Commissioner intimated his awe at 'one of the most important regions in our land – Paardekraal'¹⁰

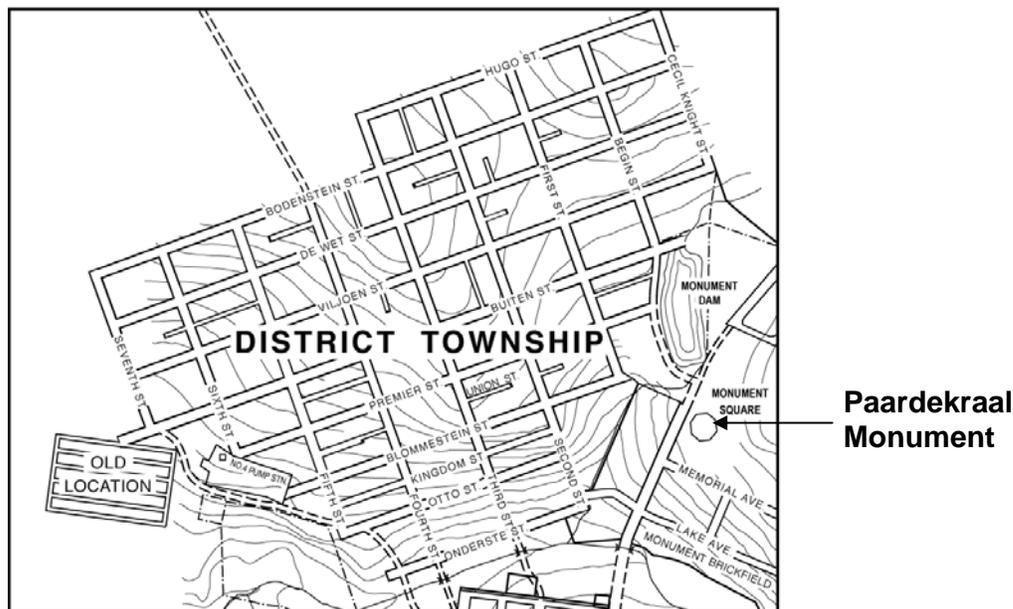
van Krugersdorp behoorden'.

¹⁰ *Ons Volk*, 7 October 1895, 'Gelukwensingen aan Ons [Volk](#)'.

¹¹ D. Bunn, 'Whited Sepulchres: On the reluctance of monuments', in p. 6. in Judin, H. and Vladislavic, I.,

Bunn writes perceptively that the Paardekraal monument used its position on a crest in a way that was similar to other 'Afrikaner monuments' [such as](#) the *Taalmonument* in Burgersdorp where '...height is not associated with prospect or contemplation but with a goal to be reached or an obstacle to be overcome'.¹¹ He argues that these monuments convey the 'breaching of a barrier and the sight of the promised land' – the idea that as a chosen people, their God will provide for them and protect them in this, their land.¹²

Map Five: The Krugersdorp District Town in Relation to Paardekraal Monument.



Source: CAD, Transvaal Public Works department (TPB), TALG 494, Town Engineer's Department, 1938

The design of these monuments reinforce this as they are essentially 'rigid, upright forms, which collect and focus power vertically' imbuing these monuments with a

(eds.), *Blank: Architecture, Apartheid and After*, Nai, Rotterdam, 1999.
¹² *ibid.*

spiritual force as the 'steeple-like structures' convey a pact between 'racialised national subjects and the Divinity'.¹³ More like 'pulpits' than memorials, these monuments are places to congregate and worship.

Nationalism and spirituality were intertwined, indeed inseparable, in the belief system of the Transvaal Boer. They inspanned their wagons at this spot for their quarterly 'nagmaal' or holy communion and again, to commemorate Boer Independence on the 16th December and to celebrate their victory over the British in the First South African War of Independence of 1880–1. The Transvaal government had allocated land in a 100-metre diameter around the monument, after procuring this from the owner of the farm Paardekraal, M. W. Pretorius in 1886, specifically to facilitate this sporadic festival and to 'protect' the monument from the rapacious English-speaking miners.¹⁴

The establishment of the District Township was envisaged as a means to accommodate farmers where they could build 'church houses' ('kerkhuizen') to accommodate themselves¹⁵ both during this festivity and for the 'communion'

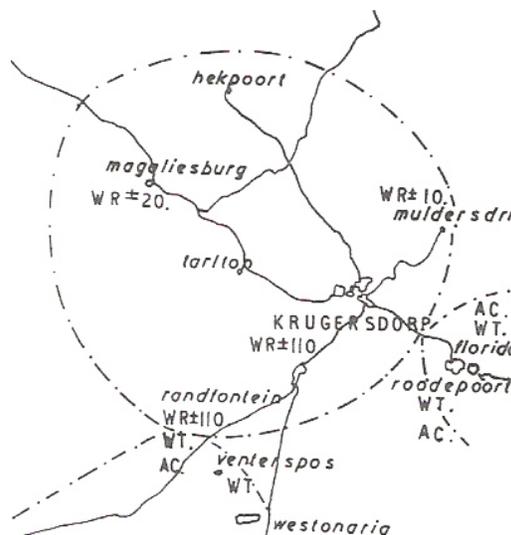
¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ M. A. Schutte 'Die Geskiedenis van Krugersdorp, 1887–1900' ('Die Geskiedenis van Krugersdorp'), MA dissertation, Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, Potchefstroom, 1976, p. 16. Pretorius had given the pioneer miners the right to dig for gold on his farm and feared that they would dig up the area around the cairn of stones and so made his gift to the state to protect the monument.

¹⁵ Many Boer *dorps* initially consisted almost entirely of small, two-roomed cottages also called the 'homehouse' ('tuishuis') which would be occupied only during *nagmaal* services. This seems to be the case for 'Pieter Mauritz Burg' (now Pietermaritzburg) where such 'diminutive structures may not have struck the first British commissioners and surveyors as permanent dwellings and therefore indicative of *bona fide* occupation', R. Haswell, 'Pieter Mauritz Burg – the genesis of a voortrekker Hoofdplaats' ('Pieter Mauritz Burg') in J. Laband and R. Haswell (eds.), *Pietermaritzburg, 1838–1988*, (Pietermaritzburg), University of Natal Press, Shuter & Shooter, 1988, p. 27.

(‘nagmaal’) services¹⁶ (**map Six**) held in Krugersdorp Dutch Calvinist churches in the Stand Township shown below. This combination of utility where the District Township would serve as an agricultural administrative centre as well as a spiritual and ideological centre gave the town a character that was different in so many ways from its counterpart in the valley below that the two ‘towns’ seem completely unrelated to one another.

Map Six: Map of Krugersdorp and Surrounding Farms, 1910



Source: J. Henning, 'The Evolution, land Use and Land Use Patterns of Krugersdorp', B.A. Honours dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1963, p. 18.

The District Township was laid out in so-called ‘burgher-right’ *erven*, as if it were a

¹⁶ Fotoalbum ter herdenking van die honderdjarige bestaan van die Nederduiste Gereformeerde Gemeente. (‘Fotoalbum’), Krugersdorp, 1890–1990, Nederduiste Gereformeerde Kerk, Krugersdorp, 1991, p. 3.

'Boer town' ('plattelandse dorp').¹⁷ These erven were twice the size of the British stands and its blocks were longer leading to wider, more imposing streets similar to, say, Nylstroom¹⁸ and the early Pietermaritzburg¹⁹ The township was sparsely populated by a handful of officials such as the *veldkorneten*²⁰ and a few Dutch-speaking residents who lived there on a full-time basis, contrasting strongly with the relatively crowded Stand Township. The District Township had the slow pace and somnolent atmosphere of a rural dorp rather than the bustle and activity of a British mining town.

Thus the District Township did not compete with the Stand Township and draw off residents. Government offices were opened only in March 1896 when the new 'District magistrate' ('Distrikts Landdrost'), C. B. Otto, occupied an office there²¹ but, as he was also the parliamentary member for Marico, he was often away in Pretoria.²² In some senses the District Township was little better than a 'phantom town' (see Chapter Two). That is, it existed almost entirely as a blueprint with only a few, vague markers of physical reality. Its *erven* were laid out along with some roads and a few buildings were erected, but there was little else there.

¹⁷ Krugersdorp Public Library (KPL), B. Burger, 'Die Geskiedenis van Krugersdorp tot 1951', ('Krugersdorp to 1951'), 1952, p. 12. It was originally planned to give this 'dorp' its own name but it was simply known as the *Distriksdorp* or 'District Township'.

¹⁸ Nylstroom Town Council, *Nylstroom, 1866–1966*, Nylstroom Stadsraad, 1966 p. 24. Nylstroom shares some of the features of a 'mosaic' town with Krugersdorp as it has all the features of a Boer *dorp* but, as it was built on a farm owned by an Englishman, many of the streets have English names.

¹⁹ Haswell, 'Pieter Mauritz Burg', p. 27.

²⁰ *The Standard, Krugersdorp* 28 January 1899, 'Fieldcornet and Burgher', S. F. Oosthuizen was the District Fieldcornet.

²¹ *Ons Volk*, 14 March 1896, 'Distrikts Landdrost'. See also *Ons Volk*, 9 May 1896, this duplication of

posts ('dubbel positie') was seen as 'unbecoming and unhealthy' ('onwys and ongezond') by the local Dutch-language newspaper.

²² *ibid.*

Even though [the District Township](#) was just a shell [consisting](#) of [some](#) streets [and a](#) few buildings, [it](#) was able to avoid the title of 'ghost town' because it accommodated at least some full-time residents and could [also](#) claim political legitimacy for its existence as an administrative centre. Its presence hardly impinged upon the British residents of the Stand Township though, [and](#) there were very few references to it in the local newspapers and archives. Most references to 'Krugersdorp' seem to refer exclusively to the Stand Township.

While the Stand Township had a British 'character' and [its residents were](#) mostly English-speaking, [it](#) was nonetheless governed by the Dutch-speaking officials of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) or Transvaal Republic. The Republican police force, the *ZARPs*, enforced the law and its *landdrosts* presided over the local courts. The main official was the 'gold commissioner' ('Mijn Komissaris') who issued claims, stand licences and acted, for practical purposes, as the town's Mayor. A small but prosperous Dutch-speaking middle class consisting of professionals and a commercial stratum of shopkeepers, merchants and traders also resided in the Stand Township so there was a distinct presence of Dutch-speaking residents in the town.

An equilibrium existed between the two groups during the Republican era up to the mid-1890s as the Dutch officials dominated the local state while an English-speaking professional and commercial elite dominated economic and social life in the town (echoing an equilibrium between the 'District' and 'Stand' Townships). Furthermore the English-speaking townsmen in the Stand Township developed an economic relationship with the Dutch-speaking farmers of [the](#) rural hinterland to the point where the two white groups were economically inter-dependent and needed [one](#) another to survive.

This 'symbiosis' was reflected spatially in the Market Square at the centre of the Stand Township (as it did in all British settler towns and Boer 'dorps') where Dutch-

speaking farmers brought their wares to the urban market and, in turn, purchased clothing and luxuries such as tobacco, coffee and sugar from 'British' general dealers occupying key commercial spaces in the Central Business District around the square. The Market Square, thus, serves in Lynch's terms as a 'node' or a 'junction' between 'paths' as well as a 'concentration' which operates as the '...focus and epitome of a district, over which [its] influence radiates and of which [it] stands as a symbol'.²³ This 'symbol', I argue, was one of spatial harmony that reflected a spirit of co-operation between the two main white groups: the English-speaking miners and middle-class shopkeepers and professionals on one hand, and the Dutch-speaking officials and the farmers of the hinterland, on the other, during the period up to 1894.

While there was co-operation between the two communities, they retained their own distinct areas in the Stand and District Townships and important ideological differences separated Boer and Briton and these were reflected in the built environment. Like a mosaic, Krugersdorp presented an image of unity from a distance but, upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that it was made up of separate and distinct parts. These differences can be best understood in terms of what anthropologists refer to as a 'cosmology' where the town can be divided into 'sacred' space to the north around the Paardekraal monument, including the District Township, and a 'profane' space to the south, including the Stand Township.

The term 'cosmology' refers to a 'divine model for structuring space-cities, villages, temples and houses' used by anthropologists for traditional urban settlements, where the architecture is best understood as 'symbolic technology' or '*vatuvidya*', the 'science of the dwelling of the gods'.²⁴ Rappaport suggests that traditional settlements were organised into built patterns of 'high level' meaning incorporating 'cosmologies, cultural schemata, world views, philosophical systems and the sacred'. He claimed that this contrasts with modern cities where 'middle level' meanings communicate identity,

²³ K. Lynch, 'The City Image and its Elements', in R. LeGates and F. Stout (eds.), *The City Reader*, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p. 99.

²⁴ Rappaport, *Meaning*, p. 22.

status, wealth, power and where 'low level' meanings consist merely of mnemonic cues for identifying uses, expected behaviour, privacy, accessibility, movement and way-finding.²⁵

While Rappaport is probably correct to argue that modernisation has led to the decline of high level meaning in the built environment, I would argue that in ideologically charged and contested spaces like Krugersdorp, the key criteria for high level meaning – that the overall patterns 'need to be known for the setting to work' – were present between 1887 and 1906, and a 'cosmology' operated. This can be demonstrated by looking in more detail at the Paardekraal Monument in relation to the early mining town.

The Paardekraal Monument, as pointed out earlier, consisted of a cairn (**Figure 3.1**) erected by Paul Kruger and other Boer Leaders as a symbol of a 'covenant' with God in a ceremony in 1880 when the Boers asked for divine intervention in the imminent war with Britain to win back their independence in what historians have subsequently referred to as [the](#) 'First Transvaal War of Independence, 1880–1'.²⁶ A 'Volksfees' was held at the cairn in 1881, to commemorate the defeat of British forces at the Battle of Majuba that secured the Transvaal Republic's independence and as a sign of thanksgiving for the fulfilment of the covenant.²⁷ Thereafter the Volksraad decided to hold a similar celebration, to commemorate both the First War of Independence (and the earlier Battle of Blood River), to be held on the 16th of December, every five years.²⁸

In 1887, as pointed out earlier, Pretorius donated the land around the monument to the state. In 1889, Landdrost Human successfully motivated for the erection of a formal monument, to be designed as a tall obelisk (**Figure 3.2**) by the famous Republican

²⁵ *ibid.*

²⁶ Krugersdorp Town Council, *Krugersdorp 100 jare/years (Krugersdorp 100 years)*, Volks Beperk, Krugersdorp, 1987, booklet produced to commemorate the anniversary of the establishment of the town, p. 13. See also Krugersdorp Public Library pamphlet, 'For those who want to know more about Krugersdorp'.

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ *ibid.*

architect Sytze Wierda and built by W. Y. Veitch.²⁹ It was publicly unveiled on 16th December 1891, by President Kruger. The monument incorporated the cairn into its base, where it was visible through an iron grating.³⁰

Figure 3.1: The Original Cairn that Marked the Site of the Covenant Made By the Transvaal Boers in 1880.



Source: *Krugersdorp 100 jare/years*, (*Krugersdorp 100 jare/years*), Volks Beperk, Krugersdorp, 1987, booklet produced by the Krugersdorp Town Council to commemorate the anniversary of the establishment of the town, p. 13.

A description of the unveiling of the monument by a newspaper correspondent, contrasts the 'sacred' monument with the 'profane' town of Krugersdorp:

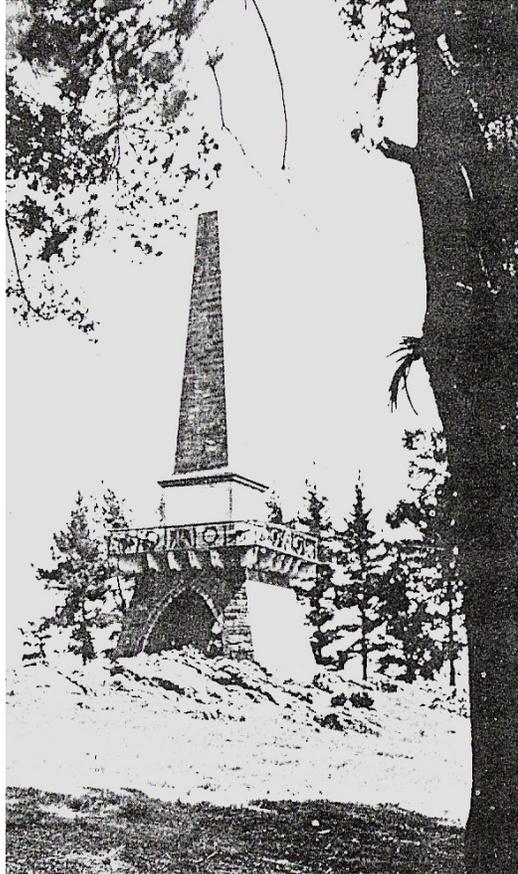
The monument was] sixty feet high, and built of white stone, quarried from the locality...[the town of Krugersdorp comprised of] '...Government buildings and about twenty-five houses, each built on a ground floor of corrugated iron. There are two or three stores, and the same number of hotels. These were doing a brisk

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ Krugersdorp Municipality, *Krugersdorp: The Pulse of the Western Witwatersrand: Official Illustrated Handbook*, issued under the auspices of the Krugersdorp Municipality and the South African Railways and Harbours, Town Clerk, Krugersdorp, 1924, p. 25.

trade as no intoxicants were allowed in the camp [for the festival], which was about half-a-mile distant on the sloping veldt...the monument [was]...the most prominent object.³¹

Figure 3.2: The Paardekraal Monument Erected in 1891



Source: Krugersdorp Municipality, *The Pulse of the Western Witwatersrand: Official Illustrated Handbook*, issued under the auspices of the Krugersdorp Municipality and the South African Railways and Harbours, Town Clerk, Krugersdorp, 1924, p. 25

A well-known and possibly apocryphal ‘story’ that is recounted in several guides, brochures and pamphlets, describes the early days of Krugersdorp in terms that can be interpreted as a cosmology. In late 1887, in an act of profound insensitivity, the

³¹ Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Krugersdorp, *Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Krugersdorp: Centenary Brochure, 1891–1991*, pp. 26–7. An extract of the Missionary Record of Mary Immaculate 2, 5, May 1892 cites this unknown correspondent.

itinerant Jewish trader Abner Cohen built a wattle and daub hut next to the Paardekraal monument and opened his 'Monument Hotel and Store'.³² He was rapidly forced to vacate his position at this 'sacred' spot and 'cast down' to the 'profane' mining town that was forming to the south in the valley below.

He spent some time – including a 'pilgrimage' to Pretoria by foot – expressing contrition to the Boer authorities and requesting forgiveness. This eventually came in the form of a successful application for a stand in the town on which he built his 'Court Bar'.³³ A final twist to the tale is that his saloon was built right next to the Courthouse, a symbol of secular Boer authority (a plaque is still visible there today, commemorating its existence), but at least his bar was now far away from the 'sacred' monument and situated in the rough-and-tumble 'profane' mining town.³⁴ The Boer authorities also attempted to imprint aspects of this cosmology over the town as a whole. The town of Krugersdorp emerged in the midst of the farm Paardekraal, owned by M. P. W. Pretorius, who requested that the town be named 'Krugersdorp' in honour of his friend thereby indicating that it was not meant to be just another British mining town but something new and special, a Boer conceptualisation of a mining town.³⁵ One of the key government buildings, the *landdrost* court, was built in the southern part of the town, near the mines, and flew the *Vierkleur* flag in a demonstration of Boer authority (**figure 3.3**).

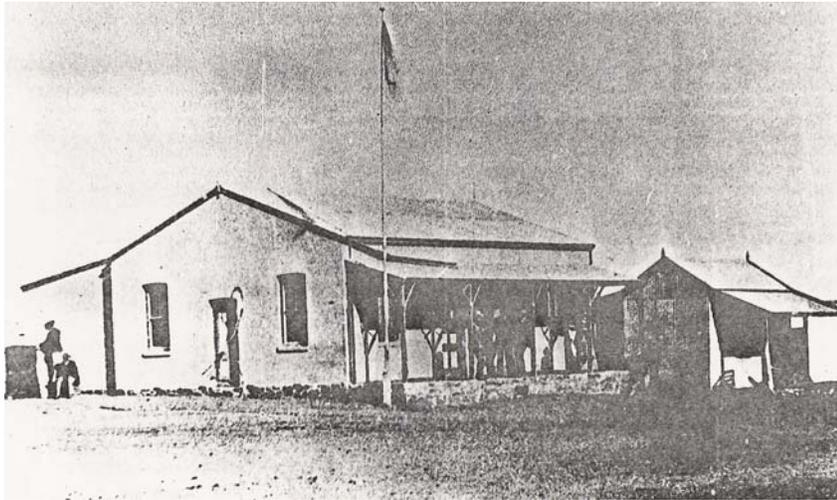
Figure 3.3: The Krugersdorp *Landdrost* Court Built in 1888

³² This story is told in so many sources that it effectively constitutes an origin myth, see, for example, *Krugersdorp 100 years*, p. 16. Born of Jewish parents in 1860, Cohen made his way first to Kimberley and then to the Rand, in May 1887. He was warned by M. P. W. Pretorius to '...vacate the spot since it was a place sacred to the Boers.' See also, for example, Krugersdorp Public Library, 'Prominent People in Krugersdorp's history', pamphlet.

³³ *Krugersdorp 100 years*, p. 16

³⁴ Personal inspection of plaque on the corner of Kruger and Commissioner streets, Krugersdorp.

³⁵ Schutte, 'Die Geskiedenis van Krugersdorp', p. 44.



Source: *Krugersdorp 100 jare/years, (Krugersdorp 100 jare/years)*, Volks Beperk, Krugersdorp, 1987, booklet produced by the Krugersdorp Town Council to commemorate the anniversary of the establishment of the town, p. 23.

In 1891 – in an even more impressive show of the Transvaal Republic’s might – a large, solid courthouse was erected under the guidance of the Wierda, the same Dutch architect, who built the Paardekraal Monument in the same year. Picton-Seymour has argued that Wierda consciously deployed the latest European architectural designs and implies that these were adapted to project a distinct ‘Transvaal Republican’ architecture:

Wierda's design is elegantly classical in the Transvaal Republican manner, the building being long and low with a central Corinthian portico, and topped by a small tower. This Dutch architect's adaption of the classical idiom is evident not only in the portico, but also in such details as the mouldings of the window and door surrounds, which show strongly the influence of his mid-19th century European architectural training.³⁶

The impact of this impressive new Government building was reinforced by its position on the southern flank of the Market Square. It was situated further north than the original wood-and-iron building and so was ‘closer’ to its ideological centre of

³⁶ D. Picton-Seymour, *Historical Buildings in South Africa (Historical Buildings)*, Struikhof Publishers, Cape Town, 1989, p. 179.

gravity, the Paardekraal monument, where it would be seen on a daily basis by miners moving from their residences in boarding houses and lodgings to the market and shops around the square. To further cement its ideological 'message' of Transvaal Republican power the foundation stone was laid by President Kruger in a public spectacle with all the pomp and ceremony suitable for such an occasion.

In his speech, President Kruger openly declared his preference for Krugersdorp to Johannesburg, a town that he detested. He said that Krugersdorp's small population and slow growth was healthy, comparing it to an adolescent that grows at the appropriate rate into adulthood.³⁷ He said that he hoped that Krugersdorp would not grow too fast like Johannesburg and Barberton, because towns were like children, if they grew up too fast they can easily become sick. Rather, he said, Krugersdorp should have the power of a man who grows up slowly and develops his strength. He visited the town a number of times and may well have seen it as a model of reconciliation and progress in stark contrast to the 'New Nineveh' or 'New Babylon' that was Johannesburg, a town that he avoided as much as he could.³⁸

While the Transvaal Republic projected its hegemony onto the built environment in the ways outlined above, this chauvinism did not unduly upset the uneasy but harmonious relationship that existed between the English and Dutch-speaking residents during this early 'mosaic' period. For example, both Dutch-speaking and English-speaking professionals and shopkeepers rubbed shoulders as members of the Krugersdorp Club, a cosy gentlemen's club³⁹ formed shortly after the town was established. Both British and Dutch/Afrikaner surnames can be detected on the team list for the local rugby team (**figure 3.4**).

³⁷ *Krugersdorp, 100 years*, p. 24.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ The following list of Chairmen were recorded by the writer of the plaque on the wall of the Krugersdorp Club: 1897 – Dr. van der Merwe, 1898 – Dr. Steward [*sic*, actually Dr. Stewart] 1899 Dr. Cawldwell [*sic*, actually Dr. Caldwell].

Figure 3.4: The Krugersdorp Rugby Club, 1893



Source: *Krugersdorp 100 Years*, p.24

In a remarkable gesture of friendship, in the early 1890s, the Boer officials even planned to build a cricket ground to accommodate the English-speaking residents.⁴⁰

Significantly, the [landdrost](#), Human had attempted to build a park slightly to the north on the Monument Brickfields, and had planted a number of blue gums there as well as around the town. The blue gum originated in Australia and can be interpreted as a conciliatory gesture.

Dutch-speaking and English-speaking shopkeepers, traders and merchants also participated as equals in the Krugersdorp Chamber of Commerce. Dutch-speaking residents went to the polls with their English-speaking counterparts to elect their representatives onto the local Sanitary or 'Health Committee', ('Gezondheids Comite'), a precursor of the Town Council. This political body reflected a degree of social harmony in that it had both Boer and British representatives.⁴¹

⁴⁰ CAD, Archives of the Staatssekretaris (SS), R 14834/90, Mynkommissaris, Krugersdorp's letter to the Staatssekretaris, requesting the allocation of land for a cricket ground, 1890.

⁴¹ See C. Dugmore, 'The Evolution of Municipal Policy Concerning Black Residents in the Locations of Krugersdorp, 1887–1923', MA dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1995, [Chapter Two](#), 'The Evolution of Krugersdorp's Municipal Government, 1887–1923', pp. 117–121.

Krugersdorp's early years, from 1887 to 1894, were thus, ones of relative social harmony between its Boer and British residents, although there was also a sense of separation and tension between these communities and their spaces, making the town a 'mosaic' rather than a 'hybrid'. These men (there were very few women as pointed out in Chapter One) interacted with one another and shared a common living and working space. British town dwellers and Boer country folk also interacted at the market and in the shops. Economic interdependence meant that there was a certain degree of civility in their relations with each another.

Relations were, however, aloof and distant rather than warm and friendly. Culturally, the two groups were worlds apart, and the establishment of the District Township separate and apart from the Stand Township expressed this in the built environment. A tense but genuine social harmony existed during the first seven years of Krugersdorp's existence as a town but this was to be shattered by the Jameson Raid of 1895, ushering in a period of Boer Republican nationalism that inscribed itself into the built environment in the years that followed.

Krugersdorp as a Boer National Chauvinist Town, 1895-1896

Krugersdorp's equilibrium was upset by the Jameson Raid of 1895, an attempted *coup d'etat* sponsored by elements of British capital, notably the mining magnate Cecil Rhodes, some individuals among the *Uitlander* associations, and at least to some extent by the British government. Jameson's troops were captured to the south of the town, an event that seems to have traumatised the Dutch-speaking whites of the area and prompted displays of rampant Boer national chauvinism. Poems were printed in *Ons Volk*, the local Dutch newspaper that condemned the display of 'Het Jingo-dom' at 'Luipaardsvlei', the farm where some of the action took

place and where a major British-owned mine, the Luipaard's Vlei Estates and G.M.

Co. Ltd., was situated. A local Boer resident wrote a letter to *Ons Volk*, which referred to the 'rednecks' ('rooinekken'), an insulting term used by Boers in reference to Englishmen. Another resident wrote the following words:

By Luipaardsvlei, o jingoes, hebt gy op meuw geboet,/ Majubaskruin
blyft vas staan, tot schande voor den Brit⁴²

Changes in the townscape reflected these tensions and there are indications that both the architectural design and the sites chosen for key government buildings in Krugersdorp expressed what could be termed an aggressive 'Boer national chauvinism'. For example, the Krugersdorp railway station which was built in 1896 was placed in the south because it was designed to be used mostly by miners, but it can also be 'read', in so far as a city is text, as an 'counter-invasion' of British *Uitlander* space by technological elements (the NZASM railway service was owned by Dutch capital) sympathetic to the Republic.⁴³ Like the courthouse built earlier, the railway station (**figure 3.5**) was opened by Kruger himself and expressed Transvaal Republican architecture found in key government symbols such as, for example, the Palace of Justice and *Staatsmodel skool* in Pretoria.⁴⁴

Unlike this courthouse, though - which was built further north and overlooking the Market where many Dutch-speaking farmers gathered - the railway station was built further to the south, close to the mines and in a space almost entirely used by English-speaking miners. In this case, the Krugersdorp Railway station's architecture clashed more starkly with its immediate surroundings of mining headgear. It had 'ornate gables' of the Cape tradition and the usual array of embellishments that became the signature of M.C.A. Meischke the man who built

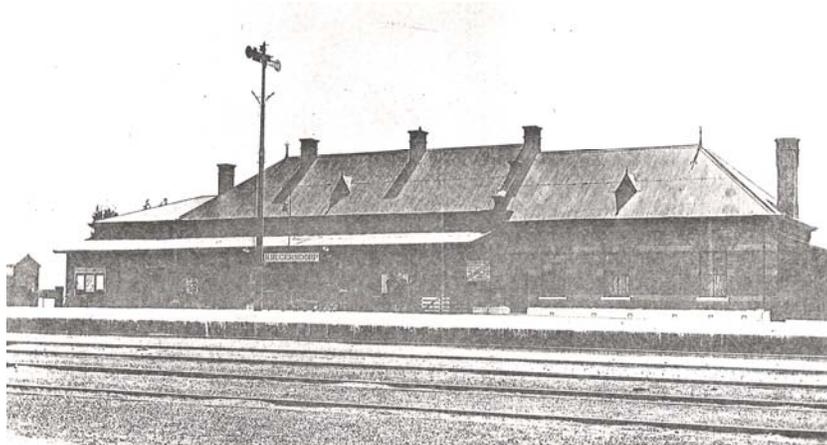
⁴² *Ons Volk*, 13 June 1896, untitled. Loosely translated as 'By Luipaardsvlei, o jingoes, you were punished, Majuba Ridge still stands to disgrace the British'

⁴³ Such military terminology is appropriate in the circumstances, tensions were high and the town was militarised to some extent. In January 1896 Commandant-general Piet Joubert visited Krugersdorp and a Volunteer Corps was established. In February they were given their first task: to guard the Paardekraal Monument as there were rumours that 'criminal elements' from Johannesburg were planning to blow it up. See *Krugersdorp 100 jare/years*, p. 53.

⁴⁴ Picton-Seymour, *Victorian Buildings*, p. 283.

these stations throughout the Transvaal and who had arrived from Utrecht a few years earlier. It was seen by contemporary English-speakers as 'one of the most important projects' seen in a long time in the town and its timing and its architecture must have had a deep and profound impact.⁴⁵

Figure 3.5. The Krugersdorp Railway Station, 1896.



Source: *Krugersdorp 100 Years/Jare*, p. 43

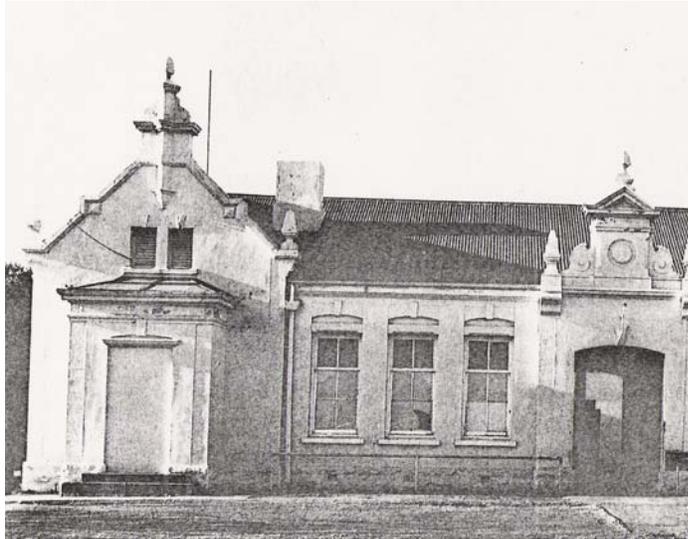
A police station was also built in 1897⁴⁶ (**figure 3.6**) because the town's growing population and increasing crime necessitated such a structure. However this structure can also be interpreted as evidence for growing Boer national chauvinism. Although it was established in the western section of the town (**see Map Seven**), which seems to undermine the argument that it was intended to project Boer power onto the English-speaking mining population, one can, nonetheless, make the case that it constituted a symbol of Boer authority by exploring the ideological values of the east-west axis along the same lines as the north-south axis were explored

⁴⁵ This is quoted in Afrikaans as a paraphrase from the *Krugersdorp Times and West Rand Advertiser*, 1 August 1896, in Schutte, 'Die Geskiedenis van Krugersdorp', p. 53, ('was een van die belangrikste projekte wat in 'n groot behoefte voorsien het'). How Schutte obtained this source is a mystery as no copies of the newspaper survive in the State library.

⁴⁶ *Krugersdorp 100 jare/years*, p. 136.

earlier.

Figure 3.6. Krugersdorp's Police Station, 1897



Source: Krugersdorp 100 Years, p. 137.

The western section of the town, it is contended, was developed after the Jameson Raid, as an additional 'sacred' region for Dutch-speaking whites and so marked an extension of the sacred territory around the Paardekraal Monument and the District Township to the western parts of the town. This made sense because the western part of the town faced the rural hinterland of Boer farms rather than in the east that faced Johannesburg or in the south near the mines dominated by English-speaking miners (the reef turns sharply south as it reaches Krugersdorp and the Randfontein mines and Randfontein Village are to the south-west of Krugersdorp). Further to the west was the Boer dorp of Potchefstroom, a symbol, along with Pretoria to the north of the town, of Boer Independence.

Map Seven: The Position of Krugersdorp's Police station in West Krugersdorp.



Source: CAD, Transvaal Public Works department (TPB), TALG 494, Town Engineer's Department, 1938

This area lay lower than the rest of the town and further from the mines (**see Map Eight**), so it may well have been cheaper land, but there may also have been important symbolic considerations as well. The architecture of the police station was again typically Republican and, to reinforce the 'message' of Boer national chauvinism, the foundation stone was laid by President Kruger.⁴⁷ It was a substantial building 26 metres in length and thus successfully projected Republican power.⁴⁸ The Republican police were used not only to suppress crime but to ensure the preservation of Boer control over an increasingly restive *Uitlander* population on

⁴⁷ Schutte, 'Die Geskiedenis van Krugersdorp', p. 52 ('...reghoekige gebou waarvan die sye 26 meter lank was...')

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

the Rand. A number of police residences were also constructed,⁴⁹ using distinctive Republican redbrick walls, in the 'sacred' north of District Township, underlying the ideological connections that were being made between north and west in the town.

The visual effects of these two new buildings, in the south and the west, together with police residences to the north and the 'Transvaal Republican' architectural features these incorporated, would have had the effect of 'redundancy' combining into a powerful 'mnemonic of Republican power. This would have been further reinforced by the presence of Boer commandoes marching through the town and the display of the Republican 'Vierkleur', hoisted and visible at different points of the town. The 'British' town, centred on the Luipaard's Vlei Estate and G.M. Co. Ltd., was, thus, 'surrounded' by a national chauvinist, military aggressive Transvaal Republican built environment.

The effect was deepened by the establishment of the Boer residential area of 'Burghershooop', also in 1897 (**see Map Eight**). This space was composed of free 'Government' stands to the west of the town⁵⁰ and was purpose-built to accommodate marginalised, poverty-stricken Dutch-speaking Boers. These people had been thrown off the land during the 1890s as victims of a process of proletarianisation, as farmland became increasingly capitalised and relationships between landowners and a type of sharecropper class, known as the 'by-woner' was transformed into a capitalist-worker relationship.

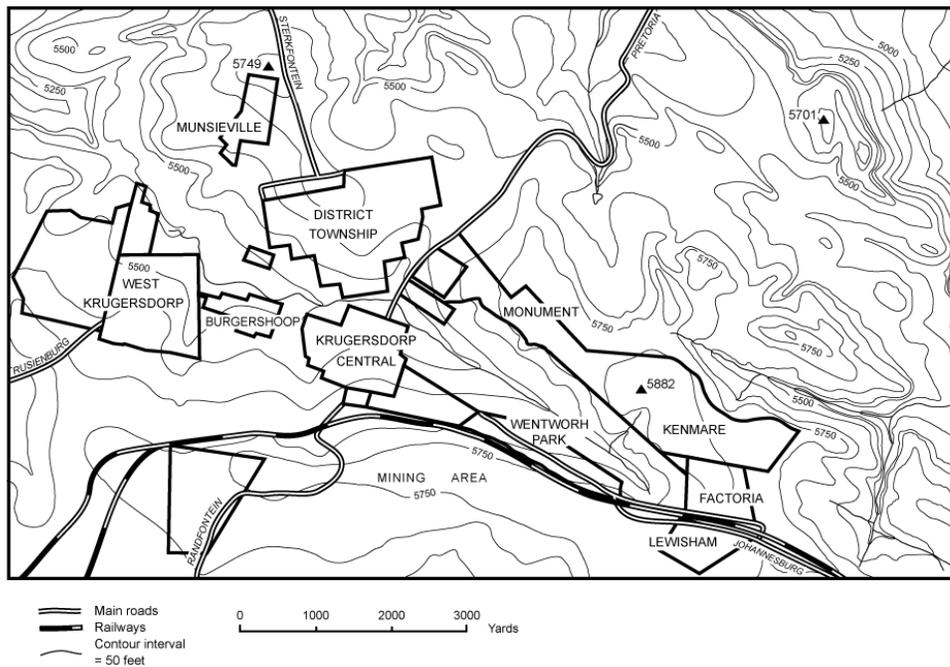
Bywoners, as a small under-capitalised agricultural class, could not retain their access to the land under these circumstances and many refused to work for the landowners as a rural proletariat or were seen as unsuitable by the commercial farmers in this regard. Similar areas were laid out around the Rand, for example,

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ CAD, Transvaal Local Government archives (TPB) 542, TA 1408, Krugersdorp Asiatics Locations Inquiry, 1910, evidence of J.A. Burger, p. 63.

Vrededorp.⁵¹ These ‘poor whites’ made a living partly from brick-making activities, in the case of Johannesburg, at the Braamfontein Spruit or in Krugersdorp, at the District Township ‘spruit’ which constituted the ‘Monument Brickfields’, to the north-east of the town. The encirclement of ‘British’ space by ‘Boer space’ was, thus, completed at this point.

Map Eight: A Topographical map of Krugersdorp depicting Burghershoop



Source: J. Henning, ‘the Evolution, Land Use and Land Use Patterns of Krugersdorp’, BA Honours dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, 1963, p.2.

It can further be argued that the ‘reach’ of this cosmology was extended to include ‘black space’ as well, but in complex and contested ways. Colonial towns whether ‘British’ mining towns or ‘Boer *dorps*’ were ‘white spaces’. Black residents essentially

⁵¹ See C. van Onselen, *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1887-1914*, vol. one, *New Babylon*, Ravan, Johannesburg, 1982, pp. 114-21 and 158-9.

had to 'fit in', and had no capacity to choose their living spaces as these were allocated by local authorities, usually on the periphery and on undesirable land (near sewerage farms and rubbish dumps, for example). This created segregated spaces in these towns where blacks and whites lived apart in different parts of the town and these were usually separated by a natural border like a stream or by artificial man-made structures such as factories.⁵²

Urban segregation was so common to colonies all around the world that Ross and Telkamp⁵³ as well as King⁵⁴ define it the quintessential feature of the 'colonial city' This is not to say that the urban subaltern groups had no effect on the allocation of space or the dynamics of urban living - many works in urban history testify to the influential roles that the subaltern plays in constructing colonial urban space, as does my own work⁵⁵ as will be demonstrated in later chapters.

In the same year that Burghershoop was established in the west of the town, the 'mixed' (Indian, Coloured and African) location was removed from the town, a 'Kaffir Locatie' was laid out a mile to its north-west Africans and Coloureds and a 'Koelie Locatie' immediately beside the 'white space' of Burghershoop (see Chapter Five).⁵⁶ This latter development is particularly significant as there is no doubt that Indians were seen in a broadly if muted negative light by Boers who freely used the derogatory appellation of 'Koelie' in reference to Indians. It is, thus, a matter of some

⁵² This pattern appears in both 'Boer' and 'British' towns, see, for example, A.J. Christopher, 'Race and Residence in Colonial Port Elizabeth' in *South African Geographical Journal*, 1986, pp. 1-19 and E. Nel, 'Racial Segregation in East London, 1836-1948', in *South African Geographical Journal*, 1991, 73, pp. 60-68.

⁵⁴ R. Ross and G. Telkamp (eds.), *Colonial Cities, Essays on Urbanism in a Colonial Context*, Martinus Nijhoff, Dordrecht, 1985.

⁵⁵ A. King, *Colonial Urban Development, Culture, Social Power and Environment*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976.

⁵⁶ C. Dugmore, 'Blurred Demarcations of Authority and Power: the Conflict Between Indian and White Shopkeepers in Krugersdorp, 1887-1923: Towards a Pragmatic Conceptualisation of Democracy and Local Government', *History Workshop Paper*, University of the Witwatersrand, 1994.

difficulty to explain why the Boer authorities would place them next to 'poor Burghers' especially during a phase of Republican chauvinism and the construction of a Republican cosmology, especially given President Kruger's profound sympathy for this class of marginalised 'poor Burghers'⁵⁷

One possible explanation is that the Indian residents were, in fact, ambivalently treated by the Voortrekker state and by 'Boers' generally, as Chapter Five will argue. Kruger himself noted on several occasions that Indians provided necessary goods to Boers at a cheaper rate than 'English' traders and could not use Boer debt to gain mortgages as they could not own land.⁵⁸ Thus, locating Indians next to the poor Burghers made sense as it lumped the providers of cheap goods with those most in need for such services. The Dutch-speaking whites did, nonetheless, look down at those with darker skins than themselves, particularly if they were non-Christians, as was the case with the Hindu and Muslim Indians in Krugersdorp. The residents of Burghershoop complained almost immediately of their proximity to a 'Koelie' location and argued that this stigmatised them as Indians were stereotyped as 'insanitary' and 'unscrupulous'.⁵⁹ Thus, this does not seem to be a satisfactory explanation.

A more probable explanation is the pressure resulting from the political power play between British and Boer in the late 1890s. The ex-Mining Commissioner of

⁵⁷ CAD, TPB 542, TA 1408, Asiatics Inquiry, 1910, evidence of J.A. Burger, p. 63.

⁵⁸ See van Onselen, *New Babylon* and C. van Onselen, *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914*, vol. 2, *New Nineveh, (New Nineveh)*, Ravan, Johannesburg, 1982, especially the chapters on 'Johannesburg's Jehus' on cabdrivers, and 'The Main Reef Road into the Working Class'.

⁵⁹ Pillay reports that the Volksraad supported the segregation of Indians by a narrow margin of 24 votes to 18, and President Kruger remarked that Indian traders provided '...a reasonable service at reasonable prices for poor burghers', B. Pillay, *British Indians in the Transvaal: Trade, Race Relations and Imperial Policy in Republican and Colonial Transvaal*, Longmans, London, 1976, p. 13.

Krugersdorp gave evidence during a 1910 inquiry into the Indian location that the Boer authorities had wanted to place the Indian location further to the west in 1897 (presumably to be close enough for the Burgher consumers to visit but sufficiently distant to remove the 'stigma' that was felt by proximity to a 'Koelie Location') but yielded to pressure arising from the stipulations of the London Convention to treat 'British subjects' fairly.⁶⁰ Indians were included under the rubric 'British subjects' by dint of their citizenship of a British colony in Indian or in other colonies like Natal.

Indians themselves made the most of this pressure to secure concessions for themselves in the Republic and would complain frequently and vociferously whenever they perceived that they were badly treated by the Republic's officials. Hence my contention that Indians were both the victims of competing white nationalist struggles and, simultaneously played Boer off against Briton, adopting an active role to secure a desirable commercial and residential area in the heart of the town. To avoid a potential *casus belli*, the Republican officials had to ensure that Indian traders, as a general principle in the Republic, although segregated from white residents, were in sufficiently close proximity to white customers so that their business would not suffer harm. This suggests that the spatial expression of a Boer national chauvinist cosmology had its limitations and was constrained through fear of provoking war with Imperial Britain.

Nonetheless, the establishment of Burghershooop, its location on the western periphery, the building of the railway and the police station in 'Transvaal Republic' architectural styles and the blatant Boer chauvinist displays in the streets of Krugersdorp by the Krugersdorp Commando, all point to the imposition of Boer nationalist ideology onto the formerly 'mosaic' town where a degree of co-operation

⁶⁰ See, for example, *De Voortrekker*, 15 February 1899, 'Koelie Locaties', an editorial that reflected its readership among the literate Dutch-speaking residents of Krugersdorp that expressed 'deep dissatisfaction' ('groot ontevredenheid') with the placing of burghers next to an Indian Location.

and social harmony used to prevail prior to 1895.

Krugersdorp's English-speaking middle and working class had to endure a period of hostility and an overtly aggressive assertion of the Transvaal Republic's hegemony over the town that led, in turn, to the inscription of Boer ideology onto Krugersdorp's built environment. However, given the small size of the town and the economic interdependence of its two white groups, such hostility was not likely to last.

The Restoration of Spatial Harmony, 1897-1899

As time wore on, the pain caused by the Jameson Raid steadily gradually eased for Krugersdorp's Boer residents who returned to the day-to-day grind of routine and habit. Then, in 1898, Krugersdorp's built environment was profoundly altered in a way that can be explained as a return to the social harmony that existed before the Jameson Raid. Luipaardsvlei, a British middle class suburb to the Southeast of the town was constructed, restoring the spatial balance in the layout of the town to offset, as it were, Burghershooop in the west.⁶¹ A harmony in the town's layout both reflected and helped to advance a more balanced and friendly relationship between its English- and Dutch-speaking residents - it was almost as if the brick and mortar of the town was permeating the consciousness of the town dwellers, restoring the easy amicability of Boer and Briton.

Conventional explanations will point out that a mining boom meant increased demand for housing stock in close proximity to the mines and that a property syndicate took the opportunity to lay out stands and auction these for a quick profit. The 'ecological model' also seems to apply here where the middle class and upper working class moved out of the increasingly less desirable stands in the town itself to make way for a new influx or 'wave' of working class miners who, in turn, moved out

⁶¹ CAD, TPB 542, TA 1408, 1910 Asiatic Inquiry, evidence of J.A. Burger, p. 63.

of the boarding houses and single residences of the mines on Krugersdorp's periphery as they started to marry and raise families (see Chapter Two).

Burgess and other writers from the 'Chicago School' explain this process in terms of 'invasion' and 'succession', drawing from botany. In this view, lower status miners moved into the centre of Krugersdorp and made this residential area less appealing to the middle class and upper stratum of workers such as foremen, who lived there, and they began to look for new homes.⁶² Sensing an opportunity, the Luipaardsvlei Syndicate, like property developers across the Rand, developed the Luipaardsvlei Township as a relatively elite residential area, a suburb situated at some distance from the increasingly crowded, noisy and unpleasant town. Luipaardsvlei, thus, corresponded to Burgess's 'Deutschland', an environmentally superior living space in Chicago for the 'labour aristocracy' and the lower middle class. Luipaardsvlei seems to have retained this reputation as an elite space for many decades thereafter.⁶³

However, the timing and position of these stands, together with their architectural features and the circumstances in which these houses were built, suggest that something altogether more interesting was occurring and requires more detailed examination. Luipaardsvlei was designed as a 'semi-government township', where the Luipaardsvlei Syndicate received one-third and the state two-thirds of the stand licence money. This, too, could provide an explanation for the government's decision to grant permission to build a township although further investigation reveals that ideology may also have played a role. The Luipaardsvlei Syndicate was owned by the Luipaards' Vlei

Estate G.M. Co. Ltd.⁶⁴ which was, in turn, owned by Rhodes' Goldfields of South Africa

⁶² Burgess, 'The Growth of the City', p. 91. For a discussion of this approach to South African towns, see also J. McCarthy and D.P. Smit (eds.), *South African City: Theory in Analysis and Planning*, Juta, Cape Town, 1984, p. 13.

⁶³ *The Standard, Krugersdorp* 3 July 1912, 'Townships in the Krugersdorp Area'.

⁶⁴ See *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 21 October, 1905, 'As Others See Us!: A Few Impressions by a

G.M. Co. Ltd.. It was remarkable, then, that the Boer government would grant permission to build a township to a company owned by Rhodes who was, after all, the nemesis of the Boer Republic, having had attempted to overthrow the Boer government during the Jameson Raid.

Furthermore, Rhodes had earlier built a sandstone cottage on the Luipaard's Vlei mine and it was rumoured that weapons and ammunition were stored there during the Jameson Raid⁶⁵. The co-operation of the Republic in building a township in such an ideologically loaded space is highly significant and cannot be attributed merely to the relatively trivial income that would be secured through stand licences. Rather, the construction of Luipaardsvlei Township should be understood as attempt by the English- and Dutch-speaking white residents - especially its elite elements - to restore social harmony after the traumatic events of 1895.

There is ample evidence of such attempts at *rapprochement* between Krugersdorp's two white communities. For example, the local English language newspaper, *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, which began publishing in late 1898, openly criticised the *Uitlander* political associations on a number of occasions. Run by the local British middle class trio of Stammers, Wallis and Law and their 'Standard Printers and Publishers Co. Ltd.', the newspaper declared that it would refuse to toady 'to this or that political party or clique', it would be 'absolutely fearless and independent'.⁶⁶ The newspaper demonstrated its conciliatory approach by describing the Paardekraal Monument as 'a sacred place', indicating that at least some elements within the English-speaking middle class had recognized and had internalised the core features of the cosmology suggested earlier, concerning this monument.⁶⁷

Visitor'.

⁶⁵ See, for example, the history of the company published by the proprietors: The Goldfields of South Africa, *The Goldfields, 1887-1937*, Goldfields of South Africa, Johannesburg, 1937, p. 10.

⁶⁶ See *Krugersdorp 100 jare/years*, p. 80

⁶⁷ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 31 December, 1898, untitled.

In this, they shared much in common with the proprietors and editors of *Ons Volk* that - after its short-lived patriotic vitriol described above - took great pains to bring about Boer and British reconciliation after the Raid, in 1897. Thus, the newspaper congratulated the British residents over the celebrations commemorating Queen Victoria's Jubilee, wishing her a 'long and prosperous life' ('een lang en voorspoedig leven').⁶⁸ The *Standard, Krugersdorp* showed a similar respect for President Paul Kruger, praising his 'seasonal and tactful speech' on Old Year's Eve and noted that it should go a long way in removing the obstacles that stood in the way of 'a complete fusion between the old and new populations'.⁶⁹

One can likewise detect a return to the normal friendly relations between townspeople and farmers from the rural hinterland which is reflected in calls by the local newspaper to improve conditions in the 'Markt Plain' and to clean up the 'sloots', as the English-language newspaper put it, and to build a covered Market Building to protect farmers' produce from the elements.⁷⁰ Improved economic conditions also helped to repair the wounds of the Jameson Raid. It was reported in 1898 that 'the market is beginning to boom once more',⁷¹ a testament to the economic benefits of co-operation and reconciliation.

The symbiosis captured in the rebuilding of the Market House reflected a realisation that English-speaking town and Dutch-speaking countryside were economically interdependent. The Market Master was an Englishman, Mr. Bedford, who worked hard to secure such a building from the government, a fact gratefully acknowledged by the local Dutch-speaking farmers.⁷² Mr. Bedford had a very close relationship with the local

⁶⁸ *Ons Volk*, 23 June 1897, '...a long and prosperous life'.

⁶⁹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 31 December 1899, untitled.

⁷⁰ *De Voortrekker*, 14 September 1898, untitled. See also *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 21 January, 1899, untitled.

⁷¹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 31 December 1898, untitled.

⁷² *The Standard, Krugersdorp* 10 December 1898, 'Ourselves'.

⁷³ Schutte, 'Die Geskiedenis van Krugersdorp', p. 90. See also P. Fitzpatrick, *The Transvaal From Within*, Heinemann, London, 1899, p. 188.

farmers and was an elder in the N.G.K. He was one of the many 'pro-Boers' that lived in Krugersdorp, as will be discussed later in this Chapter. The symbolic restoration of spatial harmony indicated by the Market Square is remarkable given that the Jameson Raid soldiers had actually been held prisoner in that square, guarded by heavily armed Boer Troops, just two years earlier.⁷³ Nevertheless, hostility had remained latent and the spirit of reconciliation began to break down as war clouds gathered in 1899.

The Rise of the British Imperial Colonial Town, Krugersdorp 1899–1902

The *rapprochement* between Boer and Briton was not to last long in Krugersdorp as forces much more powerful than small town editors, *landdrosts* or shopkeepers, were shaping events at a national level. Major figures like Rhodes and Chamberlain, together with the new British High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, applied pressure on the Boer authorities to extend the franchise to the English-speaking Uitlanders - which both sides believed outnumbered the Boers - and war grew imminent. A flurry of negotiations took place between February when a massive *Uitlander* petition was sent to the Queen and September 1899. People talked freely and constantly of the possibility of war, encouraged by a shamelessly 'jingo' British press, particularly the *Times* and *The Star*, the Johannesburg newspaper.

As with the Jameson Raid, but now from the British point of view, an identity shift took place from ambiguity and hybridity to a form of unreasoning patriotic chauvinism described as 'jingoism', among Krugersdorp's English-speaking residents by the start of the South African War. This shift can be detected in the growing use of British symbols. *The Standard*, *Krugersdorp's* leader articles and editorials can be analysed and this transformation can be traced in the changes in the terms and metaphors that were used in headlines and in major articles in the newspaper. There was a distinct shift from broad declarations in support for peace to distinctly war-mongering

terms.

The earlier editorials warn about war's destruction and talk about the tragedy of neighbours and friends fighting one another: 'WAR, war with all its attendant horrors' including 'friends hacking at each other'.⁷⁴ Later articles, however, offered veiled threats in an analogous fashion to the famous *Battle of Dorking* that appeared in Britain in 1870s and its many French and German imitators, which anticipated World War One.⁷⁵ During the months leading up to war, the newspaper carried a number of such articles. An early editorial took pride in Britain's immense power by pointing out that '50 000 soldiers' could be quickly mobilised and sent to the Transvaal in the event of war:

Suppose these 50 000 English troops were to join hands and extend in a line. They would form an unbroken chain reaching 56 miles, or equal to the distance from Pretoria to Heidelberg ...If they were in skirmishing order twenty paces apart, and advanced they would form a line 188 miles long, and could stretch from Laing's Nek to Komatie Poort. Suppose they came in on ordinary bullock wagons, 50 men on each, they would fill 1000 wagons, a procession that would extend from the Market Square, Krugersdorp, to well up Pritchard Street, Johannesburg, and would be six hours passing any given spot...⁷⁶

The use of familiar place names such as the Market Square and natural features, such as those associated with Boer power like 'Laing's Nek', were designed to produce an immediate and concrete sense of menace. A later editorial was infused

by this late-Victorian idolisation of force⁷⁷ and appears to be even more aggressive,

⁷⁴ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 29 April 1899, untitled.

⁷⁵ See I.F. Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War, 1763–1984*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1966.

⁷⁶ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 9 September 1899, untitled.

⁷⁷ See W. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1957.

⁷⁸ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 18 May 1899, untitled.

wondering

...how anyone could even contemplate war with so powerful a nation..., a power that holds the armies of Europe in chain will [not] hesitate to crush without mercy a twopenny-halfpenny crowd of men with guns who are foolish enough to challenge and defy.⁷⁸

This demeaning and belittling characterisation of the Boer armed forces was complemented by a subsequent depiction of Kruger's advisers as 'harpies' giving President Kruger 'evil advice'.⁷⁹ A note of dehumanisation and demonisation of the Boer political elite had now crept into the newspaper's discourse. The shift in attitudes to Boers culminated in one of the last pre-war editorials from *The Standard, Krugersdorp* that again visualised a future war with Britain, warning that:

The [British] advance will be under a paralysing shell fire from a line of seven or eight miles long.... The Boer's sole idea of fighting is lying quietly...behind a kopje and taking slow and deliberate aim. He had never known what it is to have to lie quietly when his comrades are being smashed around him by deadly hail of bullets falling from the sky... killing his horses and picking off men lying like ant bears in the holes.⁸⁰

Another striking shift in the discourse of the local English newspaper was its use of Dutch words, as already mentioned above. Dutch aphorisms like 'Wacht Een

Betjie'⁸¹ and 'Alles Zal Recht Kommen'⁸² were used in earlier editorials untranslated,

⁷⁹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 5 September 1899. untitled.

⁸⁰ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 26 August 1899, untitled.

⁸¹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 29 April 1899, 'Wacht Een Betjie' (this can be translated as 'Wait

assuming that British leaders would understand these terms and as a sign of friendship and respect for their language and idiom. Later editorials would no longer use such Dutch phrases.

In a similar vein, the word 'jingo' that had earlier been used to attack 'hotheads' or the tub-thumping imperialists that Kipling derided, disappeared from the newspaper's leading articles and editorials as the war grew more imminent. While the newspaper earlier played down the 'Edgar Incident' involving alleged ill-treatment of an *Uitlander* by a Boer policeman or '[ZARP](#)', it later played up a trivial incident involving an Englishman's arrest in Krugersdorp, into 'Police Terrorism'.⁸³

All these signs indicate a marked identity shift in the English-speaking population of Krugersdorp. Boers became steadily demonised in the local newspaper's pages while British icons, particularly military men like Roberts and Kitchener, appeared more frequently and were referred to with admiration. The Queen's Birthday marks an excuse for the most sentimental and jingoistic mush where the monarch's virtues were supposed to be so self-evident that even the perfidious Boer must secretly admire her. In an article entitled 'God Bless Her', the editor remarks that,

...there were few tutored hearts in this country which did not thrill with pleasure on the occasion of the eightieth birthday of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria. Her virtues as a mother, her powers as a ruler of vast Kingdom and as Empress spreading over a territory equal in size to all the Russias, her influence for the welfare of her people, in many cases preventing bloodshed, her heartfelt sympathy with them in times of trouble and disaster, and above all her true womanly qualities have endeared her to all, and the spontaneous prayer, 'Long may she reign', uttered this week, comes not from the hearts of Britons alone.⁸⁴

a Moment').

⁸² *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 15 April 1899, 'Alles Zal Recht Kommen' (this can be translated as 'Everything Will Be All Right').

⁸³ *The Standard Krugersdorp*, 27 July 1899, untitled.

The friendly, co-operative atmosphere between Boer and Briton in Krugersdorp deteriorated in bar brawls and bravado in the streets. English-speaking miners and the middle class began to book railway tickets to Kimberley or Mafeking.⁸⁵ Many of Krugersdorp's English-speaking residents volunteered to fight against their neighbours and friends by joining the Imperial Light Horse⁸⁶ and other similar regiments while, on the Boer's side, many Dutch-speaking men joined the Krugersdorp Commando and were soon in action at some of the key battles of the war.

Most of Krugersdorp's English-speaking residents, however, fled to the coastal towns of the British colonies in the Cape and Natal. Pietermaritzburg's population, for example, more doubled during the war from 9 000 to 19 000 whites [clearly](#) indicating [that](#) it [was](#) a major destination for British refugees from the Rand.⁸⁷ It seems likely that at least some of Krugersdorp's British residents made their way to this town and if they did, the similarities with Krugersdorp would be immediately evident. As pointed out earlier, 'Pieter Mauritz burg' as it was originally called, was once a Boer *dorp* and shared many features of the District Township of Krugersdorp including wide streets and long blocks typical of *dorps* laid out in *erven*. It even shared with Krugersdorp a powerful Boer monument in the form of the iconic Boer symbol, the Church of the Vow.⁸⁸ When the British took over the town in the 1840s, it quickly transformed the Boer *dorp* into a British Imperial Town and its parks and Market Square may have served as a model for the later transformation of Krugersdorp

⁸⁴ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 27 May 1899, untitled.

⁸⁵ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 8 July 1899, 'Of General Interest'.

⁸⁷ See, for example, R. Viney, 'Officers and Gentlemen: Masculinity, English Speaking South African Colonial Troops and the British Army during the South African War, 1899–1902', Paper presented at 'The [Anglo-Boer](#) War: a reappraisal' Conference, 12–15 October, 1999. See also, W. Ramsay Macnab and J.W. Smith, *Guide to Krugersdorp and the West Rand*, W. & A.K. Johnston, Edinburgh, n.d., p. 29.

⁸⁸ See T. Wills, 'The Segregated City' in J. Laband and R. Haswell (eds.), *Pietermaritzburg, 1888-1938: A New Portrait of an African City (Pietermaritzburg)*, University of Natal, Shuter/Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1989, pp. 33–47.

along similar lines.

Those who stayed in Cape Town and Durban would also have imbibed the cultural influences of Imperial Britain that were omnipresent in these British colonial towns especially in the parks that were heavily infused with statues and other Imperial imagery.⁸⁹ It is striking that even while hostilities still raged, plans were made in 1902 for a park in Krugersdorp, to commemorate the coronation of King Edward VII.⁹⁰ The seeds for this idea may well have been planted in the minds of Krugersdorp's English-speaking residents during their stay in the Imperial towns of Cape Town, Durban and Pietermaritzburg in the course of the war.

After the [South African War](#) ended, the English-speaking residents returned to their homes and businesses profoundly aware that the Union Jack now flew over the Transvaal. The Dutch-speaking officials were gone, replaced by military authorities that imposed martial law on the town. A large 'Burgher Camp' was situated close to the town and held Boer POWs. The surrounding farms were burnt-out shells. The local newspaper described the new Imperial Krugersdorp with evident delight when it resumed publication in 1902:

Never before in the history of Krugersdorp has the town presented such a military...appearance as it has acquired since the British occupation. Columns of soldiers frequently move about the district, generally to the accompaniment of martial music, and it is certain that such unwonted gaiety is not a little appreciated by the inhabitants.⁹¹

⁸⁹ For example the statue of Queen Victoria in front of Cape Town's Houses of Parliament, and in Durban's Town Gardens, see Picton-Seymour, *Victorian Buildings in South Africa*, pp. 51 and 243. An elaborate fountain commemorated the Queen's Golden Jubilee opposite Durban's Town Hall while the Town Gardens also sported an ornate bandstand.

⁹⁰ CAD, Archives of the Colonial Secretary (CS), 85, 3851/02, Assistant Resident Magistrate Krugersdorp to the Acting Secretary, Transvaal Administration, Pretoria, 22 April 1902..The name was later changed to Coronation Park.

⁹¹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 6 September 1902, untitled.

⁹² Personal inspection of the Monument.

The Paardekraal Monument had been desecrated during the war, or at least, this is reported in a plaque affixed to the Monument.⁹² Apparently a command was issued that the Paardekraal stones had to be taken to Vereeniging and were to be thrown into the Vaal River beneath the railway bridge.⁹³ Whether this was a symbolic act to commemorate the signing of the Peace Treaty, which seems likely; or a deliberate official desecration of the monument, needs to be further investigated.

By contrast, the graves of 'War Heroes' who 'fell in the Empire's cause' were carefully tended by the Krugersdorp branch of the Guild of Loyal Women of South Africa whose members decorated the graves during the Christmas season using white ribbon and evergreens (**figure 3.7**).⁹⁴ The most blatant display of 'jingoism' came with the Coronation day celebrations. Among the many events of the day, for which bunting was lavishly laid out, was the unveiling of a garish, monstrously huge gilt crown. It was suspended in the air above Commissioner street, illuminated by lights at night and decorated using Union Jacks.⁹⁵ It must have been a sight for sore Imperial eyes.⁹⁶

The most substantial alteration to the townscape was the building of the triumphal 'Coronation Park' to the Southeast of the town, gazing out towards Johannesburg and set firmly in the 'British' quadrant of the town. The park was enormous in scale; it was meant to mark the victory of Britain over the Boer Republic and, through its sheer size, conveyed British territorial expansion and hegemony. It was seeded

⁹³ see *Krugersdorp, 100 years*, p. 11.

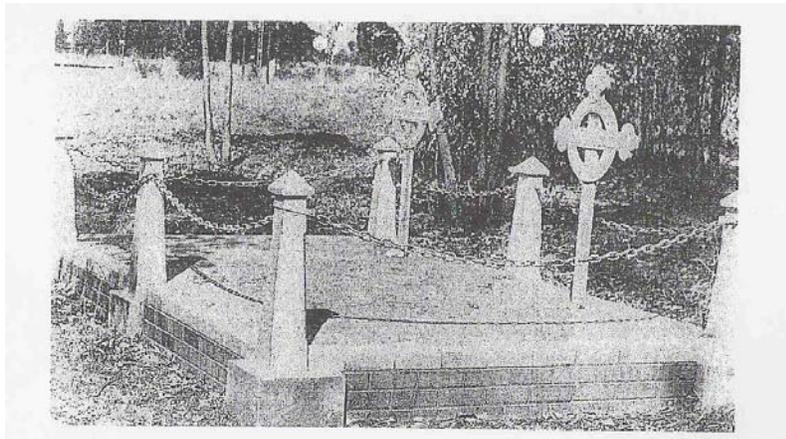
⁹⁴ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 17 January 1903, untitled.

⁹⁵ *The Standard, Krugersdorp* 13 December 1902, untitled. Such events, of course, occurred all over South Africa as well as elsewhere in British Empire, see Picton-Seymour, *Victorian Buildings*, p. 133.

⁹⁶ Thompson argues that such 'rituals and symbols' were key elements in the construction of a 'civic culture' in towns across Natal. See P.S. Thompson, *Natalians First: Separatism in South Africa, 1909-1961*, (*Natalians*), Southern Book Publishers, Johannesburg, 1990.

intentionally with evergreens to evoke the enduring sway of the empire. An 'oak path'⁹⁷ was laid out somewhat like a procession of British soldiers parading through its heart. In the centre of the park were two large circular pathways intersected partially by converging pathways from all four compass points⁹⁸ to be 'read', in this reproduction of the great parks of London⁹⁹ as the Empire upon which the sun never sets (**see Map Nine**).

Figure 3.7: War Graves in Krugersdorp's Cemetery after the South African War



Source: *Krugersdorp 100 Years*, p. 51.

Rappaport states that '...parks have important meaning in the urban environment... they communicate meanings of positive environmental quality'.¹⁰⁰ The late Victorian and

⁹⁷ *Krugersdorp 100 years*, p. 73. See also Picton-Seymour, *Victorian Buildings*, p. 141 for a [description of a](#) similar park in Paarl.

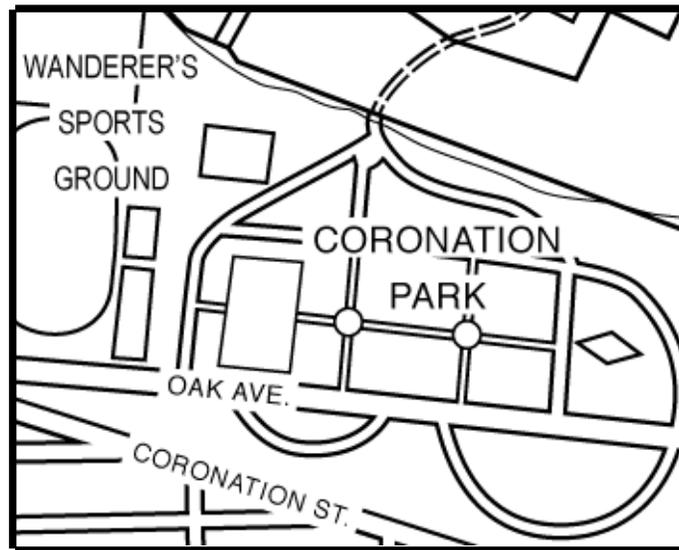
⁹⁸ Inspection of site by author, September, 1997.

⁹⁹ D. McCracken, 'Parks and Gardens' [in](#) Laband and Haswell, *Pietermaritzburg*, pp. 59–65. The Queen Alexandra Park, established in 1863, and its nearby Botanic Gardens, may have served as a model for the Coronation Park in Krugersdorp.

¹⁰⁰ Rappaport, *Meaning*, p. 34.

the early Edwardian periods are well-known for the emphasis on parks that culminated in Ebenezer Howard's 'Garden City' movement. Central Park in New York and Regent's Park are two great parks established during this period influenced by a belief that parks were the 'lungs' of the city.¹⁰¹

Map Nine: Coronation Park c. 1905



Source: CAD, Transvaal Public Works department (TPB), TALG 494, Town Engineer's Department, 1938

Thompson is one of the few South Africans to consider the importance of parks in promoting a 'civic culture' to provide identity to the British settler within a wider British imperialism.¹⁰² He argues that civic 'rituals and symbols' were key elements in the construction of a 'civic culture' in towns across Natal which helped to sustain the

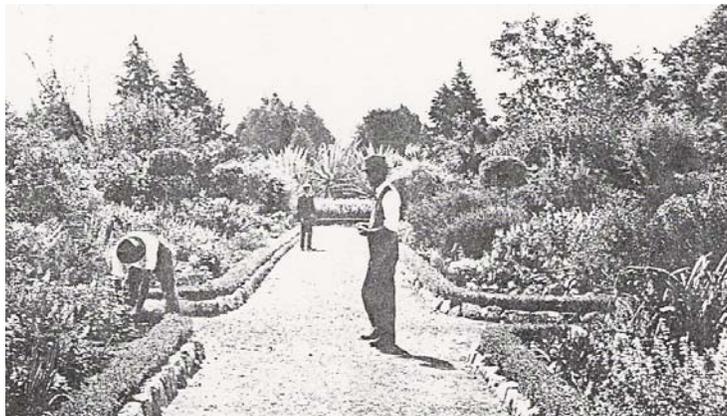
¹⁰¹ See R. Beevers, *The Garden City Utopia: a Critical Biography of Ebenezer Howard*, Macmillan, London, 1988 and D. Schuyler, *The New Urban Landscape: the Redefinition of City-form in Nineteenth Century England*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1986.

¹⁰² Thompson, 'Natalians'.

authority of - and provided the identity of - the British settler community.¹⁰³ The 'symbols' included flags, bunting, public monuments, certain public buildings and even micro symbols' such as postage stamps, coins, royal monograms. The 'rituals' included the reception of dignitaries – especially royal visitors – and occasions of celebration like royal birthdays, coronations and the installation of officials.

Through the combination of 'many artefacts grouped together in particular relationships', these homogenous areas 'add up' and produce 'strong, clear and redundant cues', a 'cultural landscape'. The construction of 'English landscapes' is found in all the Dominions such as Australia, Canada and South Africa and, in each of them, the indigenous flora and fauna was treated as an 'alien landscape' as 'negative' that had to be supplanted by 'familiar cues'.¹⁰⁴ Coronation Park was a beautiful, restful place (**figure 3.8**) but it was also an ideologically-loaded space.

Figure 3.8: Coronation Park c. 1905.



Source: *Krugersdorp: Official Illustrated Handbook*, Krugersdorp Municipality, 1924, p. 11.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ Rappaport, *Meaning*, pp. 137 and 140. The reproduction of British urban forms and urban culture could be found all over the empire. After the South African War, Johannesburg was described by J.A. Hobson as possessing an 'aggressively British tone', quoted in B. Kennedy, *A Tale of Two Mining Cities: Johannesburg and Broken Hill, 1885–1925*, A.D. Donker, Johannesburg, 1984.

In this way, the town's physical space and built environment was upset, transforming it into an 'Imperial Town'. Burghershoop and the District Township was thrown open to speculators who bought up many of the stands, leaving the repatriated burghers with no homes or means to make their livelihood.¹⁰⁵ British rule ushered in a particularly aggressive form of local capitalism that drove the 'poor Burghers' who made bricks at the 'Monument Brickfields' out of business (who were replaced by the 'Victory Brick Company'¹⁰⁶ and the local *amaWasha* who washed clothes at the *spruits*¹⁰⁷ (and who were replaced by the West Rand Steam Laundry).¹⁰⁸

In the military's wake followed British property developers and businessmen who built sumptuous new buildings in the sturdy classical lines of Edwardian architecture.¹⁰⁹ They gave patriotic names to these buildings like 'Jubilee' and 'Victoria'.¹¹⁰ A new 'men's outfitters' shop advertised in a local newspaper that they would take a gentleman's measurements and send these to London's Saville Row where the whole suit would be made up and sent to the customer in Krugersdorp, all within as little as eight weeks!

Krugersdorp became more aggressively imperialist and Edwardian in other ways, notably through its disciplining of the town. The 'street' in colonial towns was often a particularly contested space. As a 'public' space, it was used by the dominant group to assert its authority and its claims of superiority over the subordinated black

¹⁰⁵ CAD, Archives of the Lieutenant-Governor (LG) 128, 111/23 (2494), Deputation from Licensees and Inhabitants of stands – Burghershoop, Krugersdorp, 17 March 1903. The deputation noted that '...residents and licensees of Burghershoop had been deprived of stands during absence as Refugees, on Commando or as POWs, without any notification...'.
¹⁰⁶ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 6 December 1903.

¹⁰⁷ See van Onselen, *New Babylon*, chapter on the 'AmaWasha'. Krugersdorp's laundry services seems to have been run by Indian 'knights of the wash tub' as the local newspaper facetiously put it,

The Standard, Krugersdorp, 2 May 1903, 'Street Whispers'.

¹⁰⁸ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 8 April 1905, 'A Promising Local Company'.

¹⁰⁹ See Picton-Seymour, *Victorian Buildings*.

¹¹⁰ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 24 February 1906, 'The Rise of a Krugersdorp Firm', refers to Robson and Holton Enterprises, which commenced business in 1895 and built over a hundred buildings in Krugersdorp including the 'Victoria' and 'Pioneer' buildings. The partners also

residents. In 1903, a Krugersdorp resident asked impatiently,

...is there not some by-law or regulation whereby Mr. Jack Kafir is requested to avoid obstructing the pathway? ...If you walk down Ockerse street...you can scarcely [sic] get foot away. Any lady coming down has to elbow her way through these louts or walk in the mud...¹¹¹

A number of by-laws were soon passed to 'reclaim' the streets and impose imperial discipline on these public spaces and, particularly over 'non-white' users of the streets. If the Africans, Indians and Coloureds expected to be treated as 'British subjects' after the war – and many did – their fond hopes were quickly and cruelly dashed. Gambling in the streets, a remnant of the transient mining town, as discussed in Chapter One, was prohibited. Imperialism blended with the middle class's desire for the stabilisation of the town, discussed in Chapter Two, to make the town safe and [a pleasant place in which to live](#). The reference to any 'lady' in the quotation above, reveals that the Imperial town was also one increasingly populated by women and one that was both patriarchal and patriotic.

New imperial legislation also clamped down upon the violence of the ephemeral mining town, particularly the threat of violence posed by the presence of large numbers of black residents as the mines began to start up again and attract migrant workers. The carrying of 'dangerous weapons' was prohibited but 'weapons' were interpreted so broadly that even walking sticks were banned.¹¹² With the support of the English-speaking shopkeepers, the imperial government also clamped down upon the colonial street by imposing severe restrictions on Indian hawkers.¹¹³

Congregations of blacks, for whatever purpose, could be broken up under new public

established the 'Victory Brick co.' in 1906.

¹¹¹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 27 June 1903, 'Correspondence': 'Pertinent Queries'. See also *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 9 May 1903 'Street Whispers' that claimed that 'black pandemonium' existed in Ockerse street. See also *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 24 January 1903, 'Walking on the Footpath'.

¹¹² *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 28 October 1905, 'Dangerous Weapons'.

¹¹³ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, untitled, 20 January 1906, exorbitant licence fees were charged: 7 pounds for hawkers and 5 pounds for pedlars; hawkers could stay in one spot for more than 20 minutes and could not return to the same site within 24 hours.

disturbance laws. Responding to the above call to put Africans 'back in their place', new legislation prevented Africans from walking on the sidewalks.¹¹⁴

Linton's Directory, printed to [provide](#) British investors with information, conducted door-to-door visits in Krugersdorp,¹¹⁵ as did another guide for merchants in England, which highlighted what products were in demand in the town.¹¹⁶ There was an obsessive 'mapping out' of Krugersdorp by various authorities with which 'geographers of empire' are familiar with. A new rigid conception of time was imposed on the town. A new clock was placed above the Post Office, a miniature version of Big Ben,¹¹⁷ while a '*Hambe Kahle*' bell reminded black residents that they could not be on Krugersdorp's streets after the nine o' clock curfew.¹¹⁸ The discipline and rhythms of Industrial capitalism permeated the town, mingling with the military rigidity of barracks, curfews and policed space.

Even the Dutch language of the 'Other', was proscribed in certain ways from Krugersdorp. Alpheus Snell, born in the United Kingdom and trained at the 'Cape University' ([see Chapter Two](#)), acted as schoolmaster in Aliwal North.¹¹⁹ ran the pro-Boer, Dutch language newspaper *De Voortrekker*, before the [South African War](#). When he applied to re-start a similar newspaper after the war, his background was checked by the local Resident Magistrate who described him as 'Anti-English'.¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 29 November 1903, 'A Ten Shilling Jeer', apparently Town Regulations of 1889 covered this 'offence' at a fine of 10 shillings.

¹¹⁵ *The Standard, Krugersdorp* 28 February 1903, untitled.

¹¹⁶ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 7 February 1903, untitled.

¹¹⁷ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 28 February 1903, untitled. The clock was ubiquitous throughout the Empire, adorning railway stations, post offices and particularly Town Halls, see Picton-Seymour, *Victorian Buildings*, 'those clock-towered halls being built throughout the empire since the 1860s', p. 110.

¹¹⁸ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 9 March 1907, 'night curfew', by this time the efficacy of the curfew had come under question. Similarly, Australian Aborigines were excluded from Darwin by a curfew between sunset and sunrise, see Kennedy, *A Tale of Two Cities*, p. 46.

¹¹⁹ *The South African Who's Who, an Illustrated Biography and Sketch book of South Africa*, (S.A.'s Who's Who) South African Who's Who Publishers Company, Durban, 1908, p. 377.

¹²⁰ CAD, Archives of the Colonial Secretary (CS), 12821/02, Assistant Resident Magistrate, Krugersdorp to Colonial Secretary, 17 October 1902.

What was held against him [particularly](#), was his reluctance to decorate his employer's building using bunting during the Coronation festivities when instructed [to do so](#). He was also reported to have taken the 'oath of Allegiance' as late as August 1902.¹²¹ Thus Krugersdorp was denied a Dutch newspaper while the English [newspaper](#), *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, held exclusive sway.

The Decline of the Jingo and the Imperial Town

The decline of Jingoism came with the passing of time, as the war grew more distant in people's memories. Reminders of the war disappeared from view as the Burgher Camp was rapidly emptied of its prisoners who were returned to their homes. Martial Law was lifted and British troops left the town. A clear indication that time was healing and transforming the hurt and bitterness of war, was the remarkably speedy rendering of the war into a curiosity, a souvenir stand for tourists, and mementoes for collectors. An exhibition of 'War Pictures' was advertised in the local newspaper promising photographs on glass plates with images projected onto a screen that would depict, of all things, war scenes from 'Bullwer's Campaign'.¹²² Since these would depict the defeat of British troops at the hands of the Boer commandoes, the exhibition marked an important turning point from the arrogant triumphal boastings of the immediate post-war period.¹²³

Even more remarkably, the popular Ben Viljoen mentioned earlier, who had served as *veldcornet* and as Krugersdorp's representative in the Volksraad as well as a Boer officer during the [South African](#) War, left Krugersdorp to join a lucrative lecture circuit in Europe and the United States. This was reported with pride in the local English-speaking newspaper.¹²⁴ An auction was held in Krugersdorp of 'Boer curios',

¹²¹ CAD, Archives of the Colonial Secretary (CS), 12821/02, Assistant Resident Magistrate, Krugersdorp to Colonial Secretary, 17 October 1902.

¹²² *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 25 October 1902, untitled.

¹²³ *ibid.*

¹²³ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 24 January 1902, untitled.

¹²⁴ *ibid.*

articles [such as](#) carvings and jewellery made by Boer prisoners on the islands of St. Helena and Bermuda,¹²⁵ surely the ultimate example of the commodification and trivialisation of the pain and suffering experienced by combatants of the war. The war had grown distant and its effects in polarising Boer from Briton was weakened over time.

There can be detected in *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, an identity shift from exclusive 'jingo' to a more balanced and inclusive identity that merged and synthesised Boer and British cultural traits into something new that was greater than a sum of its parts, perhaps even a new embryonic 'South Africanism'. Boers who were ridiculed in newspaper columns in the early months after the [South African](#) War, were treated with more respect.

This can be detected in the local newspaper's treatment of the exiled President Kruger. One article viciously opposed a proposal to allow the ailing former President to return to his country to die and said that he had made his bed and should lie in it.¹²⁶ However, when Kruger died in 1904, the newspaper's owners, editor and readers had abandoned such jingoistic knee-jerk responses and a sensitive article reported that 'widespread regret' was felt throughout Krugersdorp upon his death.¹²⁷ We can also detect a drop in imperial fervour associated with imperial occasions. The King's Birthday was still celebrated in the Coronation Park with a 'parade of all troops in the garrison' at noon in the park 'at the east end of the town', but the article announcing it was just four lines long and buried [in](#) amongst other 'parish pump' [or parochial, municipal](#) news.¹²⁸

Chamberlain's visit to Krugersdorp, while it was given all the full page treatment one would expect for the arch-imperialist; was followed by a number of letters that are

¹²⁵ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 13 January 1902, untitled.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 5 November, 1904, Editorial. See also, same edition, 'Talk of the Town'.

¹²⁸ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 8 November 1902, untitled.

revealing of identity shift towards a more conciliatory stance. The newspaper had criticised the poor grammar and bombastic language of the speech given by the Reception Committee that, in the spirit of *rapprochement* was a mixed body of local Boer notables and British 'pro-Boers'.¹²⁹ Two successive letters by residents calling themselves, respectively 'Britisher' and 'Another Britisher' condemned this attack on the Reception Committee as 'bad form'.¹³⁰ The writers noted that Chamberlain had struck a conciliatory note in his speech by offering to repair the Paardekraal Monument that had been damaged by British troopers (although he remarked most insensitively that it would be fitting to include the names of British fallen on the restored Monument).¹³¹ The inclusion of such letters and the passion with which they were written, is powerfully suggestive of a return to pre-war reconciliation.

As jingoism declined the use of Dutch words in the local English newspaper seemed to alter. Dutch phrases again appeared, for example, 'Langzaam mark zeker' ('slow but sure') in an editorial entitled 'Moving Slowly' which referred to the process of reconstruction.¹³² As words changed (significantly, 'jingo' made a re-appearance indicating a distancing by the editors from 'them', the arch-imperialists),¹³³ so did attitudes and, reflecting these, the built environment also underwent transformation as the town, bent out of shape, began to return to its erstwhile ambience and harmony.

What is particularly remarkable is how imperialist symbolism appears to have been quickly and literally rubbished. The Coronation gilt crown seems to have been abandoned on a rubbish heap on the Market Square even before Chamberlain arrived, a powerful symbol of how quickly overt patriotism was jettisoned.¹³⁴ That the

¹²⁹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 24 January 1903, 'A Puerile Tirade of Venomous Vapourings'.

¹³⁰ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 7 February 1903, untitled. See also *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 14 February 1903.

¹³¹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 24 January 1903, 'Mr. Chamberlain, Reception Krugersdorp'.

¹³² *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 13 September 1902, 'Moving Slowly'.

¹³³ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 6 December 1902, 'General'.

¹³⁴ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 13 December 1902, 'A Derelict Crown'.

'decline' of such a powerful imperial icon should occur in the 'node' at the heart of the town so strongly associated with spatial and cultural harmony, is, indeed, remarkable. It was as if the Market Square was re-asserting itself as a symbol of co-operation between townspeople and rural folk, between Dutch- and English-speaking whites, that is, between Briton and Boer.

The Coronation Park, too, [was](#) transformed from imperial symbol, to a much more sedate, family-orientated and domesticated symbol as it became a favourite haunt of black nannies and their white charges rather than an imperial rallying ground. None of the typical array of heroic statues, plaques and fountains seems to have been erected there. Plans had been made to erect a fountain in Market Square but while castings had been commissioned from Carnegie and Jamieson, [local iron foundry owners](#), these were never bought by the Health Board that was subsequently sued by the local firm. This failure is [rather](#) telling as fountains were a quintessential Victorian prop, and one that could easily be embellished into imperialist imagery with its virile jets of water and the symbolism of fertility, eternity and purity that flowing water conveyed (see Chapter Seven).¹³⁵

An effort to Anglicise the Market Square by building a bandstand also proved doomed and by 1905 it was described as [a](#) 'relic of a bygone musical age...leaning out of true in the last stages of decrepitude'.¹³⁶ Once the 'pride of the Coronation celebrations', the crown was reported as lying 'abandoned, unhonoured, unsung, and to say the truth, a bit of a nuisance, on the Market Square', which had itself become quite a 'rubbish heap'.¹³⁷ It was felt that the practice of 'dropping golden crowns about the town' ought to be stopped before Mr Chamberlain arrived otherwise it might lead to 'the wrong impressions'.¹³⁸ The image of fallen crowns powerfully conveys the rapid decline

¹³⁵ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 28 February 1911, 'W.C.T.U. Annual Meeting'. See also Picton-Seymour, *Victorian Buildings*, various pages, where she highlights some striking fountains in Pietermaritzburg and other British colonial towns.

¹³⁶ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 25 March 1905, 'Market Square'.

¹³⁷ *ibid.*

¹³⁸ *ibid.*

of unabashed patriotism and the demise of the 'Jingo Town'. In its stead, the first glimmerings of a hybrid South Africanism can be detected during 1905.

The Rise of an Embryonic 'South African' Colonial Town, 1903–1906

The Market Square lay at the heart of emergent *rapprochement* between English- and Afrikaans-speaking whites in Krugersdorp. It was, after all the market itself that brought together local Boers from the surrounding farms and *rooinek* townsmen as consumers, in one place and at the same time. The English-speaking representatives on the Health Board and, later, the Town Council, did much to promote reconciliation by pushing for improvements in the Market Square, especially a plan to build a new market house to protect farmers' products from the elements, as already mentioned above. The English-speaking newspaper revived this campaign as early as September, 1902 when [it](#) published the 'impressions' of a returning Prisoner-of-War who condemned the 'apology for a market house'.¹³⁹ The re-built Market house adjoined the new Town Hall, crowned with a clock tower, the quintessential British Victorian civic symbol (see **Figure 3.9**).

Figure 3.9. Krugersdorp's New Town Hall and the Market Hall in 1908



¹³⁹ The Standard, Krugersdorp, 6 September, 1902, 'Impressions on returning to Krugersdorp of an ex-P.O.W.'.

The Town Hall's architect was an Englishman, C. Hoskings, and the foundation stone was laid by Selborne, the High Commissioner, who placed British coins under it. [In addition](#) six different newspapers and the Mayor's Minutes, including those of G. van Blommenstein, the Mayor in 1905–6, were also placed under the stone. General Smuts, the famous Boer general, formally opened the Town Hall on 21 December 1907, as a senior member of the new Het Volk government, again underlining the hybrid nature of this central municipal symbol.¹⁴⁰

The spatial proximity of these two spaces indicate that a balance was being restored to the built environment. The importance of the Market Square to the economic life of the town meant that it was restored to its old position as a meeting ground between two white groups and a symbol of co-operation and harmony. The local farmers brought large quantities of local tobacco which had become popular with English-speaking residents, indeed, exports to Britain had taken off because during the War, the 'Tommy' or 'British Soldier', had acquired a taste for Magaliesburg tobacco.¹⁴¹ Here was a perfect example of a merging between the two white groups: if the archetypes of British 'Tommy' soldier and the Boer, the 'son of the soil', could find a common ground; then there was hope of reconciliation.

The Wanderers Sports Grounds were laid out in 1906, situated between the Paardekraal Monument and the Coronation Park (**see Figure 3.10**). It created a neutral meeting place for the two white elites. Krugersdorp's Town Hall adjacent to the Market Square in 1908.¹⁴² An abattoir was built in 1906 to serve the farming community but was placed in the southern British space of the mining area¹⁴³ despite the 'negative externalities' associated with such structures (**see Figure 3.11**). By 1905, under the pressure of all these influences, the tensions between English-

¹⁴⁰ *Krugersdorp 110 years*, pp. 68–71.

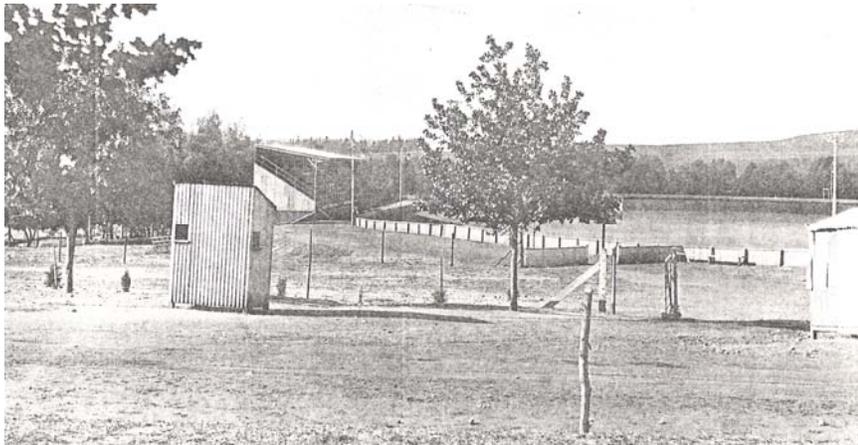
¹⁴¹ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 20 May 1905, 'My Lady Nicotine'.

¹⁴² *ibid.*, pp. 96–7.

¹⁴³ *ibid.*, pp. 102–3.

speaking and Dutch/Afrikaans-speaking whites in Krugersdorp had dissipated significantly. As if to underline this restoration of harmony and balance, two new building developments commenced in different parts of the town. In 1905, a new working class suburb [was built](#) in the Boer 'territory' [to the west, beyond Burghershoop. This was](#) to be called West Krugersdorp.¹⁴⁴ The following year, 1906, Lewisham, a middle-class residential area was laid out as a semi-government township to the [southeast](#) of the town, further south and further to the east than any previous township.¹⁴⁵ Again, a spatial balance had been restored to the town.

Figure 3.10: The Krugersdorp Wanderers Sports Grounds in 1906



Source: *Krugersdorp 100 Years/Jare*, p. 96.

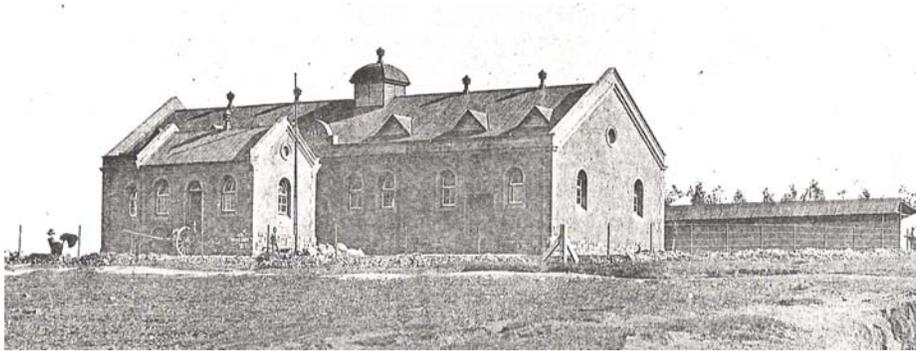
The District Township, long a symbol of the town's separation, became one of its most important symbols of reconciliation as [a](#) growing number of [the](#) English-speaking middle class made their homes there, happy to live close to the Paardekraal Monument and among Dutch-speaking neighbours who, for their part, welcomed them. Probably one of the most remarkable signs of reconciliation in this

¹⁴⁴ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 29 July, 1905, 'New Freehold Township'.

¹⁴⁵ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 13 July 1912, 'Townships in the Krugersdorp Area'.

regard was Abner Cohen who was, in many ways, the nemesis of the old Boer Republic, as pointed out at the start of this Chapter.

Figure 3.11: Krugersdorp's Abattoir, 1907.



Source: *Krugersdorp 100 Years/Jare*, p. 103.

Cohen sold up his 'Court Bar' to allow for the expansion of the court building¹⁴⁶ and then appears to have used the proceeds to buy a number of *erven* as a consolidated block in the District Township. He proudly referred to his peri-urban plot as 'Homelands' (**See Map Ten**). If Cohen could feel sufficiently welcome and comfortable to set down roots in the heart of a Boer *dorp* and a stone throw's distance to the Paardekraal monument from which he had been evicted less than twenty years earlier, then there was, indeed, meaningful reconciliation among Krugersdorp's residents.

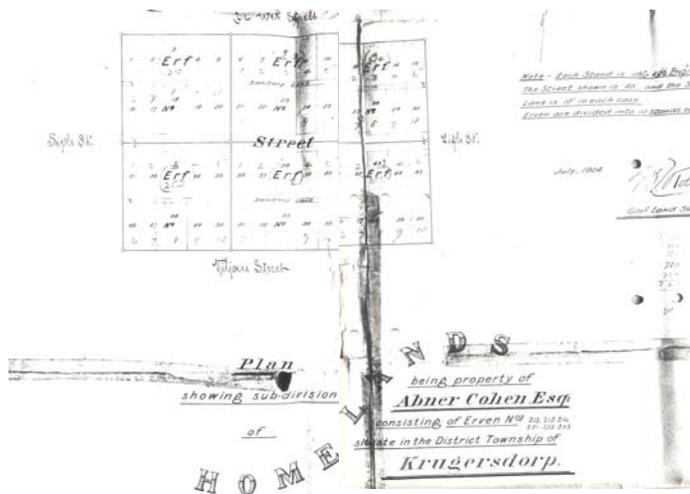
Even more significant as a symbol of reconciliation, the Paardekraal Monument was restored. The sandstone tablets bearing inscriptions 'in the *taal* [were](#) restored in more expensive marble, a poignant gesture of respect not only for the monument but

¹⁴⁶ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 17 October 1903, 'The Court Bar'.

¹⁴⁷ *The Standard, Krugersdorp*, 30 January 1904, 'Paardekraal Restored'.

also the Boer language itself.¹⁴⁷ The Hospital, built in 1911 after the Union, was named, not after Victoria, Albert or King Edward, but after the original farm, Paardekraal, an almost poetic return in full circle to Krugersdorp's hybrid roots.¹⁴⁸ Reconciliation is powerfully conveyed by the trade directory which promoted Krugersdorp to investors and industrialists (**figure 3.12**).

Map Ten: Abner Cohen's 'Homelands' in District Township

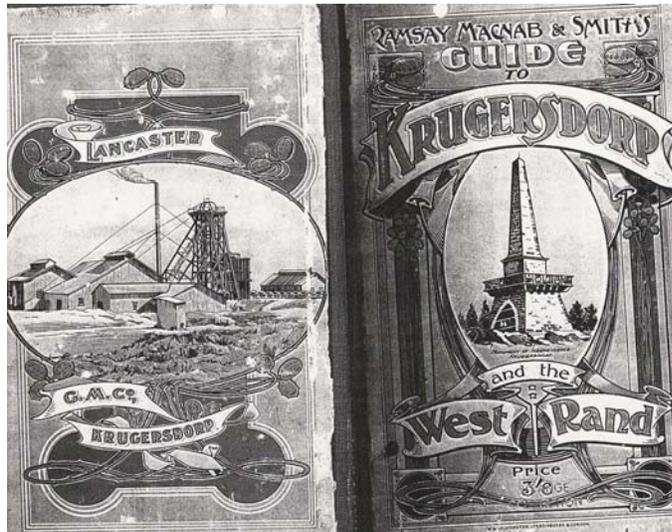


Source: Archives of the Krugersdorp Town Planner's Office, Plan showing the sub-division of 'Homelands' being the property of Abner Cohen Esq; consisting of Erven Nos. 212-4, 251-3, situated in the District Township of Krugersdorp, compiled by the Government Land Surveyor, July 1904.

A new building in the town was significantly named 'Monument Buildings' and was built for 'Stegmann and Tindall', a local law firm that promoted a partnership between 'Dutch' and 'English' lawyers. This was one of the many such partnerships that began to spring up in the town. The building was built in the 'most modern' architectural style, with a forward-looking approach, rather than in the backward-looking 'Republican' and 'Victorian' styles.

¹⁴⁸ *Krugersdorp 110 years*, p. 151.

Figure 3.12: Cover of a Krugersdorp Promotional Booklet



Source: W. Ramsay MacNab and J.W. Smith, *Guide to Krugersdorp and the West Rand*, Johnston Ltd, Edinburgh, n.d., cover page.

Conclusion

This Chapter suggests that the concept of a 'cosmology', usually reserved for traditional, pre-industrial urban spaces, can be borrowed from cultural anthropology and applied to a modern town under particular circumstances of ideological tension. Co-operation between the white residents of the town and its surrounding hinterland characterised the town's 'natural' state given the dynamics of the town's size, mutual economic interdependence and racial identity within a socio-economic system characterised by racial capitalism. Conflict tended to arise mostly from outside the town, through externally imposed ideologies and the effects of the onset of war, of war itself and then its aftermath on the town lying in its path.

Conflict resulted in the growth of ethnic identification, of narrow nationalist

chauvinism that was reflected in the architecture and the distribution of buildings and residences in the town which, in turn, influenced the people resident in town in the form of a 'dialogue' of 'environment-behaviour', between 'flesh' and 'stone'.¹⁴⁹ The terminology of 'cues' and 'mnemonic' devices, of reading the city as a 'text', is drawn from urban semiotics and helps to shed light on the processes involved. The use of an interdisciplinary approach opens up new opportunities for understanding urban spaces and the built environment.

¹⁴⁹ The term is derived from R. Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: the Body and the City in Western Civilization*, Faber and Faber, New York, 1994.