

REL POSTGRAD PRESENTATIONS



Tackling Monuments
of Myth, Might, and
Movement



20 MAY 2026

10:00AM - 10:30AM

REL SEMINAR ROOM

LS 5.67

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PASSCODE: F999CC7D



JOHN BESCHE
(MASTRERS STUDENT)





Tackling Monuments of Myth, Might, and Movement

JOHN BESCHE
(MASTERS STUDENT)

10:00 - 10:30

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This presentation introduces a master's dissertation on Afrikaner public monuments — how they embody and (re)produce Afrikaner identity politics and, in turn, the Afrikaner civil religion — by unpacking a chapter examining the National Women's Monument in Bloemfontein. The presentation identifies the theory, methodology, and research question behind the dissertation and explores how that analytical framework is being applied to a single case study. Drawing on theories of discourse, embodiment, and materiality, the research explores how the monument encoded themes of suffering, sacrifice, and chosenness following the Anglo-Boer War, and how those meanings are reinterpreted in democratic South Africa through processes of heritagisation and contestation. Methodologically, the project combines archival research with analysis of monumental space, symbolism, and public memory. The presentation invites critical engagement with the project's analytical framework and opens a discussion on how Religious Studies engages the built environment.