

# A study in purple: The Jacaranda city in postcards<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

White settlement in the Pretoria region started in 1855, and this small market town on the periphery of the British Empire played an increasingly important role in South African politics as the capital of the Transvaal Republic and then as the administrative capital of the entire country after 1910. As the site of significant structures such as the Union Buildings and the Voortrekker Monument, for many years Pretoria symbolised apartheid rule and bureaucracy. Pretoria has therefore generally been seen as a conservative seat of power with strong Afrikaner affiliations. Moreover, although it housed many significant industries such as Iscor, Pretoria never attained the status of industry and commerce usually accorded Johannesburg. This article investigates some of the ways in which Pretoria was represented as both the attractive 'Jacaranda city' and as the seat of monolithic power and government in the pre-1994 years. Postcards are commonly produced for tourists and the so-called leisure class, but also serve to foster civic pride and ownership for the residents of cities. Postcards have helped to construct Pretoria's identity by means of practices of representation than either select and showcase, or ignore and elide certain aspects of the city and its peoples. Despite small shifts in the visual language by which Pretoria has been represented, many post-apartheid postcards perpetuate the clichés and fail to reflect the 'reality' of the city.

**Keywords:** Pretoria; postcards; capital cities; identity; jacaranda tree.

## Introduction

[Pretoria] has to-day much to recommend it. But it is not a Manchester, a Boston, or a Cairo, not even a Johannesburg or a Capetown [*sic*]. It is not a populous manufacturing town, a centre of fashion, an historical health resort, a gold metropolis, or a world-famed spot of singular beauty. Within its boundaries there is not the throb of intense industrialisation, the parade of a nation's gaiety ... no roar of mining batteries and incidental wealth; no mist-wreathed peaks and pine-clad slopes of a Table Mountain. Pretoria is not remarkable for any of these (South Africa Railways and Harbours Publicity 1913:36-37).

1. I would like to thank Mrs L Trollope and Mr B Jansen for generously sharing their Pretoria postcards with me. I also appreciate the comments by the peer reviewers for improving the quality of this article.

Despite the continued validity of the above quotation, Pretoria was nonetheless a significant centre of power from the last decades of the nineteenth century onwards and survived several political regimes. In this article I want to focus on the construction of the City of Pretoria as the administrative capital of South Africa from the early 1900s to the present day by means of its representations on postcards. Capital cities are important symbolic agents for establishing collective national identity and disseminating nationalism to the body politic. Although postcards were initially conceptualised primarily as a cheap, democratic and speedy form of personal communication, they swiftly became far more than that. Soon picture postcards<sup>2</sup> were being used as advertising, pin-ups, propaganda, education, entertainment, souvenirs, personal mementos, to validate trips, to document events, and even to evoke envy or desire in their recipients (Pritchard & Morgan 2005:55; Albers & James 1988:138-139; Meikle 2000:268). It is nonetheless interesting that from the outset, postcards were almost overwhelmingly associated with the 'promotion [of towns and countries], marketing, the image-making of places, national ideologies, and the mechanisms of propaganda and persuasion' (Jokela & Raento 2012:54; Oliver 2012:3).

By looking at a range of postcards published during the span of about a hundred years, it is possible to draw conclusions regarding the manner in which Pretoria has been represented under different political and ideological dispensations. One of the common assumptions that can be tested is that postcards are generally bound up with class and gender lines (Schor 1992:216), but the operation of racial divides also needs to be considered. I start with an overview of postcards, which have been acknowledged as an important type of ephemeral visual culture (Löfgren 1985). Thereafter, I consider the role of Pretoria as a capital city and discuss a sample of postcards that illustrate topics such as institutions of government and culture and the idea of modernity. Lastly, I shall touch on the under-representation of black people in postcards of Pretoria.

## Postcards as visual culture

For about the last two decades, postcard studies (deltiology) has become important in inter-disciplinary research because the 'images are carriers of text and textual correspondence that operate across boundaries of class, gender, nationality, and race, and bring into question notions of authority, originality, and power' (Prochaska & Mendelson 2010:xi). Postcards can be analysed by focussing on their content or visual imagery, the textual information on the front and back, as well as the mechanisms of production, distribution, reception and collection (Prochaska &

<sup>2</sup> The term picture postcards is replaced by the word postcards in this article for the sake of convenience.

Mendelson 2010:xi; Corkery & Bailey 1994:492). For the purposes of this paper, I am using a random sample of 324 postcards of Pretoria, collected over a number of years at flea markets, antique stores, antique fairs, specialist postcard fairs and, more recently, online organisations such as Ebay and Bid or Buy. Although we do not yet know definitively how many different postcards of Pretoria were produced, the sample seems to be representative. There are many duplicates or versions of the same scene, which supports the idea that a relatively restricted lexicon of images was used and re-used. This has always been common practice in the postcard industry. I cross-checked my collection with that in the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History in Pretoria and with an extensive private collection, and was able to eliminate duplications and locate scarce examples. Thus, I am reasonably confident that the sample is representative enough to support a number of general suppositions about how Pretoria was represented.

The first modern postcards were produced in Austria in 1869 and they swiftly became popular as a cheap, accessible and efficient form of communication. For almost twenty years they were produced as plain correspondence cards, with no pictures. The picture postcard became popular in 1889 with the Paris Exhibition and pictures of the Eiffel Tower, establishing an important precedent for the links between postcards, world fairs/expositions, propaganda, and nationalistic self-promotion (Schor 1992:213). The first postcards in South Africa, Transvaal Republican stationery cards, appeared in 1896 (Atkinson 1983:227-228.). According to the South African Post Office in 1899, postcards 'issued by the Government ... are designed to facilitate letter correspondence and provide for the transmission of short communications, either printed or written in pencil or ink', and could be posted to Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Rhodesia, the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State and Natal for one penny and to the United Kingdom for two pennies reply paid (*Longland's Pretoria directory* 1899:9). The discovery of gold on the Rand in 1886 and the resultant influx of photographers, artists and publishing houses keen to document these events led to the public's voracious desire for picture postcards (Norwich 1986:11). Jeremy Foster (2008:213) considers that postcards were the primary form of communication in South Africa from the late nineteenth century to 1914, and more importantly, were virtually the only source of cheap, readily available images.<sup>3</sup> Between about 1902 and 1914 many postcards were published in South Africa, after which most production moved to Europe;<sup>4</sup> this period corresponds with the so-called Golden Age of Postcards from 1898 to 1918.<sup>5</sup>

The earliest postcards in the late nineteenth century featured lithographic images, engravings and line drawings; it only became possible to mass-produce affordable photo-postcards around 1900 when technology improved (Woody 1998:14-16).

3. Despite the fact that postcards usually have to have an extended shelf life, they often featured newsworthy or ephemeral events and in this way visual images achieved currency a century ago. So, for example, a Pretoria postcard from the early twentieth century shows the flooding of Church Square after a heavy fall of rain (see image in Oliver 2012:212) and other postcards depict snow falls in Pretoria; these images would nowadays feature in newspapers or on social media sites.

4. Norwich (1986:11) notes that at the high point of production, there were 357 South African postcard publishers, including major companies such as Sallo Epstein and Co, Braune and Levy and RR Füsslein. A private collector documented 172 publishers of Pretoria postcards (Jansen 2013).

5. A staggering 880 million cards were posted in 1914 in Great Britain alone (Pritchard & Morgan 2005:55).

Various photographic methods such as collotype and photo-lithography replaced lithographic processes, and after 1939, modern chrome postcards were produced in increasing numbers (Norwich 1986:11). Colour postcards were, however, quite rare in South Africa until the 1950s. Early postcards had so-called undivided backs that were intended only for the address of the recipient. The message was written on the front in a designated space with the picture, or even across or around it. From about 1902 onwards, the divided back format was introduced and the message and address shared the back (verso) and the picture was allowed to dominate the front (recto) (Schor 1992:212). These changes in format and techniques are useful when dating postcards, as are time-sensitive details such as architecture, clothing styles, and cars. For the purposes of this article, the focus is on topographical postcards, which includes views of cities, 'urban street scenes and general views' (Hill 1987:7).

## Pretoria as a capital city

Space does not allow an in-depth discussion of the history of cities, nor is that the intended scope of this article. Nonetheless, a few issues are pertinent in attempting to understand the way in which Pretoria has been represented as a seat of national power. Lewis Mumford's (2011 [1937]:94) classic definition of a city as a 'geographic plexus, an economic organization, an institutional process, a theatre of social action, and an aesthetic symbol of collective unity' is still current and encapsulates his idea that a city is primarily based on 'purposive association'. More recently, Göran Therborn (2002:26) has delineated capital cities specifically as the locus of 'political power' that operates through the symbolic language of spatial layout, architecture, public monumentality, and the names conferred on public spaces. But he also notes that most colonial capital cities are not derived from or sited in the historic nation states of Europe; they are usually the product of colonial amalgamation and division relating to modernity and settler culture, and are subject to contestations of power (Therborn 2014). As such, many colonial capital cities are based on ruptural events and had to employ symbolic manifestations of (nationalist) power, mainly invested in the grammar of power located in architecture (Therborn 2014). This is of course not limited to colonial capital cities, but the manner in which this is implemented within a short span of time in comparison with European cities is noteworthy. In Pretoria, for example, the most important government and civic buildings were built within a period of about 25 years and therefore display many visual correspondences.<sup>6</sup>

6. This timeframe is derived from when the Raadsaal was started in 1887 to the completion of the Union Buildings in 1913.

The purpose of this article is not to deliberate on the history of Pretoria, nor do I wish to enter into the contentious debate regarding its name.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, in order to contextualise the discussion it is necessary to outline the main points regarding Pretoria's history, specifically in terms of Therborn's (2014) argument. The Pretoria region was occupied by Southern Transvaal Ndebele from around 1600, and white settlement in the Pretoria region started in the 1830s. By the 1850s, a need was felt in the Transvaal to establish a 'centrally located administrative centre to bring unity to the various Voortrekker groups settled in the area', and the laying out of a new parish and town were ratified by the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) *Volksraad* on 16 November 1855 (Oliver 2012:208; *Lochhead's guide, hand-book and directory of Pretoria* 1913:29).<sup>8</sup> This small market town on the periphery of the British Empire played an important role in South African politics and was proclaimed the capital of the ZAR on 1 May 1860. In 1900, Pretoria became the capital of the Transvaal. After the defeat of the ZAR in the South African War in 1902 and the proclamation of Union in 1910, Pretoria continued to play a significant role as the Executive capital of South Africa.<sup>9</sup> Pretoria's first town council was elected in 1902 and it attained city status on 14 October 1931. It remained the capital of the Transvaal until 1994, when it was incorporated into the new Gauteng province.

7. Therborn's (2002) discussion of renaming cities and of deciding which buildings or monuments to keep during and after changes of regime is particularly pertinent to the South African situation. In this article, I use the 'old' street names such as Church Street to avoid confusion.

8. A large number of postcards showcasing the growth and importance of Pretoria appeared in 1955 with the centenary celebrations.

9. With the Act of Union, three capital cities were established in South Africa: Pretoria is the Executive and Administrative capital, Cape Town is the seat of Parliament and is the Legislative capital, and Bloemfontein is the Judicial capital. This article focusses only the manner in which Pretoria has been constructed as a capital city. Identifying differences in the creation of iconic scenes of Cape Town and Pretoria falls outside the scope of this article, but what is notable is that Pretoria has consistently been represented by its Administrative buildings (Raadzaal, Union Buildings) whereas Cape Town's Parliament Buildings have never become iconic or metonymic to the same extent.

10. An important scientific body in Pretoria is the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), constituted by an Act of Parliament in 1945 as a science council. The CSIR 'undertakes directed and multi-disciplinary research, technological innovation as well as industrial and scientific development to improve the quality of life of the country's people' ([http://www.csir.co.za/about\\_us.html](http://www.csir.co.za/about_us.html)) and has been found on one postcard, probably dating from the 1950s.

Pretoria's origins as an administrative centre and market town coloured the manner in which it developed predominantly as a white city centred on government departments and ministries, the South Africa National Defence Force and the South Africa Police, statutory councils,<sup>10</sup> education, research (Oliver 2012:208; Heydenrych & Swiegers 1999:18) and foreign embassies. It is also important to bear in mind that Pretoria has always been a major centre for the Afrikaner population. Although Pretoria was from the late nineteenth century also an important commercial and industrial centre, notoriously a 'City of Civil Servants and Shopkeepers' (*Lochhead's guide ...* 1913:195), it never achieved the stature of Johannesburg as a centre of mining, trade and finance. I hope to suggest in this article that these facts are reflected in the manner in which Pretoria has been represented in postcards.

## Pretoria postcards

Topographical postcards that depict cities and urban scenes generally fulfil the same functions as prints, drawings, maps, and paintings (Prochaska & Mendelson 2010:xii) in that they established ownership, entitlement and pride. Foster (2003:671-672) adds that South African postcards invariably showed what was considered valuable to early communities – important local buildings, streetscapes, views of

towns, and early industries or activities that were ‘important agents in early settlement’. During the 1920s, depictions of trains, factories and mines became less frequent as the emphasis shifted to landscape images – streets, lakes, parks, gardens, and expansive landscapes (Foster 2003:672), indicating a different kind of place-making.

The iconography of postcards frequently celebrated technological modernity<sup>11</sup> and pride in progress by depicting roads, highways, bridges, dams, industrial sights, manufacturing plants, and factories (Meikle 2000:275). In particular, the city evoked the sublimity of modern life and was typically portrayed to show ‘skylines, bird’s eye views, major streets ... and highly visible landmarks’ (J Jakle in Meikle 2000:276-277). Corkery and Bailey (1994:494) have examined the iconography of Boston postcards and identified heritage; shopping; academe; tourism; metanarratives of science and technology, and government as the most important topics. Although this model cannot simply be applied to Pretoria, it is nonetheless possible to identify a number of historically constructed gazes that became iconic. In his discussion of the tourist gaze, John Urry (1990:3, 12) notes that certain gazes have been constructed and mediated by semiotic codes and signs for tourists. These gazes are usually constructed around stereotypical scenes that capture the so-called essence of a place or view and are themselves ‘visually objectified or captured through photographs, films ... [etc.]’ (Urry 1990:3). According to Bickford-Smith (2009:1763, 1765, 1770), in South Africa these gazes often hinge upon common narratives such as white identity or entitlement.<sup>12</sup> Foster (2008:3-4) notes furthermore that certain gazes achieved cultural currency because they entwined landscape with white identity and helped establish the emerging sense of South African nationhood. Hence Table Mountain and Cape Dutch architecture became iconic Cape views and cultural value was assigned to them by photographers and the public that viewed the images. I believe the same applies to the manner in which Pretoria was ‘visualised’ in the earlier twentieth century; one thing that differentiated Pretoria from Cape Town and rendered it ‘remarkable’ (South Africa Railways and Harbours Publicity 1913:36-37) was its jacarandas.

The first category I have selected is institutions of government, state and civic buildings and monuments, and encompasses the notion of monumentality as a characteristic of the national capital (Therborn 2002:29). The second comprises cultural and leisure spaces, heritage and tourism sites, and seats of learning, and the third showcases science, technology and modernity.<sup>13</sup> The last group is devoted to depictions of black people, mainly as being symbolic of otherness. Not all the important buildings or sites in Pretoria can be referred to in this article so three factors have been taken into consideration: the frequency or conversely scarcity

11. Postcards are potent indices of modernity and stand parallel to the rise of mass transportation and communication systems, growing literacy, tourism, mechanical means of reproduction; and open and more democratic forms of communication (Schor 1992:209, 211).

12. Also see Van Sittert (2003) for the construction of Cape Town’s visual identity around Table Mountain.

13. There are similarities between these categories and Therborn’s (2002:35-36) description of the capital cities of industrialised nationalism in Europe. According to him, nineteenth-century Paris was the model for capital cities that were conceptualised around four components: a set of state buildings that expressed the power of the nation state; the considered layout of urban streets and emphasis on modern architecture such as the railway station; institutions of ‘national high culture’ whose ‘function was national identity’; and lastly ‘statuemanía’ and the ‘monumentalization of urban space’ (Therborn 2002:35-36).

of appearance, and I have given preference to postcards from the earlier twentieth century as they are generally more interesting and were virtually the only source for the visual construction and consumption of Pretoria. If a site is mentioned in the text, this means by default that postcards have been located of it, even though they are not necessarily discussed at length.

1	government, state and civic buildings; monuments: <i>official dimension/body politic and institutions of government</i>	141
2	leisure and cultural spaces, sites of learning, heritage and tourism places (churches, art museums, theatres, schools, universities, libraries, nature): <i>social dimension and institutions of culture</i>	132
3	science, technology and technological progress, street scenes: <i>modernity</i>	42
4	black people: <i>'otherness'</i>	9

## Building the state

The first category deals with Pretoria as the seat of the body politic and the structures that conveyed its official status. This development of Pretoria can be located in one key area, namely Market Square or what is now Church Square (Figure 1). According to Hannes Meiring (1980:9; emphasis in original), '[j]ust as the cities of Europe developed mostly around the market place, Pretoria grew from a winter outspan. Here the first buildings were erected, as if the pioneers wanted to say: *We belonged to this land long before it was ours*'. Church Square was originally the site of commerce and the market, and the Dutch Reformed Church built in 1856 hosted Holy Communion every three months when settlers in their ox wagons converged on the area. Although there has not been a church on the Square since 1902, when it was removed 'so that the Square would now be open' (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:101*),<sup>14</sup> it kept the name. In the late nineteenth century, Church Square was also the prime location for insurance companies (e.g., The Standard Life Assurance Co), attorneys, banks, and the State Library (see *Longlands' Pretoria directory 1899:29-33*).

14. The dismantling of the Dutch Reformed Church was recorded on a Sallo Epstein postcard.

15. Wierda was a Dutch-born architect who came to the ZAR as Government Engineer and Architect in 1887. He transformed the unsophisticated architecture of Pretoria with his formal urban buildings, based on European models such as Paris and Berlin, making it a worthy capital city in a short space of time (*Pretoria 150 jaar 2005:10*).

In keeping with Pretoria's status as the capital of the ZAR, during the late nineteenth century a number of impressive buildings were erected on Church Square that established the authority of the town as the centre of government. The most important was the Renaissance-style Raadsaal designed by Sytze Wierda, erected between 1887 and 1890<sup>15</sup> (Figure 2). The Raadsaal served as the parliament building



of the ZAR and was a 'symbol of the economic progress and the independence of the ZAR'<sup>16</sup> (Meiring 1980:63). The Palace of Justice on the northern side of Church Square, also designed by Wierda in an Italian Renaissance style,<sup>17</sup> was started in 1897 and completed in 1902, and housed the Transvaal Supreme Court (Figure 3). The seats of government shared prime locations on Church Square with symbols of capital in the form of banking houses. The State Bank and Mint of the Transvaal Republic were built in 1892 next to the Post Office on the western side of Church Square (Oliver 2012:212). The impressive Netherlands Bank on the western side of Church Square, designed by WJ de Zwaan and completed in 1897, was a 'symbol of the prosperity that followed upon the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886' (Meiring 1980:65). A Standard Bank building was built on the southern side of Church Square in 1890, next to the Grand Hotel, but both buildings were demolished in the early twentieth century. The new Standard Bank building by William Stucke and Harrison, erected between 1931 and 1934 in a neo-classical art deco style, is still one of the icons of the Square<sup>18</sup> (Figure 4). Although not on Church Square, the 136m high, 36-floor skyscraper for Volkskas Bank (now Absa), completed in 1978, was the tallest building in Pretoria until it was supplanted by the South African Reserve Bank in 1988.<sup>19</sup>

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Pretoria entrepreneur Sammy Marks commissioned the sculptor Anton van Wouw to execute a statue of Paul Kruger for Church Square. Although the granite base was erected, the statue was moved by the British to Prince's Park in 1905 and was replaced by a fountain donated by Marks<sup>20</sup> (Figure 5). The Kruger statue was moved to the outside of the new Herbert Baker railway station building in October 1925 and was only finally erected on Church Square in 1954.<sup>21</sup> A competition for the beautifying and layout of the Square was undertaken in 1910, leading to the existing layout and the removal of the Marks fountain to its current position in the National Zoological Gardens.<sup>22</sup> The New General Post Office on Church Square was the fourth building to be built on the same site, and was designed by William Hawke in 1910 'in the style of the later Renaissance, somewhat freely treated and adapted to South African conditions' (Lochhead's guide ... 1913:141) (Figure 6).

16. Pretoria and the State Treasury benefited from the discovery of gold in the Eastern Transvaal, specifically in the Barberton district in the 1880s – trade expanded and many people flocked to the town. During the last part of the nineteenth century, 'there was no lack of money in the Government chest' (Lochhead's guide ... 1913:43, 59).

17. The use of classical European architecture for official architecture is an important characteristic of many capital cities (Therborn 2002:26-27), also in the colonial context.

18. See Freschi (2009) regarding the manner in which the headquarter buildings of insurance companies in Cape Town reflected contemporary ideas of modernity and *volkskapitalisme* in their architecture and decorative programs. Although companies such as Southern Life, Old Mutual and Norwich Union existed in Pretoria, in the early twentieth century they were usually sited in existing buildings such as the Law Chambers on Church Square (see Lochhead's guide ... 1913:10, 130, 150).

19. See Silverman (2000) for a discussion of Afrikaner nationalism as exemplified by buildings such as these from the 1940s onwards.

20. President Kruger had wanted the statue to stand in Burgers Park but Marks thought Church Square was more appropriate.

21. The various movements of the Marks fountain and Kruger statue make it possible to date postcards of Church Square reasonably accurately.

22. One of the reasons for the removal of the fountain was that it was wasting water obtained from Fountains Valley (Pretoria 150 jaar 2005:25)





FIGURE **N° 01**



'Market Square, Pretoria'. Posted 1906. Publisher Braune and Co.

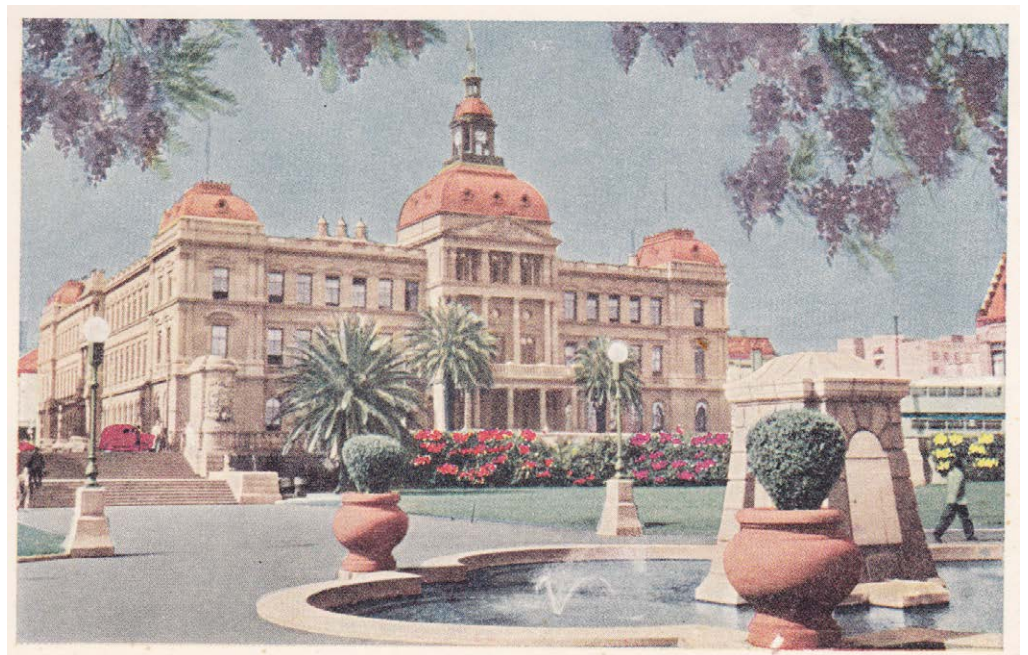


FIGURE **N° 02**



'Raadsaal, Church Square, Pretoria'. After 1935 when double decker busses were introduced in Pretoria. The Capitol Theatre (opened 1931) can just be seen on the extreme right hand of the image behind the bus and was very important as a cultural landmark in Pretoria. Publisher Sparham Ford.



FIGURE **N° 03**



'Church Square looking North, Pretoria'. The Palace of Justice is on the right. Circa early 1920s. Publisher unknown.

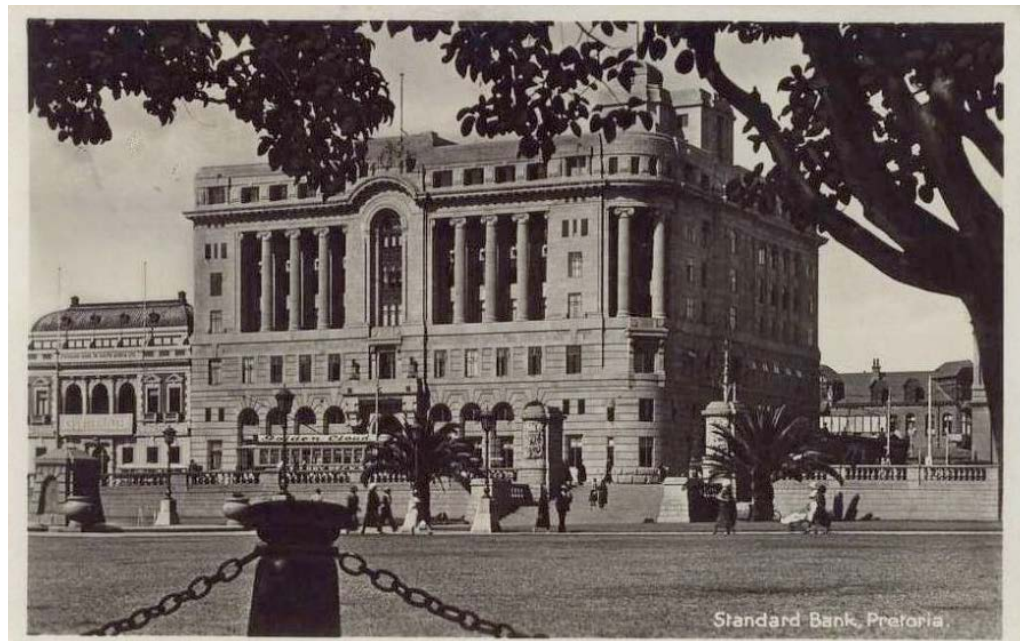


FIGURE **N° 04**



'Standard Bank, Pretoria'. 1936. Publisher unknown.





FIGURE **Nº 05**



'Church Square, Pretoria'. Circa 1906-1910. Publisher Hallis & Co.

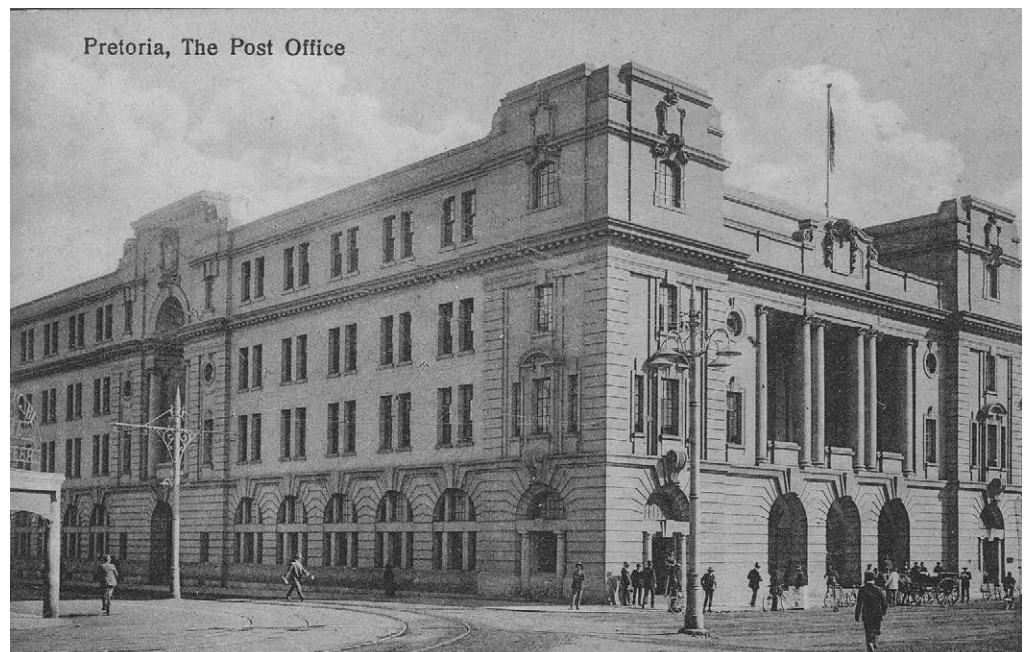


FIGURE **Nº 06**



'Pretoria, the Post Office.' The Café Riche building by F Soff, built in the *Jugendstil* in 1905, can be seen on the far left hand side. After 1910. Publisher John Bacon.

An important civic building not located on Church Square was the so-called new Town Hall in Pretorius Street. It was designed by Ralson of Johannesburg, and the foundation stone was laid in 1905 (Figure 7). This building was replaced by the current City Hall designed by J Lockwood Hall that opened in 1935. Federico Freschi (2006:236) describes this building as an 'eclectic mix of classicism, restrained art deco, and a hint of Lutyens' imperial architecture at New Delhi.' The interior of the City Hall was decorated with murals by the artists JH Amschwitz and PA Hendriks and Freschi (2004:4, 22) notes that the architecture and decorative program reflect the so-called 'fusion' politics of the Smuts-Hertzog coalition of the 1930s. A popular topic for postcards, the City Hall was an important site for public events in Pretoria for many years (Figure 8). Two modernist buildings from the 1960s linked to local government symbolised the optimism of the times: the Transvaal Provincial Administration Building (Figure 9) and the Munitoria building.<sup>23</sup>

The ultimate symbol of Pretoria as a seat of authority and power is the Union Buildings, designed by Herbert Baker and built on Meintjieskop between 1910 and 1913 as the 'majestic seat of government in the administrative capital' (Meiring 1980:87) (Figure 10). The Union Buildings, which *Lochhead's guide* (1913:79) to Pretoria predicted would 'be one of the future sights of Pretoria, which South Africans will travel for miles to view', is indeed one of the most popular scenes in Pretoria and has become iconic of the capital city. Originally a symbol of British imperialism, 'a building of which any city in the Empire might well be proud' (*Lochhead's guide ...* 1913:139), the Union Buildings symbolised the unification of English and Afrikaner people – effectively ignoring black people (Freschi 2006:62, 152). After the victory of the National Party in 1948, the Union Buildings became the arch-symbol of repressive apartheid rule. What is remarkable is how it was seamlessly naturalised as the seat of democratic, non-racial governance post-1994. Numerous postcards over the last hundred years have featured views over Pretoria from the vantage of the Union Buildings, not only documenting the growth of the city, but also employing the panoramic view as a device to suggest power and stability.

23. Munitoria was designed by Burg, Doherty, Bryant and Partners as the municipal headquarters of the then City Council of Pretoria. Munitoria burnt down in 1997 and was imploded in 2013 to make way for a forthcoming new structure, Tshwane House.

24. Brynerton was already depicted as the area for 'civil servants' on postcards dating from the early years of the twentieth century.

25. The first inhabitants of Government House were Lord and Lady Selborne.

Just as popular on postcards post-1910 was Government House in Brynerton,<sup>24</sup> designed by Baker and built between 1902 and 1906 as the official residence of the Governor-General of the Transvaal Colony.<sup>25</sup> After 1961, this became the home of the State President of South Africa. A postcard from that period shows a group of folk dancers on the lawns outside the house; the ominous thunderclouds in the sky now seem prophetic of imminent changes in the country (Figure 11). In 1935, a competition was held for the design of a new official residence of the Prime Minister of South Africa. The competition was won by Gerard Moerdijk and work started in 1936 and was completed in 1940. Although Moerdijk originally designed





FIGURE **Nº 10**



'Union Buildings, Pretoria. Jacarandas in bloom'. Posted 1940. Publisher unknown.

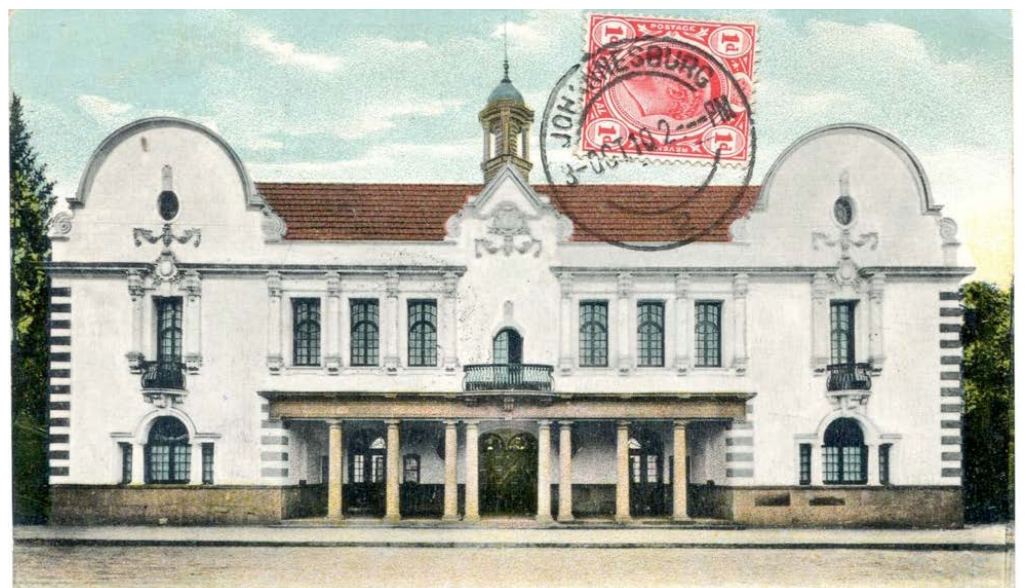


FIGURE **Nº 07**



'Town Hall'. Posted 1910. Publisher unknown.



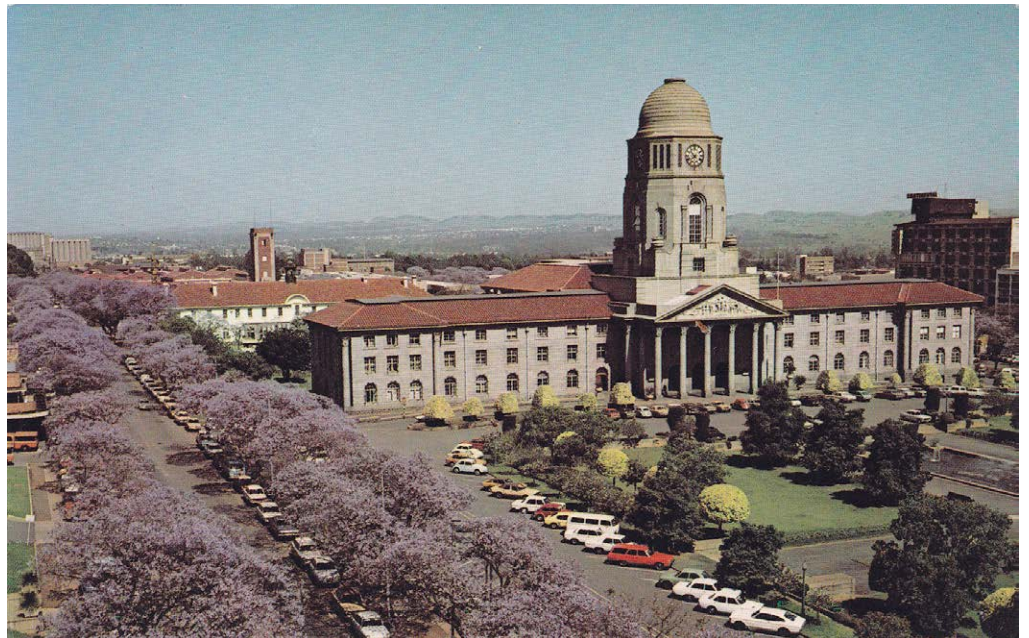


FIGURE **N° 08**



'The City Hall, Pretoria, Transvaal'. 1977. Publisher South African Railways Publicity and Travel Department.



FIGURE **N° 09**



'Church Square, the hub of the Capital City, with its Raadzaal and statue of Paul Kruger beneath the provincial administrative centre [TPA] modern facade'. Circa early 1970s. Art Publishers.





FIGURE N<sup>o</sup> 11



'Folk dancers at the residence of the State President, Pretoria.' Circa early 1960s. Publisher Nasionale Raad vir Volksang en Vokspele.

the house in a Cape-Dutch style, the completed house is in a Cape neo-Georgian style. The house was known as *Libertas* but was renamed *Mahlamba Ndlopfu* by President Nelson Mandela in 1995.

Capital cities need to foster (a) collective identity based on shared memory (Therborn 2002:40), and Pretoria has been no exception. A potent symbol of Afrikaner collective memory was the Great Trek of 1838, and a desire to memorialise this manifested in the conceptualisation of the Voortrekker Monument, inaugurated on 16 December 1949.<sup>26</sup> This monument by Gerard Moerdijk was for many decades a monolithic symbol of hegemonic Afrikanerdom (Figure 12). Despite this, it too survived the change in regime in 1994 and is almost as popular as the Union Buildings as a tourist destination and topic for postcards. The JG Strijdom<sup>27</sup> monument featuring a bust by Coert Steynberg and horses by Danie de Jager, erected in 1972, is a prime example of what Therborn (2002:45) calls the politicisation of urban space (Figure 13). But it was less resilient than the Union Buildings and the Voortrekker Monument – the bust was destroyed when an underground parking garage underneath it collapsed on 31 May 2001, the fortieth anniversary of the proclamation of South Africa as a republic.<sup>28</sup>

26. The architect Gerard Moerdijk was commissioned to design the Monument and the foundation stone was laid on 16 December 1938. The symbolism of the Monument cannot be dealt with here but see Delmont (1993) for more details.

27. Strijdom was Prime Minister of South Africa from 1954 to 1958 and was a staunch supporter of apartheid politics.

28. The Danie de Jager horses survived and were re-installed on the University of Pretoria's sport campus (see chapter three in Schmahmann 2013).



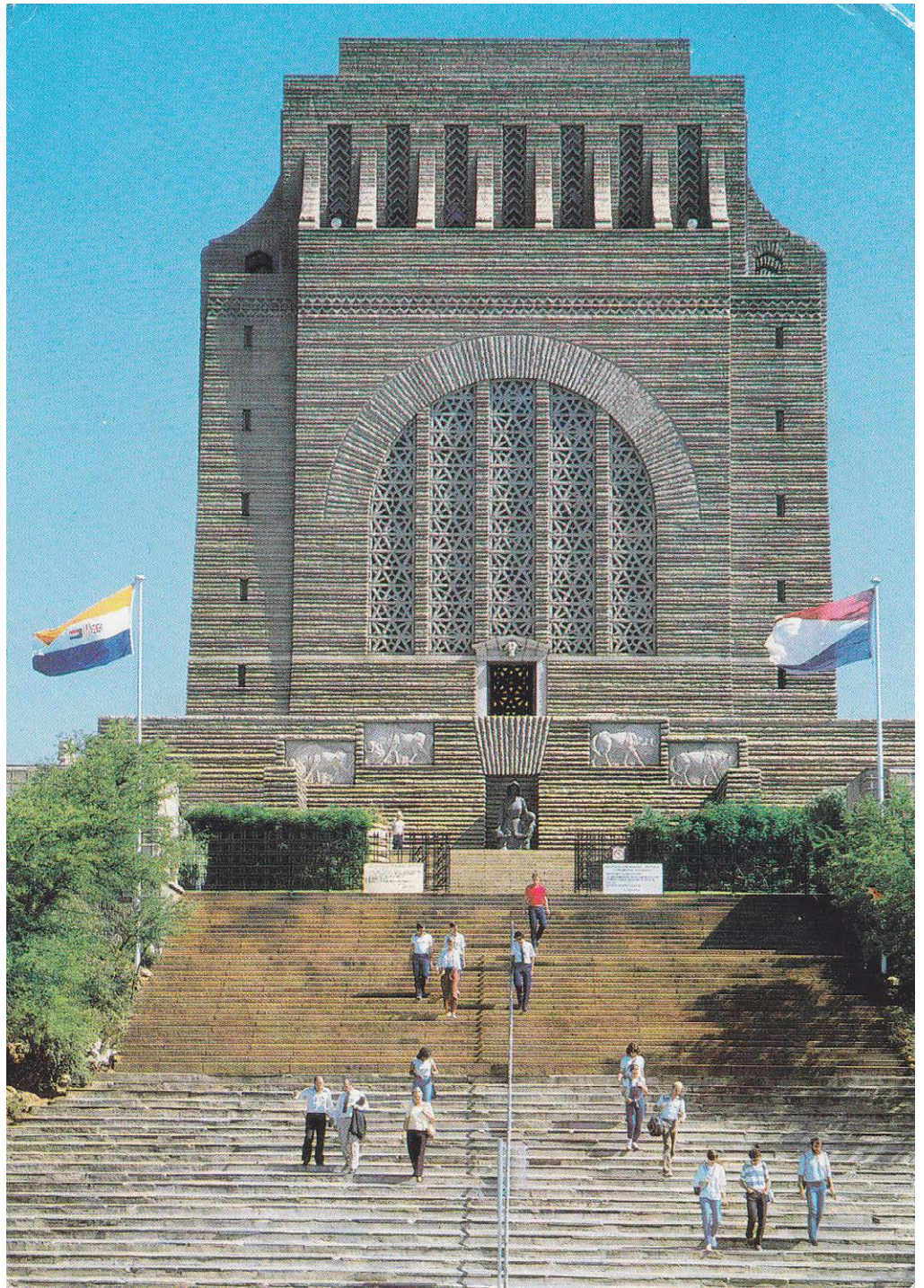


FIGURE **Nº 12**



‘Voortrekker Monument, Pretoria.’ Note the old South African flag on the left. Circa 1970s to early 1980s. Art Publishers.





FIGURE **Nº 13**



29. Some of the earliest postcards in South Africa depict scenes from the South Africa War of 1899-1902, from the vantage point of the contesting forces or by European publishers. Pretoria was occupied by British forces during this time and many of these postcards were satirical and cartoon-like but are not dealt with in this article.

30. Roberts Height was renamed Voortrekkerhoogte in 1939 by the Union Government, and was again renamed Thaba Tshwane in 1998 by the African National Congress Government.

31. When it was built in 1892, the Pretoria Lunatic Asylum or Krankzinnigengesticht te Pretoria was the first institution for the treatment of psychiatric illnesses in the ZAR. It was built to the west of Pretoria on the grounds of the former botanical gardens – the existence of care for the "insane" was indexical of Pretoria's status as a civilised town and it therefore graced a number of early postcards of Pretoria (see figures 14 and 15 in Jansen 2013). The building was designed by W Goetz, based on specifications drawn up by the ZAR government architect Wierda, and additions by the British architect Hine were made in 1907, including the central clock tower.

'The JG Strijdom Memorial, Pretoria'. 1975. Publisher South African Railways Publicity and Travel Department.

Apart from establishing political power, capital cities also need to establish their military might in various ways. Many early postcards of Pretoria show the Artillery Barracks designed by Wierda (1898, later renamed Defence Headquarters) in Potgieter Street.<sup>29</sup> The military base in Pretoria, founded around 1905 by the British Army, was initially called Roberts Heights after Lord Roberts and features on a number of postcards that project the ideal of imperialism.<sup>30</sup> The first hospital in Pretoria was in an old house near the Artillery Barracks in Potgieter Street. The foundation stone of a new 'Volkshospital' was laid by President Kruger on 21 June 1890 and this building was in use until it was replaced in 1932.<sup>31</sup>

## The cultured citizen

The next category of postcards deals more with the social dimension of Pretoria and seeks to portray the town or city as a site of secular culture, heritage, recreation and tourism.<sup>32</sup> As with all pioneer towns in so-called colonial outposts, it was important to establish that they were "civilised" and emulated the aesthetics, values and standards of European cities. Equally important was the notion that the nation 'assumed responsibility for the culture of the population' by means of 'museums, operas and concert halls, libraries, universities and drama theatres' (Therborn 2002:39). Some of the earliest postcards of Pretoria focus on its natural beauty, when its 'profusion of tall trees and flower gardens at once gives the impressions of a town of pleasure' (*Lochhead's guide ...* 1913:151). During the 1880s, Pretoria was known as the 'city of roses' owing to the 'immense hedges of multi-flora wild roses' (*Lochhead's guide ...* 1913:43).<sup>33</sup> When JD Celliers imported two jacaranda seedlings, *Jacaranda Mimosifolio*, from Brazil in 1888 and planted them in the garden of his Sunnyside home, Myrtle Lodge in Celliers Street, the seeds of the future 'jacaranda city' were sown. The main planting was done under the horticulturalist James Clark from 1898 onwards and Frank Walton Jameson after 1909 in an attempt to beautify the town just before Union.<sup>34</sup> By 1939, there were 17,000 trees and this now stands at about 70,000. Jacaranda trees and blossoms proved to be one of the most popular visual icons that was used to signify Pretoria on postcards from the 1920s onwards.<sup>35</sup> (See Figure 16).

An equally regular topic that signified Pretoria's entry into genteel society was the first park, Burgers Park, situated in the wealthy residential area named after Thomas Francois Burgers, President of the ZAR from 1872 to 1877. He set aside land to found a botanical garden on this site in 1874, but owing to a lack of funds this was not carried out (Figure 14). After the discovery of gold on the Rand and in the Eastern Transvaal, leading to a boom of wealth in Pretoria, the park was developed by George Jesse Heys and the botanist James Hunter between 1890 and 1892 (Oliver 2012:214).<sup>36</sup> The Victorian pavilion was erected in 1895 and the octagonal kiosk was built in 1897. Burgers Park became a popular social gathering place 'much in demand for romantic parties, and many elegant receptions were held there' (Meiring 1980:75).<sup>37</sup> The Burgers Park area was also famous as the site of Melrose House, designed for George Heys in 1884 by the London architect WT Vale. The house was completed in 1886 and named Melrose House in 1900 (Oliver 2012:213). Melrose House was the site of the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging on 31 May 1902, which ended the South African War of 1899 to 1902, hence this private home featured on a number of postcards.

32. Although not discussed here, other forms of recreation that were depicted on postcards included rowing, fishing, various sports in Berea Park, horse racing at the track in Sunnyside, the Pretoria Country Club and the Municipal open air swimming baths.

33. It is said that the name was conferred on Pretoria by the poet Jan FE Celliers (Meiring 1980:11). In his novel *Jess* (1887), Rider Haggard also refers to the beauty of Pretoria's roses (Joyce 1981:46)

34. The Town Engineer was nicknamed 'Jacaranda Jim' because of 'his partiality to that handsome tree for street ornamentation' (*Lochhead's guide ...* 1913:79).

35. In 1939, *the Illustrated London News* wrote about Pretoria: 'The beautiful mauve-blue Jacarada-tree, whose superb clouds of blossom are a familiar sight in Australia, Egypt and Brazil in spring ... would enhance the attraction of any city. In Pretoria, because of the wide streets and ideal situation in the heart of the High Veld, the cumulative effect is especially enchanting.'

36. The first botanical garden was originally established where Weskoppies psychiatric Hospital now is. Burgers Park has been declared a South African National Monument.

37. A less public space for romantic trysts was the 'Lover's Drive' near the Apies River in Sunnyside, which featured on a number of early postcards. It is also shown on a composite postcard dating from around 1910 with austere images of the Palace of Justice, the Fountain on Church Square, the Artillery Barracks, and the old Post Office!

Sunnyside, originating in the 1860s just south-west of the centre of Pretoria, was originally common as a picnic spot (Figure 15), but when it was made accessible via a tram route, it developed into a popular suburb (Oliver 2012:214). Many postcards depict picnics in Sunnyside and later on its jacaranda-lined streets and Victorian houses (Figure 16). One of the most popular picnic spots outside Pretoria was the Wonderboom, site of the thousand-year old *Ficus salicifolia* tree. Visitors to Pretoria were urged to 'hire a conveyance, and, with a well-filled hamper, spend an hour or two underneath its shady branches' (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:154*). Equally popular to visit and to depict on postcards was Fountains Valley park, 'Pretoria's spring of life', which was laid out as a public park in 1908 and was reached by train (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:107*) (Figure 17). The Fountains Grove Hotel drew 'pleasure parties and health seekers [who could enjoy] fishing, boating, skittles, fruit garden and picnic grounds' (*Longland's Pretoria directory 1899:94*). In 1913, *Lochhead's guide* (1913:107) noted that there were plans to 'fence in the whole of the Valley, plant trees, make and fix rustic bridges, and generally open up the bush tracks.' After the completion of the Hartbeespoort dam and road over the dam wall in 1923, this area became sought after for water recreation, mainly by the wealthy members of the Transvaal Yacht Club (Figure 18).

Another key space for recreation and education was the Pretoria Zoo, opened on 21 October 1899 'with a few indigenous animals on the banks of the Apies River' (Oliver 2012:215) and proclaimed the official National Zoological Gardens in 1916. Entertainment was provided in the Zoo in the early twentieth century: 'Evening Promenade Concerts' were held during the summer and a band played on Sunday afternoons (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:173*). Postcards of the Zoo depict the exotic animal life as well as people enjoying the leisure opportunities afforded by the space (Figure 19). Next door to the Zoo, the cornerstone of the Old Museum in Boom Street was laid in 1899 and it opened in 1902 (Figure 20). The so-called New Museum and Library, later known as the Transvaal Museum and currently the Ditsong National Museum of Natural History, was founded as the *Staatmuseum* of the ZAR on 1 December 1892. The new museum building, 'severely classic in style' (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:143*) opened in 1910 under the directorship of JWB Gunning as part of the project of Union (Figure 21). Another Pretoria museum that featured frequently on postcards was Paul Kruger's house. This modest home, designed by Tom Claridge, was built on Church Street between 1883 to 1884 for President Kruger and was noteworthy for being one of the first houses in Pretoria to have electricity (1892) and a telephone (Oliver 2012:210). The house became a museum in 1934 and was declared a National Monument in 1936.





FIGURE **Nº 14**



'Burgers Park, Pretoria. (Bare ground 14 years ago).' Circa 1905. Publisher Gilham Studios.

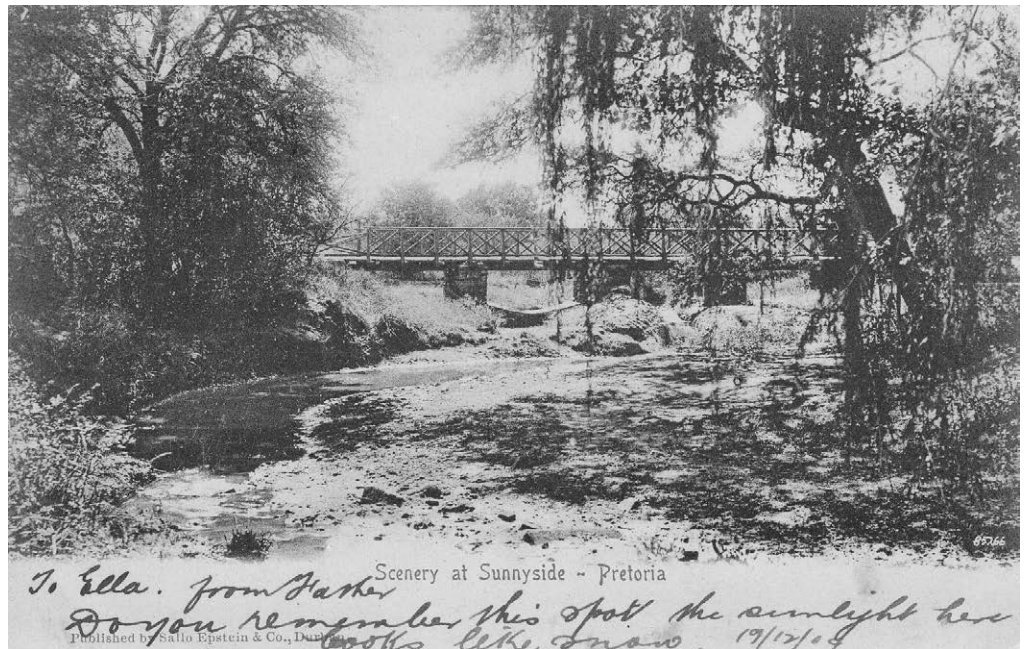


FIGURE **Nº 15**



'Scenery at Sunnyside, Pretoria.' Posted 1904. Publisher Sallo Epstein.





FIGURE **Nº 16**



'Sunnyside, Pretoria. Jacarandas in bloom.' Circa late 1930s. Publisher unknown.



FIGURE **Nº 17**



'Fountains Valley, Pretoria.' 1956. Publisher unknown.

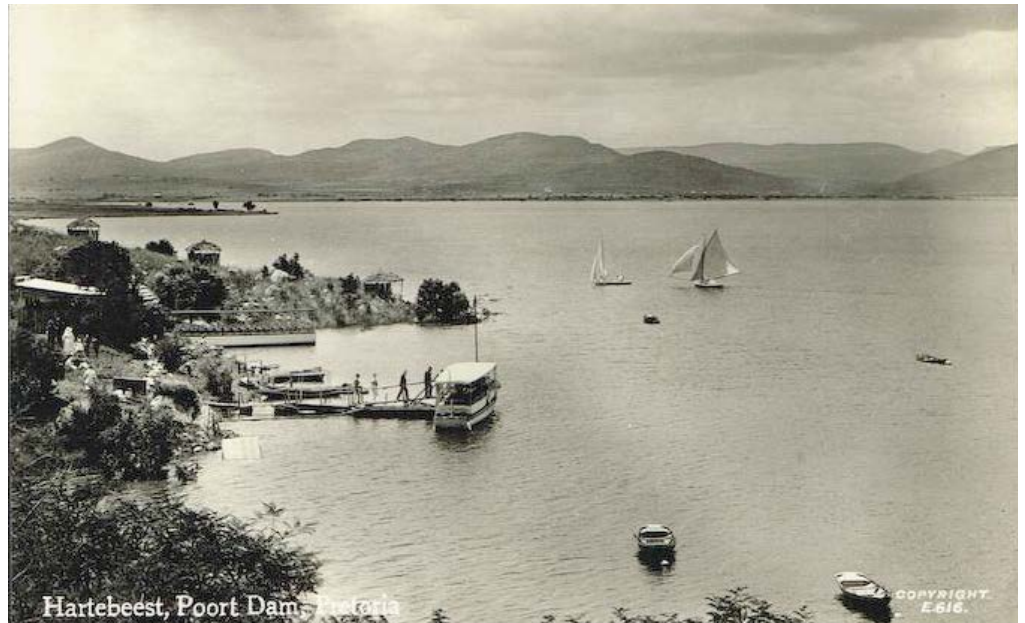


FIGURE **N° 18**



'Hartebeest, Poort Dam [sic], Pretoria.' Circa 1920s. Publisher unknown.

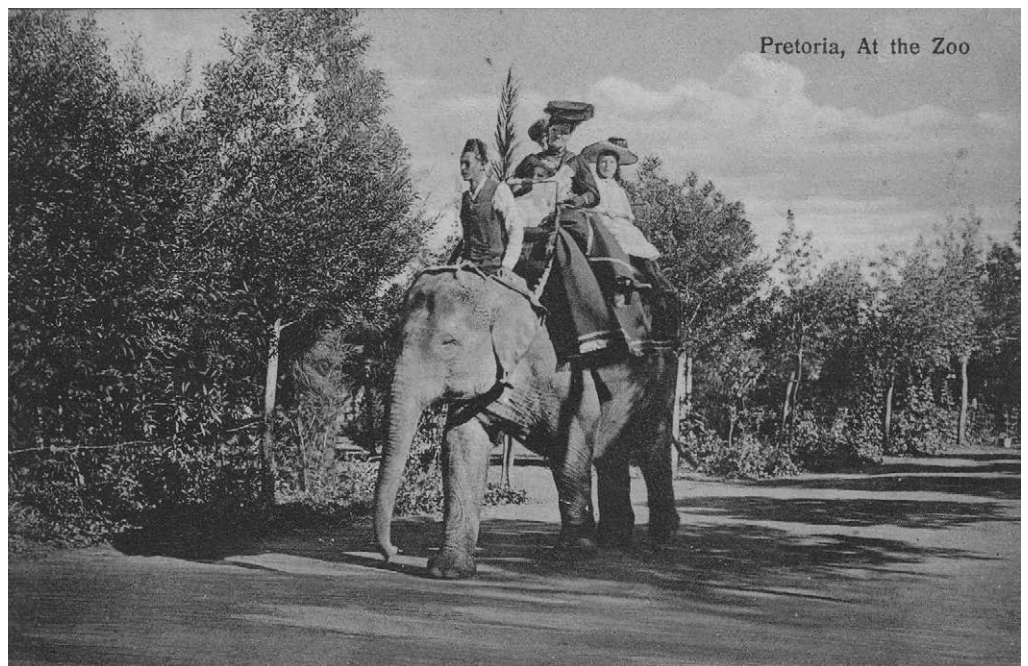


FIGURE **N° 19**



'Pretoria, at the Zoo.' The handler of the Indian elephant seems to be Indian and the one woman on the elephant is also garbed in an exotic manner. Circa after 1910. Publisher John Bacon.





FIGURE **Nº 20**



'Zoological Garden & Museum Pretoria.' Before 1910. Publisher unknown.



FIGURE **Nº 21**



'Pretoria, The New Museum.' Circa after 1910. Publisher John Bacon.



FIGURE **N° 22**



‘The Opera House Pretoria.’ Circa 1908. Publisher Sallo Epstein.

Pretoria’s first Opera House in Schoeman Street, designed by McIntosh and Moffat, opened in February 1904 and was soon ‘the centre of a refined cultural life’ and hosted international stars such as Gallicurci and Pavlova (Meiring 1980:51) (Figure 22). The South African State Theatre, completed in 1981, quickly became a landmark in Church Street. Another cultural landmark that was frequently depicted on postcards was Jess’ Cottage, immortalised in the eponymous novel (1887) by Rider Haggard. He built this house in Railway Street in the late 1870s and named it ‘The Palatial’.<sup>38</sup> The Caledonian Hall and the Pretoria Club, both in Vermeulen Street, were also important spaces for social gatherings and appeared on early postcards.

Another important criterion for a modern city is its seats of knowledge and learning. The project of building educational institutions was taken seriously; according to *Lochhead’s guide* (1913:119) to Pretoria, ‘no one can hesitate to take up his abode in Pretoria on the ground that his children will be unable to find sound learning.’ Thus, we find that early schools in Pretoria, as well as its first university, are recorded on many postcards. In the 1880s, the ZAR Government built a *Staatsmodelschool* on the corner of Skinner and van der Walt Streets and a *Staatsmeisjesschool* (State Girls’ School) on Visagie Street, designed by Wierda. The Pretoria High School for

38. Besides being depicted on many postcards, Jess’ Cottage was also the subject of an oil painting and a lino cut by the artist JH Pierneef.



FIGURE **Nº 23**



'Girl's [sic] High School Pretoria.' Posted 1906. Publisher Sallo Epstein.

Girls was started by Lord Milner in 1902 as part of his efforts to anglicise the Transvaal and originally occupied the *Staatsmeisjesschool* building (Figure 23). The school then moved to its current Park Street location on 28 July 1915. The Pretoria High School for Boys and the Normal College were other important educational landmarks in early twentieth-century Pretoria that appeared on postcards, as did the Loretto Convent School in Skinner Street, founded in 1878.

The Transvaal University College (now the University of Pretoria), the 'chief educational institution in the Administrative Capital' (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:119*), opened its doors in 1908 in a house called Kya Rosa in Skinner Street. The campus soon moved to larger premises to the east of Sunnyside. The first building that features on postcards is the Old Arts building, designed by P Eagle in 'a free Byzantine' style, and which was first used in October 1911 (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:120-121*). Although the University of South Africa had existed since 1893 in various incarnations, it assumed its current role as a distance education university in 1946, with quarters in central Pretoria. Unisa moved to the iconic new Brian Sandrock buildings in Muckleneuk in 1972, forming a popular topic for postcards that celebrated the monumentalism of this structure and that continue to document its expanding imprint on the hill<sup>39</sup> (Figure 24).

39. Pretoria is considered to be important today for its intellectual capital – in the mid-1980s, a survey found that 20% of people with doctoral degrees in South Africa lived in Pretoria (Pretoria 150 jaar 2005:28).



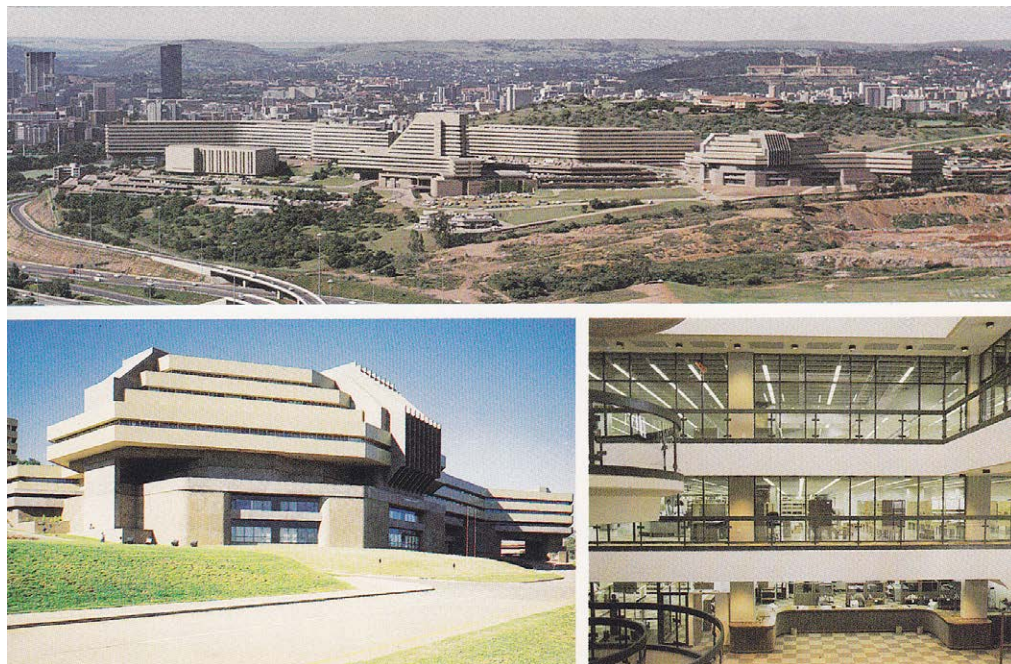


FIGURE **N° 24**



‘Unisa, campus in Pretoria.’ Note the Volkskas/Absa and Reserve Bank buildings on the left hand side and the Union Buildings in the background right. Circa 1990s. Publisher Unisa.

## The modern state

Just as important as it was to demonstrate that Pretoria was a centre of genteel society and cultural life, it was equally imperative to stress its entrance into modernity and progress from the late nineteenth century onwards. Increasingly, the quaint images of ox wagons and bicycles were supplanted by vibrant street scenes and images of trains, trams, busses and motorcars<sup>40</sup> (Figure 25). As in many other places in South Africa, the railway line was crucial for the development of Pretoria as a modern capital city. This was established with the railway link between Johannesburg and Pretoria in 1890 (*Lochhead’s guide ... 1913:67*). The first station building for the *Nederlandsche-Zuid-Afrikaansche Spoorwegmaatschappij* (NZASM), which had been founded in 1887, was built in 1892, and the highly strategic line that linked Pretoria to Delagoa Bay (Maputo) was completed in 1894. The new railway station building was designed by Herbert Baker shortly before Union and opened in October 1912. The first electric tram on tracks, which replaced the horse-drawn trams that had run across the city from 1896,<sup>41</sup> ran in November 1910.<sup>42</sup> By 1913, there were ‘thirteen and a half miles of tramway track’ that linked Church Square to Arcadia, Sunnyside,

40. The first car in South Africa, a Benz, was bought by Mr JP Hess of Pretoria in 1897; both postcards and motor cars served as important markers of technological progress and modernity (Van Eeden 2012).

41. The Pretoria Tramway Company started with eight trams and 50 horses.

42. The extant Tram Shed, now a shopping centre, was built in 1912.





FIGURE **Nº 25**



'Pretoria, Church Street East.' Van Schaik's book store is on the left hand side. Johannes Lambertus van Schaik opened his first small shop in Church Street in 1914. Circa 1915. Publisher John Bacon.

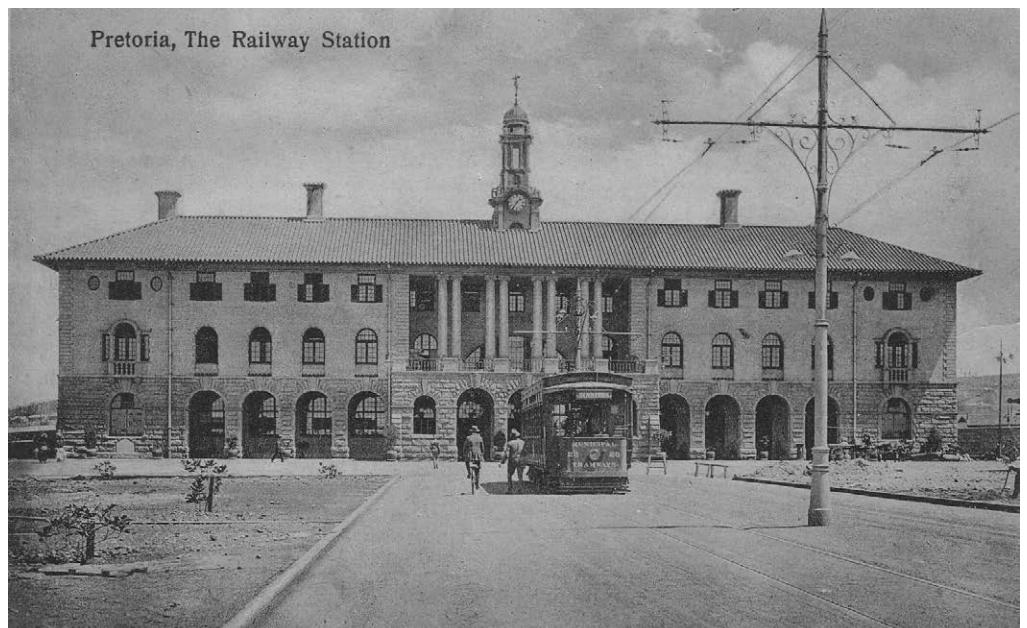


FIGURE **Nº 26**



'Pretoria, The Railway Station.' Note the tram in the foreground. After 1912. Publisher John Bacon.

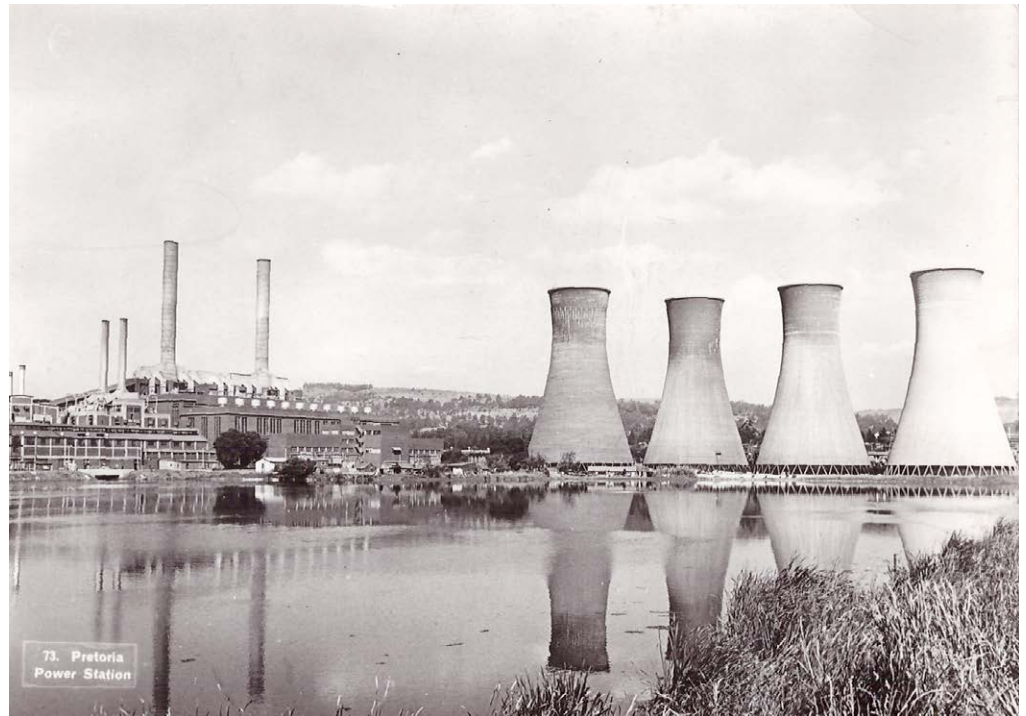


FIGURE **Nº 27**



'Pretoria power station.' Date unknown. Publisher unknown.

the railway station, the zoo, the 'West End' and the hospital (*Lochhead's guide ... 21-22, 79*) (Figure 26). In 1935, trams were supplemented by double decker buses, and the last tram in Pretoria ran in August 1939 (Pretoria tram line find 2014). These details are particularly useful when dating postcards that have no other form of date on them.

The first electric power station in Pretoria, which provided power in 1892, was a key signifier of a town's entry into modernity, as were the subsequent works in Pretoria West (Figure 27). Many early industries in Pretoria centred on the building trade and played a key role in the construction of Pretoria's public buildings. These include the Pretoria Portland Cement Company (PPC), founded in 1892 (Figure 28), the Groenkloof Brick Works, the Western Brick Works, and the Pretoria Brass and Iron Foundry (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:195-206*). Pretoria's Castle Brewery was opened 'just after the [South African] War' and was a major employer in the town (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:207*) (Figure 29).<sup>43</sup> Although Pretoria never attained the romance of capital linked with Johannesburg's gold rush, it was associated closely with the Premier Mine, established in 1902 in Cullinan, about 38km from Pretoria (Figure 30). This underground mine rose to prominence in 1905 when the Cullinan Diamond was discovered there.<sup>44</sup>

43. Although the Eerste Fabriek Hatherly Distillery Ltd, founded by the entrepreneur Alois Nelmapius in 1883 to the east of Pretoria was one of the earliest industrial developments in which Sammy Marks was involved, thus far only a watercolour illustration of it has been located but no postcards.

44. A special train was organised for 750 citizens from Pretoria to visit Johannesburg to see the Cullinan diamond (*Lochhead's guide ... 1913:99*).





FIGURE **N° 28**



'PP Cement.' Date unknown. Publisher unknown.



FIGURE **N° 29**



'The Castle Brewery Pretoria.' Circa 1910. Publisher unknown.

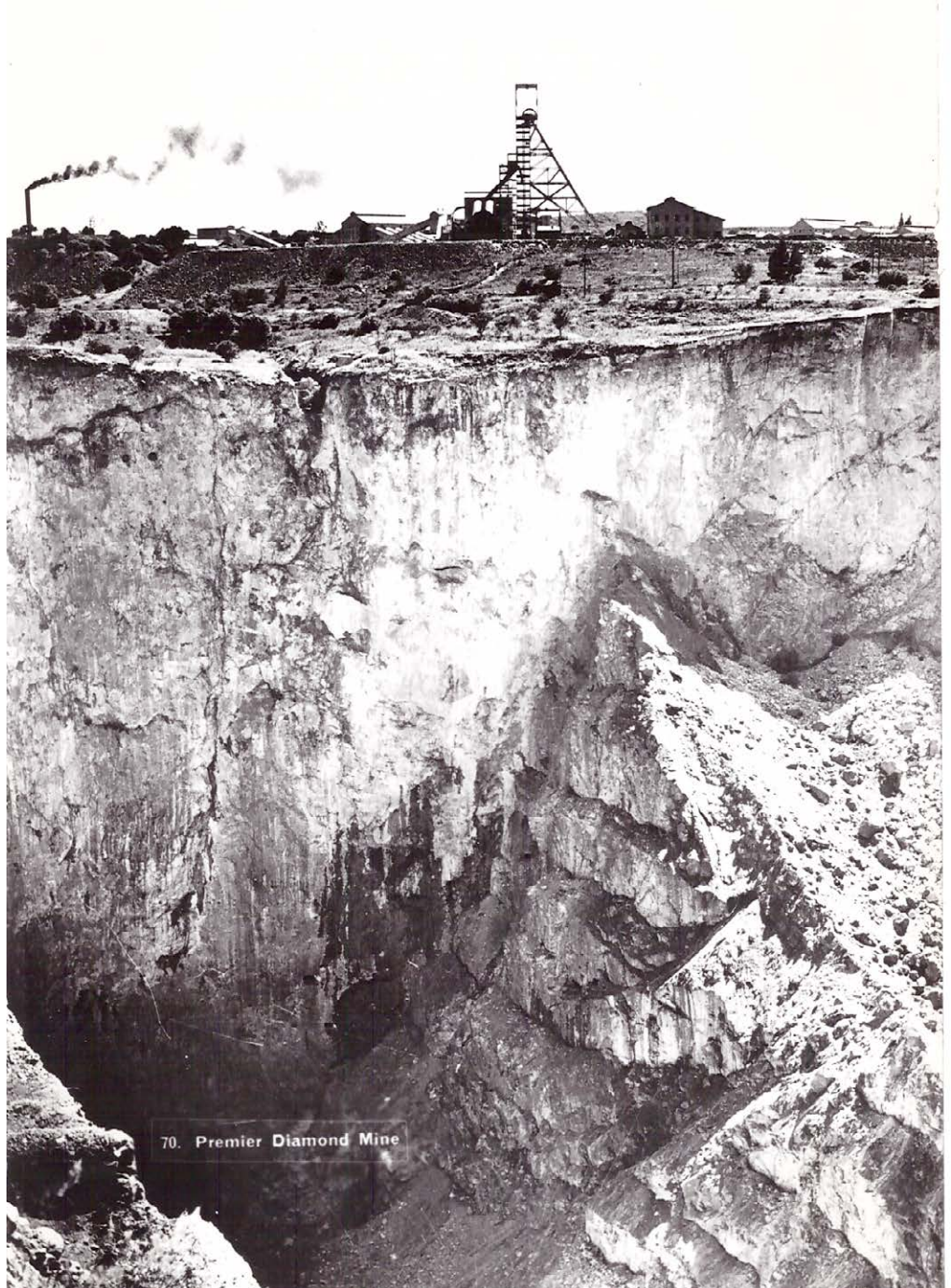


FIGURE **Nº 30**



'Premier diamond mine.' Date unknown. Publisher unknown.



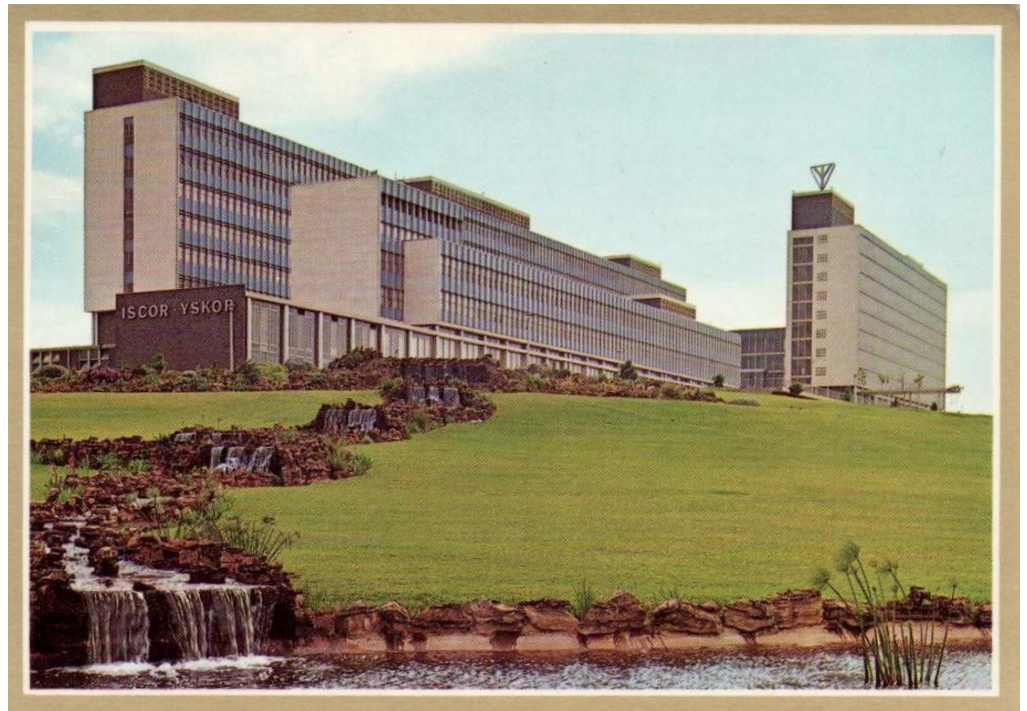


FIGURE **Nº 31**



Iscor Headquarter buildings, Pretoria. Circa mid-1960s. Publisher unknown.

The main symbol of Pretoria's status as an industrial city was Iscor, established as a state company in terms of the Iron and Steel Industry Act, No. 11 of 1928, not only to produce iron and steel, but also to employ black and white unskilled labourers.<sup>45</sup> The Pretoria plant opened in 1934 and was one of the main employers in Pretoria during the 1950s and 1960s. It experienced its high point in the late 1970s; the works themselves are often depicted in dramatic night time scenes, whereas the impressive International Style Headquarter buildings designed by D Ross in 1962 are shown in profile to enhance their stature (Figure 31).

## The other Pretoria

The propaganda machine of apartheid ignored the majority of the population – according to Pieterse (1992:107), 'picture postcards show the skyscrapers and the prosperity of Johannesburg and Pretoria, but not those who built them'. It is therefore not surprising that the main pictorial absences are related to so-called black areas such as Marabastad, Schoolplaats, Bantule, Lady Selborne, Atteridgeville, and

<sup>45</sup> *Lochhead's guide* (1913:195) noted that the Pretoria district was rich in iron ore 'but up to the present little or nothing has been done to develop these resources.'

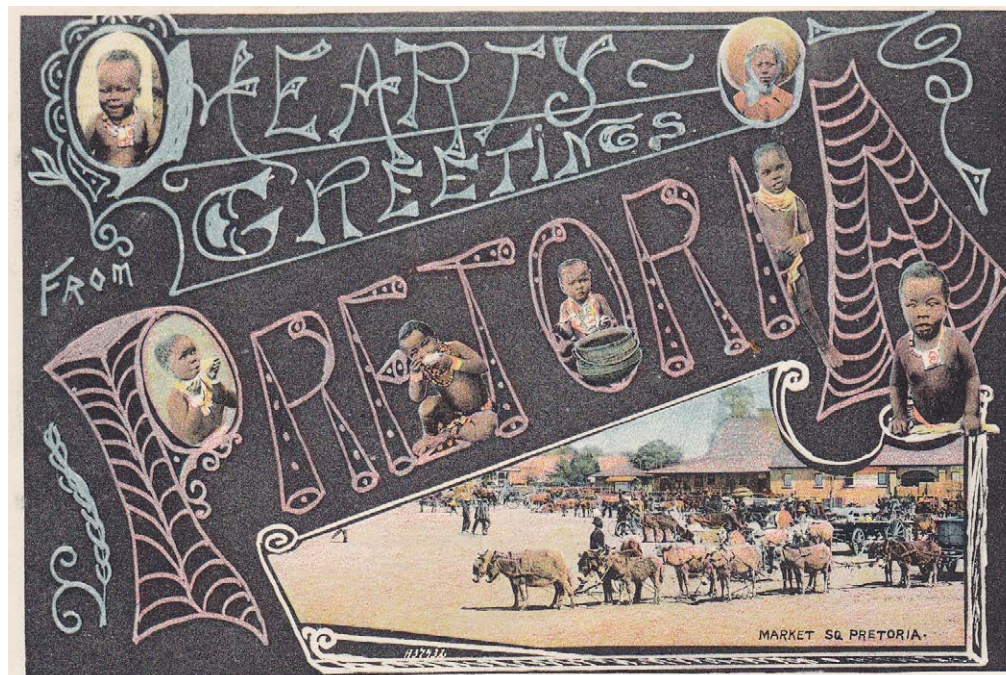


FIGURE N° 32



'Hearty greetings from Pretoria.' Circa 1906. Publisher Sallo Epstein.

46. In comparison with Johannesburg, for example, where postcards of Soweto from the apartheid years are indeed found. An Art Publishers postcard, probably from the early 1970s, aptly illustrates the apartheid ideal of separate development: 'the Orlando sheltered workshops, teachers training college, housing schemes, swimming pool and crèches etc.' GaRankuwa was proclaimed a township of Pretoria by Proclamation 448 of 1965 and initially accommodated people who had been forcibly removed from areas such as Lady Selborne. Postcards of 'GaRankuwa Lokasie' show the grid-like arrangement of apartheid housing.

47. This photograph of Market Square is the same as the one in Figure 1.

48. The Mapoch Ndebele Community was displaced from Pretoria in the early 1950s and moved to a farm at Klipgat in 1953 where they erected the new village that is shown on postcards.

49. Visual marginalisation was not limited to the depiction of black people - although there are postcards of the Pretoria Synagogue, none have been found yet of the Mosque or Hindu temple.

50. See also Therborn (2002:35) on how

Mamelodi.<sup>46</sup> The representation of black people is virtually absent in postcards of Pretoria – when they do appear, it is mainly to stress their *otherness*. An early postcard combines a salutation in an informal graphic style with six small vignettes of black children, superimposed on a photograph of Market Square (Figure 32).<sup>47</sup> A postcard of a so-called native laundry, dated 1908, shows native labourers and situates them as the underclass (Figure 33). Most of the representations of black people depict them in villages *near* Pretoria – for example, 'Basuto village near Pretoria' (1907) and various iterations of 'Mapoch/Ndebele village near Pretoria', but do not show them as an integral part of the town<sup>48</sup> (Figure 34). The colourfulness of Ndebele mural decorations is stressed and the people are depicted as benign and non-threatening.<sup>49</sup> An interesting example of the manner in which black people are marginalised is found in the postcard of 'Folk dancing near Pretoria' where they are shown merely as servants for the white performers (Figure 35).





FIGURE **Nº 33**



'Native laundry, Pretoria.' An informal laundry at Steenhoven Spruit, on the eastern boundary of Marabastad. Posted 1908. Publisher Braune & Levy.



FIGURE **Nº 34**



'Ndebele/Mapoch. Visitors to this unique African village near Pretoria, can see these unusual painted homes – and the colourful attire of the tribe.' Circa 1960s. Publisher unknown.



FIGURE **Nº 35**



‘Folkdancing near Pretoria, Transvaal.’ Circa 1950s. Publisher South African Tourist Corporation.

## Conclusion

It is clear that postcards reflect dominant discourses and are ‘inflected by a politics of class, civic, and national pride ... [and are] highly selective in [their] representation of the city’ (Schor 1992:219). Schor (1992:222) comments in her discussion of postcards of Paris that commercial and leisure activities are highlighted and that slums, poverty and references to work are elided, situating the city as the domain of the triumphant middle class.<sup>50</sup> The postcard of a ‘Pretoria home’, for example, is biased towards the upper-middle classes and seems to suggest that all people in Pretoria live in similar places (Figure 36). Based on the sample discussed in this article, it can be confirmed that postcards of Pretoria operated along class and racial lines, but gender seems to be a less compelling factor, possibly because the topics include relatively few figures. Nonetheless, taking into consideration the argument that cities are gendered as male and the similar association between modernity and masculinity, there seem to be many images that celebrate so-called masculine values such as “progress” and “modernity”. As a consequence of this, the postcards that include the most human figures are those that are dedicated to

class was always embedded in European cities.



leisure and entertainment in more “feminised” social spaces.<sup>51</sup> Some leisure activities have been gendered historically, so scenes of fishing in the Crocodile River near Pretoria show males in the landscape, whereas the folk dancing scenes focus on the female dancers.

What is perhaps unexpected is that the manner in which Pretoria has been represented has seemingly changed very little since the early 1900s. Whether as the seat of the ZAR, the British imperial government and subsequent Union, the embodiment of monolithic apartheid power, or as the symbol of democracy post-1994, the same visual icons are re-used and the same rhetoric of power and authority is dominant. Under the ZAR, the Transvaal government had to quickly and visually demonstrate its authority through an impressive architecture of power, reminiscent of Europe. In the post-South African War period, the rebuilding of the country was symbolised by civic architecture such as the Town Hall and the new layout of Church Square. This culminated in the period of Union government with large-scale projects such as the New Museum, the City Hall, the Station, and of course the Union Buildings, which served to symbolise cooperation between whites. Under the apartheid government, the power of white people was further entrenched in a number of iconic buildings such as the Voortrekker Monument and the triumphalism of corporate buildings.

But the heady days of apartheid rule crumbled like the Strijdom monument, and a post-apartheid dispensation seamlessly assimilated the old symbols of power and privilege. What is interesting in the context of this article is how the same visual images continue to be recycled on postcards during the last hundred years; governments and flags may change, but postcards present an unchanging spectacle of jacaranda trees, the Union Buildings, the Voortrekker Monument, and imposing buildings as indices of “civilisation” (Figures 37, 38, 39). In terms of the thematic categories discussed in this article, the variety of postcards of Pretoria has narrowed substantially in the last hundred years. This can of course be ascribed to a number of factors, including the fact that postcards ceased to be the sole source of visual images. But it is noteworthy that the category that continues to flourish is the one that mainly deals with the representation and validation of authority. In common with other capital cities, Pretoria has increasingly had to market itself as an attractive (and “civilised”) tourist destination (Thorborn 2014), hence the use of clichéd images such as jacaranda trees. This has unfortunately produced bland and predictable visual imagery that fails to engage with the real diversity and rich complexity of the multicultural capital city.<sup>52</sup>

51. This assumption is based on an informal content analysis of the sample.

52. Certainly there have been some changes in how Pretoria has been represented but they do not seem to be as significant as those related to the representation of places such as Cape Town, Durban or Johannesburg. Most of the other major cities in South Africa developed post-1994 around the market imperatives of capitalism to become post-industrial cities and recuperated the apartheid past for touristic consumption to a much greater extent than Pretoria (see Bickford-Smith 2009). It is also clear that the activities that are offered in many Pretoria places have changed (such as the State Theatre), without needing to modify the building.





FIGURE **Nº 36**



'A Pretoria home.' Circa 1960s. Publisher South African Railways Publicity & Travel Department.

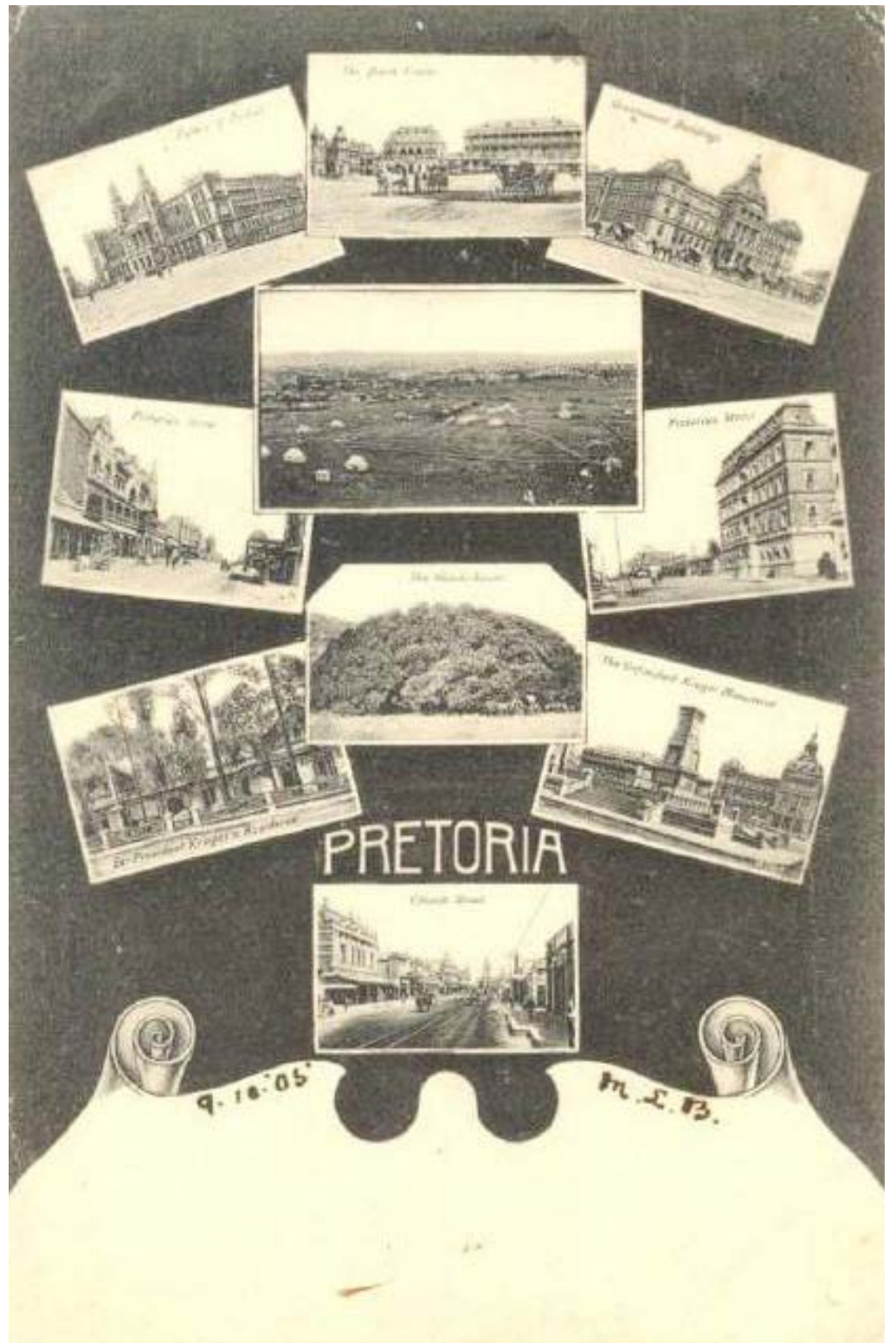


FIGURE **Nº 37**



'Pretoria'. Composite view. Dated 1905. Shows the important government buildings (predating the Union Buildings), Church Street and Church Square, the Wonderboom, President Kruger's residence, and a panorama over the young town. Publisher unknown.

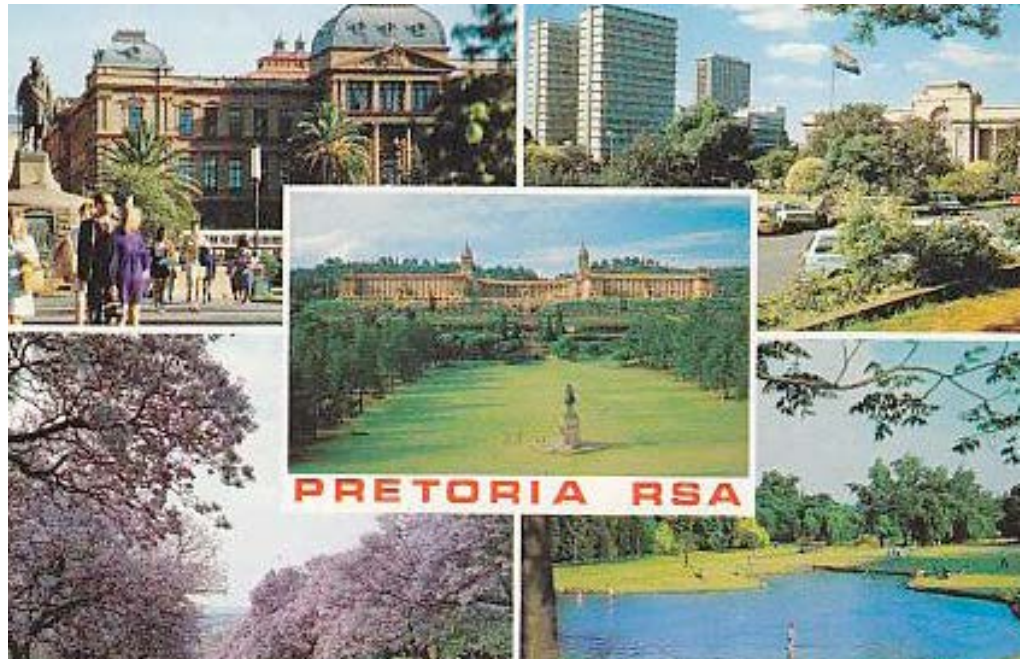


FIGURE **Nº 38**



'Pretoria RSA.' Composite view. Pre-1994. Shows the Raadsaal and Church Square, the Transvaal Museum, the Union Buildings, a public park, and jacarandas. Note the old South African flag outside the Museum. Publisher unknown.



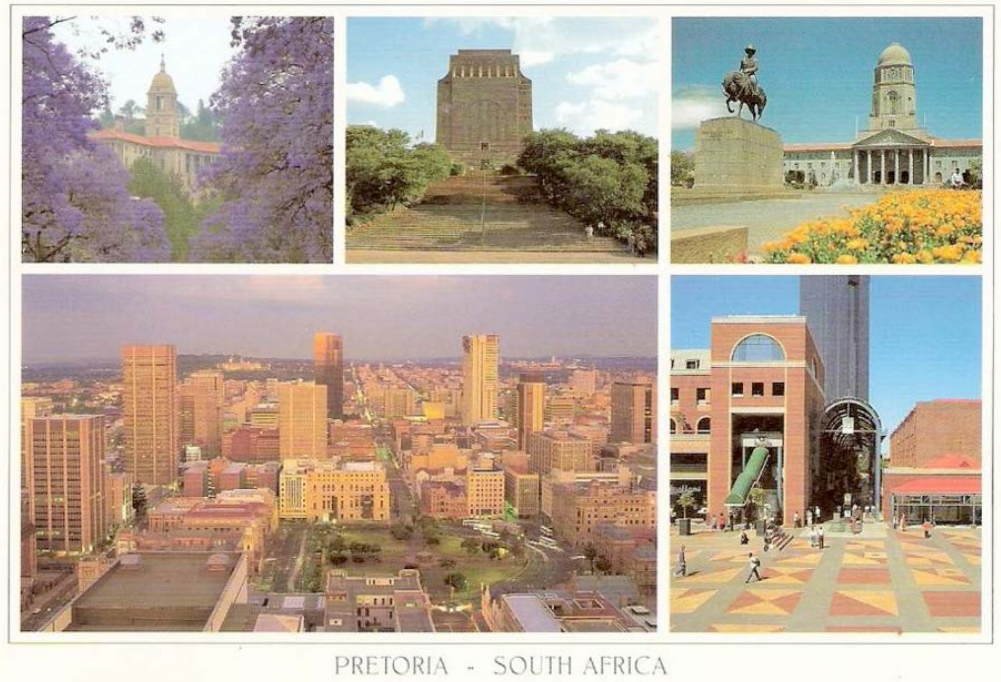


FIGURE **Nº 39**



‘Pretoria – South Africa.’ Composite view, after 1994. Shows the Union Buildings, Voortrekker Monument, City Hall, cityscape including Absa and Reserve Bank buildings, and a new shopping precinct, the Sammy Marks Square, which opened in Church Street in late 1993. Art Publishers.

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