

From *Breaker Morant* to *Verraiers*:

Ideology within filmic representations of the Anglo-Boer War

By Alexander Holt and Anna-Marie Jansen van Vuuren

Abstract

The Australian produced *Breaker Morant* (1980) and the South African film *Verraiers* [Traitors] (2012) are based on apparently true and similar incidents that occurred on the opposing sides during the Anglo-Boer War. In *Breaker Morant*, Australian soldiers under British command are arrested and stand trial for murdering Boer prisoners and a civilian. In *Verraiers* a prominent field cornet and his sons are put on trial for treason. Both films constitute strong anti-war statements whilst communicating the continuing significance of the Anglo-Boer War to the national histories of their respective countries of origin, but in diverse ways and with different objectives. *Breaker Morant* was profitable at the time of its release, continues to be regularly screened on television, and is regarded as a film classic seminal to the Australian New Wave. *Verraiers* was produced in a post-1994 South Africa and differs significantly from earlier Anglo-Boer War films. The paper gives a brief analysis of *Breaker Morant* and explains its success (in terms of the contextual social dynamics that justified its production) as contrast to an in-depth analysis of the more complex historical and contextual social forces to which *Verraiers* is a response, and which account for its failure at the box office despite the existential importance its message for the future of South Africa.

Paper / notes

“...You fasten all the triggers
For the others to fire
Then you set back and watch
As the death count gets higher...”
(*Masters of War*, Bob Dylan)

One can make a general observation that films about the Anglo-Boer War produced in South Africa, especially those made after 1948 used an idealised heroic narrative as an ideological tool for nation building (Jansen van Vuuren, 2015). Secondly, these films conformed to a prevailing hegemony of a unified nation. The pro-British regime of Jan Smuts constructed this narrative after the Anglo-Boer War “to serve a biased

function in maintenance of state power” (Britz, 2017). Regardless of the criticism raised against them as “ideological products of Afrikaner nationalism”, these South African films are in certain respects conditioned or ideological statements of truth. The purpose of this paper is to throw some new light on this discourse by contrasting two Anglo-Boer War feature films, namely: the seemingly anti-imperialist Australian produced, *Breaker Morant* (Beresford, 1980) and the so-called anti-nationalist South African film, *Verraaiers* (Traitors, Eilers 2012).

Breaker Morant's characters were designed to resemble the actual historical personages quite closely, such as the prosecutor, Captain Alfred Taylor (portrayed by John Waters). It is an exemplary example of an emergent national cinema through its ability to speak simultaneously to domestic and international audiences. It was profitable at the time of its release, continues to be regularly screened on television throughout the world, and is regarded as a film classic seminal to the Australian New Wave (Gardner, 1981).ⁱ *Verraaiers* was made post the 1994 re-constitution of South Africa and differs significantly from prior Afrikaans Anglo-Boer War films, most notably the 1931 short film by Joseph Albrecht, *Sarie Marais*. *Verraaiers* was mostly made by Afrikaans filmmakersⁱⁱ and can be read as having been constructed from the point of view of the descendants of the nation that was defeated in the Anglo-Boer War. Its theme underwrites a mature and circumspect criticism of war.

Given the success of *Breaker Morant* with Australian audiences, *Verraaiers*'s local box office failure due to indifference from South African audiences (and lack of interest from international producers) might seem surprising (Jansen van Vuuren, 2015). A reason for this might be the film's portrayal of a tragic hero protagonist, a so-called traitor, whilst Afrikaans target audiences would have preferred a willing hero to identify with. However giving too much primacy to story-telling archetypes may underestimate cinema audiences and encourage formulaic and stereotypical concepts of story-telling. An explanation of the success of *Breaker Morant* and the failure of *Verraaiers* should be sought in the difference between film industries, the socio-economic and political origins of the two respective countries, and the difficulty of producing films of universal appeal about the Anglo-Boer War in the context of where it was fought. In the words of Jon Woronoff (2009, p. vii), “the first war of the 20th century, like many others in history turned out quite differently from what had been expected”; and it remains a very sensitive and contested cultural legacy today.

This paper will firstly give a brief analysis of *Breaker Morant* and explain its success in terms of the contextual social dynamics that justified its production. This serves as a contrast to an in-depth analysis of the complex historical and contextual social forces to which *Verraiers* is a response and which it will be argued account for its failure at the box office despite the existential importance of its message for the future of South Africa. The narrative structure of *Verraiers* is analysed against a re-interpretation of events which form the historical landscape the film is traced over. The authors argue that the depiction of the interaction between Jan Smuts and General de la Rey reveals the crucial role of the former in prolonging the war, and this raises important new questions that are examined in the paper. The difficulty of producing such a film text for a sensitive and contested cultural terrain, when the message is more than an anti-war statement, is explained. At the same time, aspects of aesthetic execution are critiqued on the basis appropriate film theories.

***Breaker Morant* - A 'bugle call' for grand imperialism**

"The strength and viability of a country's film industry derives as much from the theoretical and historical aspects of cinema as it does from the viability of finance and investment. Often a knowledge of the former triumphs over the homogenising influences of the latter" (Tomaselli, 1981).

Background

A contention that *Breaker Morant* ideologically perpetuates the hegemony of the British Empire (the victors of the Anglo-Boer War) would not be inconsistent given that it comes inescapably from a British Commonwealth country that was one of the participating victorious allies that fought against the Boers.ⁱⁱⁱ Nevertheless, the film questions the decisions made in pursuit of the all-powerful British Empire, with one of the characters, George Witton even once pointedly asking Morant: "You believe in the Empire, don't you Harry?"

Although a masterpiece in formalist filmmaking, in our analysis *Breaker Morant* is found to lack a Brechtian self-interrogation of its own premises. At the time of its release it was hailed as being "Australia's most important, powerful and forceful motion picture ever".^{iv} Still, a substantial debate ensued about the film in the South African Journal of Cultural and Media Studies, *Critical Arts*. In one of the key articles, Susan

Gardner (1981), denies it the status of “a great film” and takes it to task from an Australian-feminist perspective for its chauvinistic portrayal of women. On the other hand, Keyan Tomaselli (1981) writing from a South African perspective is more complimentary with his assessment by acknowledging the film based on artistic achievement and international commercial success.

In an interview recorded as part of the re-release of *Breaker Morant* on DVD (2000), the main actor, Edward Woodward, discusses the film’s impact (both on himself and on Australian Folk imagery). According to Woodward, when he first got approached to play the lead role, he did not know who Morant was, nor did many of his British contemporaries.^v It did not seem to be a breakthrough role for his acting career. Yet, as the years passed, the film’s influence grew until it was named by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences as one of the 100 most influential films of all time. In the DVD extras it describes Morant as “an Australian folk hero”, and Woodward (2000) attributes the successful reception of the film (amongst Australians) to its quality of memorialising and mythologising Morant as a “scapegoat” of the British Empire. He explains that because detailed military and court records were kept, it was possible to copy certain scenes and segments from the historical court case verbatim in the dialogue of the film. However, the authors could not find proof that the court records were accessible at the time that Beresford created the film.

Breaker Morant’s artistic achievement is extraordinary. Production values are of an order few films achieve, especially at the time of its original release in the 1980s. It displays an astounding level of perfection in the composition and timing of its shots, resulting in a film architecture that is often close to immaculate. Film critics gave it top marks for script, casting, acting, art direction, lighting, cinematography, colour design, sound and editing (Tomaselli 1981). Though few films credit storyboard, *Breaker Morant* is a graphic designer’s dream because of its craftsmanship level (especially in terms of the close-up reaction shots that display the superb acting), which could never have been attained without careful planning in minute detail before its execution. Each sequence is constructed with the precision of an advertising commercial, yet the resulting narrative is always quite plausible, never unnatural, nor unrealistic. This is an achievement and shows Beresford’s profound understanding of the economy of communication and the possibilities of a film language. *Breaker Morant* won ten Australian Film Industry awards and actor Jack Thomas (who portrayed the role of

defence attorney Major J.F. Thomas) won the best supporting actor category at the Cannes Film Festival (IMDB, n.d.)

Analysis

The ideological power becomes apparent from the opening of *Breaker Morant*: three sentences of white text on black screen give a very brief account of the background stating that the causes for the war were complex, “but basically the Boers wished to preserve their independence from Britain”.^{vi} Then the ears of the audience are filled with the sounds of an imperial military band, while the screen displays a rapid montage of close-ups or medium shots pregnant with important connotations: a Khaki dressed soldier playing a shiny brass wind instrument, a Victorian bandstand, close ups of various spectators in the crowd (including a well-dressed and refined-looking young Black middle class couple)^{vii} and a flagpole featuring a Union Jack. Then the camera moves to the inside of a courtroom. Here the trial proceedings and the beginning of the narrative unfolds. This succinct economy of the first images and their connotations define the tempo, style, and message of the film.

Gardner (1981, p. 30) describes *Breaker Morant* as following the typical Australian story-type, namely: “the Australian male’s usually unsuccessful quest for self-assertion, frequently taking place in the hostile environment of the former metropolis or in the trenches and frontlines of the Imperial battlefield”. The film seems sceptical of British imperialism. In a pertinent scene, Morant yells to the younger Lieutenant Witton: “They have to apologise for their bloody war. They need scapegoats. We’re the scapegoats!” The narrative suggests that foreign political powers, especially that of Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm, had induced Kitchener to make examples of Morant and Hancock.^{viii} But, it has been written that “Kitchener’s motives were cruder: evidence of his own army’s indiscipline drove him wild with frustration”, (Pakenham, 1976).

With its release, *Breaker Morant* was not taken up by Ster-Kinekor, South Africa’s main distributor and cinema chain but was subsequently distributed by Nu Metro. It has been speculated that Ster Kinekor’s lack of enthusiasm may have been caused by the negative implications attending to the alibi claimed for the defence of one of the accused in the filmic trial representation (Tomaselli, 1981). Hancock was supposed to be having affairs with two married Boer women in the time period that a German

missionary was murdered. The issue of the morality of Boer women does not go unanswered in *Verraiers*, where Boer women are shown to have strong moral values and to vehemently despise the military occupation. A second reason could be the representation of Boer treachery^{ix} which directly leads to the Boers' capture. In the scenes where Boers/Afrikaners are depicted in *Breaker Morant*, the inference is perhaps created that the enemy's women were whores (as criticised by Gardner) and the men were cringing traitors, informers, and liars.

To any South African viewer's ears, the language they speak sounds like a mechanical form of Dutch, and does not ring true to Afrikaans, even if the language then would have differed significantly to how it is spoken today. Possibly, because the film was released in the early 1980s, these issues were not commented on by South African or international critics. At the time the controversial apartheid policy led to Afrikaners (especially in Hollywood films) being cast in the role of pariahs. The representation of blacks is slightly more favourable, e.g. featuring the abovementioned well-dressed middle-class black couple in the opening montage, and in depicting blacks in general as conscientious and sensitive workers helpfully assisting the British forces. The black court stenographer is likely intended to pay tribute to Sol Plaatje who worked in the British Military courts during the war.^x Yet in a time where it is recognised that "black people played an important part in this war and that they were deeply affected by it" (Pretorius, 2009, p. viiii), one needs to flag the marginalisation of black characters, though it is not discussed within the thematic parameters of this article.

In support of the claim that an official order existed for the killing of Boer prisoners, the defence attorney in the depicted trial, Major J.F. Thomas cites the burning of farms and herding of women and children into concentration camps as barbaric and a violation of civilised norms. Yet, in the context of the 1980s the filmic connotations of Boers or Afrikaners being murdered by Australians would have resonated beyond the confines of the film. Of course, this uninhibited and repeated depiction of the brutal murder scenes derives logically according to the structural concept of the film, and one should never want to censor any part of it. These scenes are presented as flashbacks during the trial proceedings and serve as exposition to Morant's psychological transformation process. Nevertheless, however justifiable this may be in artistic terms, in the 1980s it would have given the film a degree of hard-core or

even cult snuff appeal. Yet today, compared with violence contained in Quentin Tarantino's films, the violence in *Breaker Morant* seems mild.

Had a South African film depicting Boers brutally killing Australian prisoners of war been released in the 1980s, it is not unlikely an outcry would have come from Australia, with relatives coming forward, and calls from the Australian government for a formal apology. However, the depictions of Boers/Afrikaners being murdered seemed to be quietly accepted by an international community – the same community that could be accused of accepting international acquiescence of the gruesome cruelty of the scorched earth policy and what happened in the British concentration camps.^{xi} A notable contemporary example of this again resurfaced in February 2019, when a pro-Brexit member of the British parliament, Jacob Rees-Mogg, argued in a BBC interview that the concentration camps were justified and that the death toll was exaggerated (BBC, 2019). Thus, one might understand the portrayal of the head of the enquiry, Major Charles Bolton, as aloof and personally detached from the accused men on trial. Within the film Bolton never shows sympathy for the accused, although often in unguarded moments revealing that he is aware of the validity of the defence's case. He is described as having “the characteristic of an educated Englishmen – of concealing his real feelings under a surface of blandness”.^{xii} Furthermore, the defence states during the trial that the events that they are being tried for are consistent with “Modern Warfare”. This exonerates what once were unequivocally recognised as war crimes under the Geneva Convention.^{xiii} Major Thomas for the defence illustrates the moral complexity of war and how “right” and “wrong” could be a matter of interpretation.

The two instances where the song “Sarie Marais” features on the film's soundtrack are very creative. It is a throwback to the 1931 short film or so-called ‘featurette’, *Sarie Marais*.^{xiv} *Breaker Morant* is set in November 1901. By this time Boer resistance had mostly been “pacified”. The burning of the farms and the implementation of concentration camps meant that in real terms the Boers had already been effectively crushed as an independent people, thus the song becomes more of a nostalgic irony. In fact, in one specific scene a Boer man is singing the song as dinner entertainment to a group of British officers. Two Boer women who are also present at the dinner, are later revealed to be courtesans. Thus, a song meant to inspire patriotism amongst Boers is used within this context to mock and humiliate them.

The second instance where the *Sarie Marais* song features is when the said British Military band plays it outside as part of a parade. A few seconds into the song, the viewer spots a seemingly suspicious-looking man in the crowd, dressed in a black jacket. We hear a gunshot, and then witness the Boer hendsopper/informer lying dead on the ground. This is the same informer who volunteers to shoot the Boer prisoners earlier in the film and then gives testimony against Morant, Handcock and Witton. As the crowd gathers around the dead witness, the band begins to play *Sarie Marais* again.

There are many anti-imperialist anti-war sentiments expressed in *Breaker Morant*, such as the title character who ironically writes 'Hell! All on account of unity of an Empire!' at a represented time when few questioned Empire solidarity.^{xv} These types of statements constitute a degree of retro-grade to the overall visual celebration of the majestic grinding-on of a great colonial imperial power. The film might have an anti-imperialist theme with anti-English sentiments, but because of its revitalisation of familiar stereotypes and archetypes, it remains a cultural artefact to reify and celebrate Anglo imperialism (Gardner, 1981, p. 30). The perfunctory representation of the British Empire's militarism as well as pomp and ceremony (displayed in the brass band, the marching of the soldiers, and the decadent dinners) has a visceral impact that appeals to subconscious identification with Anglo-imperialism or its latter form of globalist Western Imperialism. One can understand the younger character, Lieutenant George Witton's rather naïve ideal of fighting for the British Empire, an attitude gained from his father, also an Empire soldier. Thus, despite its dialogue and thematic premise advocating otherwise, these subliminal connotations make *Breaker Morant* one of the greatest war films ever made in terms of priming viewers for enlisting in military academies. Like Mark Anthony, Bruce Beresford has come to bury Caesar, not to praise him; however, the film is unable to transcend the interpellation level that lies beyond the reach of its critical content. Ironically, if one changed language, uniforms, and flag, the film might be mistaken for a late Soviet Union Kino-Pravda propaganda film, one that alludes to a specific society's complexities without exploring the ramifications of its dominating ideology.

Verraaiers (Traitors) - A ballad of Afrikaner introspection

“.. But it will take generations before the wailing of our wounding of others - our leprosy of unreality, the leprosy in our genes that wounded us so much will die down over the lakes.”

The above words of Afrikaner playwright P.G. du Plessis quoted in the closing titles of *Verraaiers* suggest a certain degree of self-consciousness that exists amongst those that call themselves Afrikaners. Others have also written about this collective memory that exists amongst the descendants of a Boer nation that suffered because of the scorched earth policy and the British concentration camps. “As such, [you] can’t be a distant observer when it gets to your own people...” (Opperman Lewis, 2016, p. 7). Yet it was a government consisting of the same Afrikaner nation that later implemented the discriminatory apartheid policy. In this vein, Howard Stein writes “What cannot be contained, mourned, and worked through in one generation is transmitted, for the most part unconsciously, as affect, mission, and task to the next generation ... the fate of repression and dissociation is enactment.” (quoted in Opperman Lewis, 2016, *author’s* emphasis). This self-consciousness of the role they played as oppressors within the apartheid system, might account for the decline of narratives that glorifies the Afrikaner’s heroic deeds and militarism (evident in Anglo-Boer War themed films produced between the 1960’s and 1980’s)^{xvi}. *Verraaiers* is not only about the Anglo-Boer War, but also about its continuing repercussions on South African society, even after the establishment of a new dispensation in the early 1990s^{xvii}. Denied of a more normal and gradual evolution into a single state through this violent prelude to unification, the people of South Africa remain relatively divided.

Earlier films such as *Die Kavaliers* (1966) perhaps still perpetuated an aspect of the residual hegemony of the oppressor nation (Anglo-imperialism) by encouraging and endorsing a (false) consciousness of Afrikaner bravery and heroism, instead of taking proper stock of the tragic loss and destruction caused by the Anglo-Boer to the Afrikaner people. In this respect, *Verraaiers* might be regarded as an emergent new form and important turning point, a sociologically braver film that is more liberating than the less mature escapist Anglo-Boer War films of the 1960s (Jansen Van Vuuren,

2016). In the words of Jan Smuts (the same statesman that will be discussed below in this article), much of history does not appear in public records. "It is in the realm of ideas, personal pleas and visions and unspoken motives that largely drive the wheels of action," (Smuts quoted in Opperman Lewis, 2016). Thus, representing "history in the visual media can be a unique way of rendering and interpreting the past", (Rosenstone, 2001, p. 4). According to Albert Blake, on whose book the film *Verraaiers* is based, "the execution of the so-called Boer traitors during the war is a tragedy like none other in the Afrikaners' history" (2012, p. 13). Blake argues that the stories about Boer treason and the resulting executions has formed part of the so-called memory loss that existed amongst Afrikaners for most of the twentieth century. Thus, *Verraaiers* is an imperative film to form part of the Anglo-Boer War film canon, because its theme strongly relates to the remembrance and commemoration of the dead.^{xviii}

Though *Verraaiers* is metaphysically related to *Breaker Morant* as a work of art, and through its use of the courtroom drama as a storytelling device, *Verraaiers* seems to impart a deeper philosophical meaning than its counterpart. Following in the footsteps of the iconic South African drama series *Feast of the Uninvited* (Heyns, 2008), it resonates with the pain, the deaths, and the destruction that Afrikaners suffered as a result of the Anglo-Boer War -- something that is rarely appreciated in other parts of the world.^{xix} With its sombre gravity, reminiscent of the works of the novelist William Faulkner, *Verraaiers* quite literally through its opening monologue, denounces war as insanity. And while the anguish expressed through films such as *Breaker Morant* or *Gallipoli* (1981) is of an order that can still be soothed through hero redemption, *Verraaiers* interrogates the militaristic hero ethos and through multiple dialogue lines questions if freedom is worth the consequences of war.

Contemporary Context

In the decade after South Africa became a democracy, academics began discussing the so-called Afrikaner identity crisis (Lambrechts & Visagie, 2009). Yes, Afrikaners were embraced by Mandela as part of the rainbow nation, yet, with the new dispensation they had to come to grips with a loss of dominance and even more importantly the unmasking of many of the myths constructed by the government's ideological apparatus. "White identities... had to be renegotiated, but... needed to speak the reconciliatory ideological discourse of the new South Africa and the Rainbow Nation myth," (Reid, 2012, p. 47).

With the changing of street, city and municipality place names to reflect and pay homage to stalwarts of the anti-apartheid struggle, not only Afrikaners, but also English speaking minorities in Natal began feeling as if their heritage was symbolically targeted (Krog, 2013), because attacking a cultural icon often is taken quite literally as a personal attack on an individual or culture. Meanwhile, some Afrikaners were standing up for themselves and it was reflected in their music. In 2006, two prominent songs tapped “into a wider sentiment, especially amongst young white Afrikaners who are fed up with being demonised as nasty racists who have done nothing right while they are constantly reminded of their ‘shameful history,’” (Oelofse, 2007). In a local radio hit from the Pretoria band Klopjag, Sallas de Jager^{xx} sings that he “will stand at the back of the queue and wear my rainbow on my sleeve, but I won’t say sorry anymore” (translated from the original Afrikaans lyrics). However, the song that drew the most attention, and focused the public sphere’s attention on the “Afrikaner plight” was the singer Bok van Blerk’s *De La Rey*.

Whilst the anthem about General Koos de la Rey was echoing in pubs, traditional dance clubs and restaurants, the ruling ANC Government felt uncomfortable enough with its content to facilitate a media statement, titled *De la Rey and its coded message fermenting revolutionary sentiments*. Within its statement, the Department of Arts and Culture (2007) specifically warns against the chorus line “De la Rey, De la Rey, will you lead the Boers once again”, being used as a rallying cry for right wing Afrikaans movements. The song’s popularity and the myth of the “Lion of the Western Transvaal” spurred the songwriters, Sean Else and Johan Vorster, to collaborate with playwright Deon Opperman in creating a musical “Ons vir Jou” in 2008. The musical focused on De la Rey and his family from the lead up to the Anglo-Boer War, until the peace agreement was signed. These examples of the Anglo-Boer War in popular culture, as well as the fervent debate the De la Rey song ignited amongst South Africans, might lead one to be self-assured about the marketability of an Anglo-Boer War film to a certain target audience. Secondly, choosing characters such as General De la Rey and Jan Smuts to feature in the same film would in advertising terms be regarded as a unique selling proposition (USP).

Still, the above-mentioned controversy about the De la Rey song suggests he may erroneously have been regarded by some primarily for his outstanding military achievements, whilst his steadfastness in fighting the war as a *bittereinder* came a

close second. So, this was also an opportunity for giving a more objective account about the personality of De la Rey -- instead of producing a film consistent with the earlier genre, that might have featured him as an obvious hero and main protagonist. While seeking to satisfy their target market one might presume the filmmakers were working within establishment film making structures and were thus called upon to negotiate the portrayal of De la Rey within this interpellation, i.e. not to antagonise the state by producing a film depicting De la Rey in any manner that might be inflammatory. This also called for a delicate handling of his depiction so that Afrikaner audiences for whom the myth had manifested De la Rey as a potential hero (to lead them out of their identity crisis) would not be lost. Working within these parameters the film script for *Verraaiers* was adapted from a story published in the book by Albert Blake. This book is based on records that had remained sealed until the year 2000 in the interests of reconciliation.

Verraaiers focuses on the saga of a tragic hero or so-called traitor with the fictionalised name of Van Aswegen, his young son Carel-Jan, and his son-in-law, Henry Ahrens, who find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. They take up the British amnesty to save their farm, and re-unite as a family unit, but end up being convicted for treason and sentenced to death. The failure of the film at the box office when it was released in 2012, might be attributed to the fact that the apparent protagonist was contrary to expectations of the majority Afrikaner target audience, who were expecting a willing rather than a tragic hero (Jansen van Vuuren, 2015). While the above deduction is partly correct, the explanation should be sought in terms of other factors as well. Primarily, the film does not conform to a classical narrative structure but uses instead a non-commercial film form, and for this reason it does not work as successfully as *Breaker Morant*.

Protagonist vs. Antagonist: De La Rey pitted against Smuts

Post 1994, many set about to reconfigure certain myths held amongst many cultural groupings in the country. "As South Africa made the transition from apartheid to democracy a new way in which to consider and understand whiteness had to be developed – one that would fit into the new political landscape" (Reid, 2012, p. 49). Two dominant figures within the narrative of *Verraaiers*, Generals Jan Smuts and Koos De la Rey, not only played important roles during the Anglo-Boer War, but they

became key characters in the myths that reinforced the belief systems of many South Africans. De la Rey is popularly referred to as the “Lion of the Western Transvaal” and a leader of the Afrikaner people (both then and now), (Krog, 2007). Smuts has been described as a world famous “soldier, statesman and intellectual” (Steyn, 2015) and continues to hold a powerful mythological status, especially amongst mainly white English-speaking South Africans. The interaction between these two important South African historical personalities within the film *Verraaiers* has a coded allegorical meaning open to various interpretations. But most importantly, their first (and only) physical interaction in the film could be regarded as a plot turning point, and the catalyst for the unfolding events that would lead to the film’s climax.

The depiction of this interaction purported to have taken place during the Anglo-Boer War carries much karma for many Afrikaners, because it implicitly also refers to the acts of cruelty actually committed against them by their fellow Afrikaner and supposed comrade, Jan Smuts, and his pro-British regime after the Anglo-Boer War. Particularly the execution of Jopie Fourie, on which occasion D.F. Malan and others had desperately tried to have him spared: but to no avail from Smuts. In terms of connotation, the depiction of the persona of Smuts in his interaction with De la Rey might be seen to represent the assault upon the Afrikaner nation by Western imperialism. The fact that De la Rey in his depiction in the film manages to at least save the life of Carel-Jan, is perhaps a message of hope for the survival of the Afrikaner nation.

According to historical fact De la Rey was a man of peace. On the eve of the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War he had clashed in a secret crisis meeting of the Transvaal Parliament with the party of Boers led by President Kruger (and his adviser Jan Smuts, at the time State Attorney of the Transvaal Republic) who were walking into the trap set by Lord Milner and Joseph Chamberlain (Britain’s Colonial Secretary) and were about to declare war when neither side had *casus belli*. The war was urgently needed by Cecil Rhodes, Werner & Beit, and the great financial houses of the City of London. De la Rey had warned that Britain was a great power (“a monster but nevertheless a great power”) that could not be defeated in the type of war that was imminent, and he had advocated that the Boers should adapt and temporarily co-operate in order to co-exist with British Imperialism (Armstrong, 1937). In response, Paul Kruger branded

him a coward and a traitor. However, after war was declared De la Rey proved true to his word and as a General was the greatest military tactician the Boers had.

Jan Smuts had studied law at Cambridge University where he achieved brilliant academic qualifications. At the time of the Anglo-Boer War he was still in his twenties. He also became a general during the war but was never a great military tactician. He was a ruthless and pragmatic genius of political strategy and in the not too distant future was destined to become a major player in the field of international relations and one of the world's most skilled drafters of international legal documents. He drafted the Union Constitution of South Africa which brought the single state into being in 1910.^{xxi} Smuts had also drafted the ultimatum to Britain declaring the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902.^{xxii} Under Smuts' leadership after the Anglo-Boer War South Africa became a prominent member of the British Empire and subsequently of the British Commonwealth; a transformation Smuts had a hand in bringing about. His strength as a leader came from the fact that he was able to act from within the hegemony of the victors and even to shape this hegemony.

Smuts is such a complex personality that historians will probably never be able to understand for sure whether he was working all along with the British Empire or whether he was working the British Empire to his own advantage.^{xxiii} He certainly knew where the source of world power lay and how to exploit this; but he was not particularly compassionate to his own Afrikaner people whom he would rule over with an iron fist (when he came to power after the Anglo-Boer War). Smuts had once been a great admirer of Cecil Rhodes. It was during a school visit that Rhodes had chosen Smuts as a young teenager to be the recipient of a bursary to study in England. However, after the failed Jameson raid of 1895/6 against the Transvaal Republic, which cost Rhodes a temporary fall from grace, Smuts distanced himself and campaigned publicly in denunciation of the raid. Smuts went even so far as renouncing his citizenship of the Cape Colony and moving to Johannesburg to take up citizenship of the Transvaal Republic.

With the return of Lord Milner to England after the Anglo-Boer War, Smuts resumed his administrative role for a unified South Africa after 1910, initially under the figurehead of Louis Botha as prime minister. However, while leading the pro-British United Party as prime minister after World War II, Smuts was unexpectedly defeated

by the Afrikaner National Party in 1948. But after this apparent recuperation of power by Afrikaner nationalism, South Africa began a steady descent from its pedestal on the world stage to become labelled as a threat to world peace and the world's greatest pariah state. The damaged victims of the concentration camps and their following generation were destined to cast themselves as the predators. This failure of political fortunes might be partly be since the genocide of the Anglo-Boer War and its aftermath seriously crippled Afrikaners by wiping out some of their most prominent family lines, along with their culture of non-racism and democratic values. One of South Africa's earlier historians, McCall Theal, writes that at the start of the Anglo-Boer War the Boer population that had evolved in Southern Africa already numbered 400,000. Had De la Rey's wise judgement of voluntary coexistence with British values been heeded and the Anglo-Boer War not taken place, these statistics (in accordance with the generally existing rate of population growth before the war) would today have made Afrikaners the largest population group in South Africa. On this basis, scholars agree that colonialism and its imperialism have a lot to answer for in South Africa (similarly in Australia, the United States, and Canada). Though some do not accept this parallel in respect of the Boers' share of primacy to the land as a de facto native Southern African tribe (due to having evolved in Southern Africa as a new people and their Khoi ancestry), some still argue that the genocide of the Boers was self-inflicted or semi-self-inflicted because of the *Bittereinders'* persistence in continuing to fight after the Boer capitals of Bloemfontein and Pretoria had fallen; the issue of *casus belli* and the role of Smuts is not altogether insignificant.

The depicted interaction between Jan Smuts and General De la Ray is an important aspect of the film, because of Smuts' subsequent involvement on the world stage. This includes his participation in the Versailles Peace Conference after the First World War, his drafting of the document upon which 'The League of Nations' was founded, his contribution to the British Commonwealth formation, as well as his writing of the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations after the end of the Second World War. Any words or actions attributed to Smuts in relation to the trial and death sentences of those accused for high treason in *Verraaiers* carry more weight than words or actions attributed to Lord Kitchener in the murder trial of *Breaker Morant*. The de facto executioner of the Australians in *Breaker Morant* is an Englishman not an Australian,

but in *Verraiers* the de facto executioner is a fellow Afrikaner. This also a key factor to any understanding of the meaning of “Verraiers” (*traitors*).



Morant and Hancock's graves in the Heroes' Acre Cemetery in Pretoria are still visited by many Australians who regard him as a "folk hero". Credit: Alexander Holt

Exorcising Ghosts: “*To hell with Smuts*”

To have Jan Smuts and De la Rey interacting together in a film is in itself an audacious act. The opportunity to write a scene depicting these two characters facing each other presents a unique challenge to any scriptwriter. This scene is superbly written, acted, and directed. Smuts' complex and coldly pragmatic personality has been accurately characterised; playing on existing Afrikaner distrust about his bona fides and instilling apprehension. The level of intrigue surrounding the trial and convictions in *Verraiers* parallels that in *Breaker Morant*, where it is made apparent that the convictions are to

be secured regardless of any merits of the case for their defence (though this is not with the acquiescence of De la Rey in the case of *Verraaiers*). But in *Verraaiers*, this aspect is made even more disturbing by doubts in at least some members of the audiences' minds that the purposes of the sacrifice of the Van Aswegens and the two Scots might be doubly corrupted. This aspect dispels any illusions that the Anglo-Boer War was an "era of innocence".

True to life, De la Rey is depicted as a gentleman but perhaps also even more naïve than in factual history. However, his stature is not entirely reduced, and the myth survives to a fair extent. Because the narrative shows that even while under the spell of Smuts' logical argument for the need for the death penalty in order to preserve the hegemony of the Boer state (by deterring Boers from taking an oath of neutrality in return for British amnesty to save their families, farms, and properties), De la Rey's conscience is in a dilemma of trying to reconcile his personal integrity as a human being with the matter of state hegemony, as cogently expressed by Smuts.

As might be expected due to his mythical reputation, Smuts appears to be cunning: expressed through his eye contact and eye movements. The acting and direction of these particular shots of Smuts is a good example of Orson Welles' claim that the camera can sometimes speak a greater truth than words. Smuts counters De la Rey's questions about the need for a defence council at the trial and designs the trial process to ensure the executions will take place. He gets the better of De la Rey, by overcoming the latter's reservations with an assurance that his draft of the proclamation will provide for representations of mitigating circumstances to military command before death sentences are carried out. Smuts' arguments seem logical and pragmatic, to which de la Rey shows the younger Smuts due regard and deference.

De la Rey's concerns about the subsequent trial lead him to inspect the court and prison located at a farm abandoned by the Prinsloo family. Only then does he discover that Van Aswegen (previously directly under De la Rey's command and a close advisor to him) and his family comprise the condemned group (along with the Scotsman, Boyd). However, in spite of this relationship, De la Rey finds himself unable to exercise the authority to release any of the prisoners because he recognises his hands are tied due to the fact of their trial and conviction in a court of law. State procedure cannot simply be overridden as in spite of his rank the proper channels have to be followed,

and this must happen in consultation with his fellow General Smuts, who still presumably retains also the authority of the fallen Kruger government where he was the State Attorney.

After the conviction of the Van Aswegen family and the two Scots, McLachlan and Boyd, Smuts stubbornly refuses to accept any of the mitigations sent to him as extenuating circumstances or sufficient to reprieve the death sentences. His subsequent response to a second letter from De la Rey pleading for a pardon is polite but firm, impatient, and quite insensitive to the sanctity of the human lives at stake. Worded in typical Smuts conceit: "Indeed I was wrong, I do think Van Aswegen Senior, Ahrens and the two Scots' sentences should be carried out. However, with regard to Van Aswegen junior given he is so young, I suggest that we reduce his sentence to five years hard labour. I leave the decision up to you". Whereupon De La Rey in exasperation finally says: "to hell with Smuts, I am going to pardon all five of them". De La Rey orders his legal adviser, Gerrie, to ride post haste to stop the executions that are supposed to take place at 7.00 am, but the time has been brought forward with the prisoners led out for execution at 5.30 am. Gerrie is only in time to save the youngest son, Carel-Jan (who was innocent according to Khoi mythology because he had been touched by a praying mantis).

In these later sequences, particularly when he is psychologically breaking free of the spell cast by Smuts' forceful reasoning, De la Rey is depicted in his characteristic mythical long jacket cloak, where he replaces his hat on his bald head to connote a recovery of his power and a potential resurrection of the Afrikaner nation.^{xxiv}

The film finally comes to a close with a return to the 1953 narrative at the foot of the Paul Kruger statue in Pretoria, where Carel-Jan, the Van Aswegen who survived execution and his young grandson, and Gerrie who saved him, meet for their annual commemoration of the horrific event of the executions that has subsequently bound them together for the rest of their lives. Now an old man and a High Court Judge, Gerrie and Carel-Jan, are lost for words when Carel-Jan's grandson asks whether they might also build a statue for his great grandfather who was shot in the war. Gerrie says, "I hope so, I really hope so". All the audience is left with is the debris of the three heroes and the hope their Khoi heritage might bring a praying mantis to them.

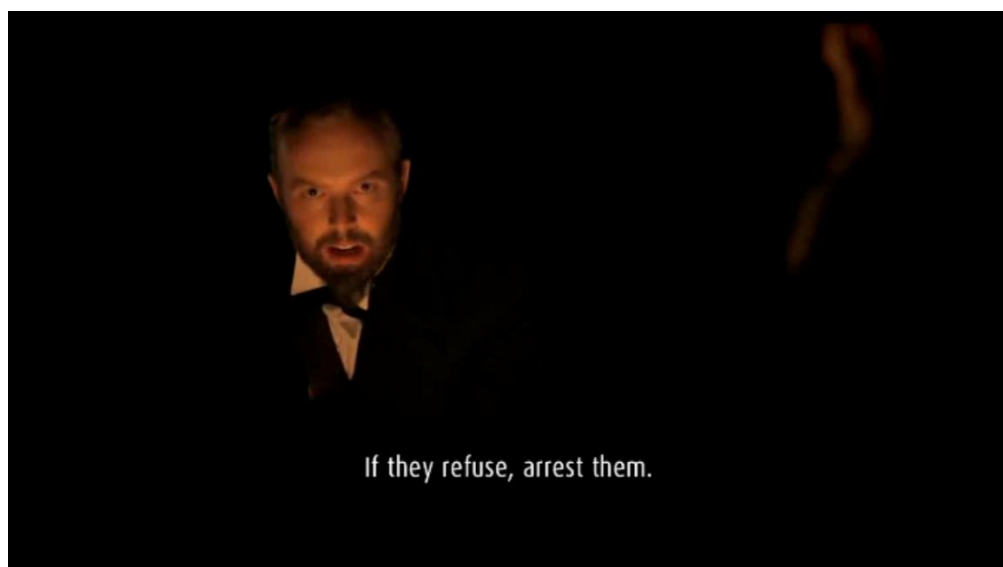
Conclusion

Verraaiers actually presents the audience with three heroes to possibly identify with: Van Aswegen, De la Rey, and Smuts. As well as identification with Carel-Jan and Gerrie, at the end of the film, the protagonists of the first 1953 narrative, survivors of the Anglo-Boer War, both of whom have been touched by the spirit of De la Rey, and from whose memories the longer narrative is derived. So, the key to *Verraaiers* is in understanding the meaning and significance of the depiction of the interaction between Jan Smuts and De la Rey, within the parameters in which the film has been made. Through their pro-filmic historical status, Smuts and De la Rey already exist in the public domain as mythical heroes and great leaders. Their pro-filmic status might be considered in terms of exposed film footage already recorded in the memories and minds of the audience. The depiction of the interaction between De la Rey and Smuts overshadows Van Aswegen as protagonist in the audience's after-memory of the film.

De la Rey's appearance in *Verraaiers* is indeed related to the topical significance of the De la Rey song and controversy about its calls for his reincarnation to come forth. His depiction in the film is neither minor nor peripherally incidental, because his interaction with Jan Smuts provides the incident that sets the ball rolling for the arrest, trial, and executions, of Van Aswegen and most of his family - the apparent unwilling hero and tragic protagonist of the narrative feature film. The main protagonist of *Verraaiers* might be seen to be De la Rey in his interaction with Smuts, to which the story of Van Aswegen and his sons are a foil.

The Afrikaner target audience is asked to make a difficult subconscious decision after seeing the film: to choose whether they can still identify with either De la Rey or Jan Smuts as heroes. A choice of existential importance as it is one of either conforming with the hegemony of Western imperialism, an area where Jan Smuts excelled as a master political strategist and diplomatist, or identifying with a great military strategist and at the same time also a Christ-like figure and peace activist, De la Rey, who opposed Western capitalist imperialism and met an untimely death as a result. However, the manner of portrayal of these two great heroes (at least of the white South African Pantheon) also denies any such identification, because as a sophisticated piece of Afrikaner drama these heroes of leadership have been pitched in a film which

leads to the destruction of the Van Aswegens, a nuclear family consisting of both Afrikaners and the two white English-speaking Scots, who represent the average white South African everyman. *Verraaiers* is also a trial within a trial of Smuts and De La Rey. The evidence of their guilt is the trial, conviction, and execution of the Van Aswegens, and the film audience is the jury. It is also a very pessimistic film about helplessness and betrayal of the common people at the mercy of those entrusted with the powers of the state, and the danger of trusting political songs or advertisements for any 'great' leaders from whatever the source.^{xxv} The reason why *Verraaiers* failed at the box office might be that the truth is too bitter a pill to swallow, or that the film was not exhibited long enough to become fully appreciated through word of mouth.



Through its cinematography, acting and direction, the film *Verraaiers* depicts an interaction between the historical personages Jan Smuts and Koos de la Rey setting them up as antagonist and protagonist respectively.

¹ In *The Legend of Breaker Morant*, Critical Arts, Monograph No. 1, July 1981, Australian critic Susan Gardner argues that “*Breaker Morant* is not a great film”, However, the film has since gained much ground in the annals of film criticism.

¹ The film’s credits include director Paul Eiler, Salmon (Sallas) de Jager as screenwriter and producer as well as producer Danie Bester. It boasts nine executive producers, all Afrikaans, with the exceptions of Michael Auret, Joel Phiri and Themba Sibeko.

¹ Given that hegemony is a concept of social cohesion that under normal circumstances accommodates criticism and conflicting views within social formations.

¹ *The Courier Mail*, Brisbane, 12 September 1980.

¹ It was decided to cast a British instead of an Australian actor in the lead role, as the real Morant originally hailed from an Anglo-Irish and Country English family (Woodward, 2000).

¹ Martin Meredith in his publication *Diamonds Gold and War* (2008) argues that the war was caused by the Empire’s hunger for the diamond and gold mines.

¹ These depictions are nevertheless consistent with the narrative that a defined urban Black middle class already existed in South Africa at the turn of the 19th Century. See Alexander R Holt, *An Analysis of Racial Stereotyping in SABC-TV Commercials in the Context of Reform, 1978-1992*, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Natal, 1998.

¹ According to historical evidence this was never an issue of international implications because the missionary killed was a German of Cape Colony nationality (British) who belonged to the Berlin Missionary Society. By that stage the German Kaiser had already reconciled with his grandmother, Queen Victoria.

¹ Blake argues that because of the shame and trauma associated with Boer treason, the National Party government of the 1970’s placed a prohibition on the publication of the names of Boer *hendsoppers*. Except for Albert Grudlingh’s book *Die ‘Hendsoppers’ en ‘Joiners’: die rasional en verskynsel van verraad*, most writers of the 20th century ignored this part of history. “More than just the names of the traitors were kept silent. There was a definite opinion that it was better to withhold their deeds and influence from the descendants [of the Boer volk],” *authors’ translation*. Blake (2010, p. 17) alleges that in 1910 Louis Botha burned documents that contained information about the Boers who fought on the side of the British. However, Blake could not find documents to substantiate this.

¹ Follow *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje* (edited by John Comaroff, 1976) and Sabatampho Mokae’s *The Story of Sol. T. Plaatje* (2010)

¹ The other panel members and the resulting social media comments mostly condemned Rees-Mogg’s statements, saying that the concentration camps cannot be condoned because it indicates the same racial discrimination which led to the World War II holocaust.

¹ This forms part of the character descriptions contained in the DVD’s special features.

¹ Britain had already signed the Hague Convention of 29 July 1899, which came into force on 4 September 1900 and bound its signatories to observe the “rules of civilised warfare”.

¹ In *Sarie Marais*’s opening titles it is described as “the nearest approach to a National Anthem that South Africa possesses” and that it is “heartily sung by all *Afrikanders* whether of Dutch or British descent” (Albrecht, 1931). These claims are severely criticized by Jacqueline Maingard in her 2007 publication, *South African National Cinemas*.

¹ Morant’s “crucifixion as he called it, as a ‘scapegoat of Empire’, has contributed ever since to making him an Australian folk hero by adoption,” (Gardner, 1981, p. 32).

¹ An Anglo-Boer War film like *Die Kavaliers* (1966) depicted a 'willing hero' as protagonist. Made at the height of the Afrikaner nationalist government's power, it might be interpreted as a statement of enduring vulnerability of a damaged people – thus essentially intended for maintaining unity between Afrikaners and English-speaking whites in the context of the declaration of a Republic and withdrawal from the British Commonwealth.

¹ Follow Hélène Opperman Lewis' book, *Apartheid, Britain's Bastard Child* (2016) on the far-reaching effects of the humiliation suffered by the victims of the Anglo-Boer War.

¹ It is prominently stated in the film that the characters of Gerrie and Van Aswegen Junior visit Church square in Pretoria yearly to mark the day that Commandant van Aswegen and the others were executed on treason charges.

¹ In a similar manner, the black experience and suffering during the Anglo-Boer War was neglected by historians until the publication of works by E. van Heyningen and S.V. Kessler.

¹ This is the same Sallias de Jager who produced and wrote the film *Verraaiers*.

¹ Smuts rejected a Federal Constitution like Australia's on the grounds that it would be "too expensive" to run. It could be argued that the war had essentially been about World Capital's expansion through a potential vast source of gold supply. This required Britain to destroy Southern Africa's agrarian economy to ensure a supply of cheap and disenfranchised labour for the full potential of gold production to be realised (Friedman, 1975; Meredith, 2008).

¹ The Boer ultimatum gave notice that if the British troop build-up on the borders of the Boer Republics and other apparent preparations for war were not curtailed and reversed within a certain time, the Boer Republics would take the offensive. The British side used this ultimatum to make the Boers appear to be the belligerent party. The British press publicised the ultimatum to inflame British public opinion. After the Jameson Raid, Cecil Rhodes was temporarily in England. At the time he stated that he did not think there would be a war and that President Kruger "was not such a bad fellow after all" (Pakenham, 1979)

¹ Pakenham (1979, p. xv) writes: "In due course I began to read the confidential War Office files – those that survived a bizarre decision to 'weed' them out in the 1950s – the files on which much of Amery's and Maurice's work had been based".

¹ Hats serve a semiotic role in *Verraaiers*'s narrative. This is confirmed in the scene where the prisoners are removed from their cell for execution: their hats are left behind on the straw-covered floor and the camera re-focuses on the hats for a split second before the cut.

¹ When Paul Kruger appointed Smuts as State Attorney of the Transvaal, *The Star* wrote: "Though he may have all the precociousness of a Pitt, we consider twenty-eight is rather too young an age for the State Attorney of the South African Republic" (Farwell, 1976, p. 335).

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ⁱ In *The Legend of Breaker Morant*, Critical Arts, Monograph No. 1, July 1981, Australian critic Susan Gardner argues that “*Breaker Morant* is not a great film”, However, the film has since gained much ground in the annals of film criticism.

ⁱⁱ The film’s credits include director Paul Eiler, Salmon (Sallas) de Jager as screenwriter and producer as well as producer Danie Bester. It boasts nine executive producers, all Afrikaans, with the exceptions of Michael Auret, Joel Phiri and Themba Sibeko.

ⁱⁱⁱ Given that hegemony is a concept of social cohesion that under normal circumstances accommodates criticism and conflicting views within social formations.

^{iv} *The Courier Mail*, Brisbane, 12 September 1980.

^v It was decided to cast a British instead of an Australian actor in the lead role, as the real Morant originally hailed from an Anglo-Irish and Country English family (Woodward, 2000).

^{vi} Martin Meredith in his publication *Diamonds Gold and War* (2008) argues that the war was caused by the Empire’s hunger for the diamond and gold mines.

^{vii} These depictions are nevertheless consistent with the narrative that a defined urban Black middle class already existed in South Africa at the turn of the 19th Century. See Alexander R Holt, *An Analysis of Racial Stereotyping in SABC-TV Commercials in the Context of Reform, 1978-1992*, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Natal, 1998.

^{viii} According to historical evidence this was never an issue of international implications because the missionary killed was a German of Cape Colony nationality (British) who belonged

to the Berlin Missionary Society. By that stage the German Kaiser had already reconciled with his grandmother, Queen Victoria.

^{ix} Blake argues that because of the shame and trauma associated with Boer treason, the National Party government of the 1970's placed a prohibition on the publication of the names of Boer *hendsoppers*. Except for Albert Grudlingh's book *Die 'Hendsoppers' en 'Joiners': die rasionaal en verskynsel van verraad*, most writers of the 20th century ignored this part of history. "More than just the names of the traitors were kept silent. There was a definite opinion that it was better to withhold their deeds and influence from the descendants [of the Boer volk]," *authors' translation*. Blake (2010, p. 17) alleges that in 1910 Louis Botha burned documents that contained information about the Boers who fought on the side of the British. However, Blake could not find documents to substantiate this.

^x Follow *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje* (edited by John Comaroff, 1976) and Sabatampho Mokae's *The Story of Sol. T. Plaatje* (2010)

^{xi} The other panel members and the resulting social media comments mostly condemned Rees-Mogg's statements, saying that the concentration camps cannot be condoned because it indicates the same racial discrimination which led to the World War II holocaust.

^{xii} This forms part of the character descriptions contained in the DVD's special features.

^{xiii} Britain had already signed the Hague Convention of 29 July 1899, which came into force on 4 September 1900 and bound its signatories to observe the "rules of civilised warfare".

^{xiv} In *Sarie Marais*'s opening titles it is described as "the nearest approach to a National Anthem that South Africa possesses" and that it is "heartily sung by all *Afrikaners* whether of Dutch or British descent" (Albrecht, 1931). These claims are severely criticized by Jacqueline Maingard in her 2007 publication, *South African National Cinemas*.

^{xv} Morant's "crucifixion as he called it, as a 'scapegoat of Empire', has contributed ever since to making him an Australian folk hero by adoption," (Gardner, 1981, p. 32).

^{xvi} An Anglo-Boer War film like *Die Kavaliers* (1966) depicted a 'willing hero' as protagonist. Made at the height of the Afrikaner nationalist government's power, it might be interpreted as a statement of enduring vulnerability of a damaged people – thus essentially intended for maintaining unity between Afrikaners and English-speaking whites in the context of the declaration of a Republic and withdrawal from the British Commonwealth.

^{xvii} Follow Hélène Opperman Lewis' book, *Apartheid, Britain's Bastard Child* (2016) on the far-reaching effects of the humiliation suffered by the victims of the Anglo-Boer War.

^{xviii} It is prominently stated in the film that the characters of Gerrie and Van Aswegen Junior visit Church square in Pretoria yearly to mark the day that Commandant van Aswegen and the others were executed on treason charges.

^{xix} In a similar manner, the black experience and suffering during the Anglo-Boer War was neglected by historians until the publication of works by E. van Heyningen and S.V. Kessler.

^{xx} This is the same Sallas de Jager who produced and wrote the film *Verraaiers*.

^{xxi} Smuts rejected a Federal Constitution like Australia's on the grounds that it would be "too expensive" to run. It could be argued that the war had essentially been about World Capital's expansion through a potential vast source of gold supply. This required Britain to destroy Southern Africa's agrarian economy to ensure a supply of cheap and disenfranchised labour for the full potential of gold production to be realised (Friedman, 1975; Meredith, 2008).

^{xxii} The Boer ultimatum gave notice that if the British troop build-up on the borders of the Boer Republics and other apparent preparations for war were not curtailed and reversed within a certain time, the Boer Republics would take the offensive. The British side used this ultimatum to make the Boers appear to be the belligerent party. The British press publicised the ultimatum to inflame British public opinion. After the Jameson Raid, Cecil Rhodes was temporarily in

England. At the time he stated that he did not think there would be a war and that President Kruger “was not such a bad fellow after all” (Pakenham, 1979)

^{xxiii} Pakenham (1979, p. xv) writes: “In due course I began to read the confidential War Office files – those that survived a bizarre decision to ‘weed’ them out in the 1950s – the files on which much of Amery’s and Maurice’s work had been based”.

^{xxiv} Hats serve a semiotic role in *Verraiers*’s narrative. This is confirmed in the scene where the prisoners are removed from their cell for execution: their hats are left behind on the straw-covered floor and the camera re-focuses on the hats for a split second before the cut.

^{xxv} When Paul Kruger appointed Smuts as State Attorney of the Transvaal, *The Star* wrote: “Though he may have all the precociousness of a Pitt, we consider twenty-eight is rather too young an age for the State Attorney of the South African Republic” (Farwell, 1976, p. 335).