ROBBEN ISLAND MUSEUM
PUBLIC HERITAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT [PHED]

AFRICAN PROGRAMME IN MUSEUM AND HERITAGE STUDIES [APMHS]

PUBLICATION

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EXECUTIVE PREFACE

Robben Island was declared a National Monument in 1996. It became a National Museum in 1997, thus ushering in the designation, Robben Island Museum (RIM). The Island was declared the first world heritage site in South Africa in 1999, and officially became Robben Island World Heritage Site (RWHS). It was declared a National Heritage Site in 2006. Robben Island holds significant heritage value to all South Africans, other African countries, and people from all over the world because its cultural and natural heritage are irreplaceable, unique and authentic, not only for the nation to which it belongs, but also for humanity as a whole. Its significance is therefore of outstanding universal value (OUV). The core value of the Island as per the Nomination Dossier is: “the triumph of the human spirit over enormous hardship, adversity, suffering and injustice”. Robben Island Museum is responsible for developing, maintaining and managing Robben Island as a national and world heritage site. The core business of Robben Island Museum as a heritage institution is outlined in the Integrated Conservation Management Plan (ICMP). In this regard, the strategic objectives from the ICMP guide RIM’s strategic direction. Currently, RIM’s trajectory is in line with the revised ICMP and a new business model. The ICMP process was driven by the vision and mission of RIM
which led to a set of strategic objectives. The Strategic Plan allocates tasks associated with the management imperatives to the various departments at RIM.

This **PUBLICATION** emanates from the strategic objective: “*To provide academic scholarship, research and training through postgraduate programme*”. The key performance goal thereof is: “*Academic research and publication*”. This is located within the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies (APMHS) of the Public Heritage Education Department (PHED) of RIM.
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Introduction

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The pedagogy of museums

Museums, today, are spaces (which include buildings, sites, parks, even mountains) that provide a myriad of experiences and opportunities for its visitors. Visitors to museums are now able to view exhibitions, watch films, go on guided tours, have seminars, and be part of structured and planned educational tours. The current use of the term ‘museum’ lends itself to the notion that it is a public entity and domain which allows access to all that want to visit. Yet the concept of the ‘museum’ did not originate as this purpose. Findlen (1989) argues that museums started out as private institutions of the wealthy that excluded many of the public since its ‘artifacts’ were private possessions. Edson and Dean (1996) argue that in classical times the definition of a museum signified a temple dedicated to the Museums.

These muses were nine goddesses who watched over the welfare of epic poetry, music, love poetry history, tragedy, sacred poetry, comedy, the dance and astronomy. It is said that the first organized museum was founded in Alexandria, Egypt in about the third century by Ptolemy Soter (Edson and Dean 1996).
Administrators and government institutions, in early museums soon realised the educative role that museums could play in society. Museums during the 17th-19th centuries now not only put up exhibitions but became central to the dissemination of information about various contemporary issues. By the 20th century a range of external factors affected the very existence of museums. Amongst these factors was funding for the sustainability of the museum. This also meant financial obligations for staff and collections. Other modern factors like television, increased technologies with reference to printing and other social media had an impact on the existence of museums and the number of people that would visit museums. Museum curators soon realised that they needed to increase the visitor numbers and attempt to attract people who would not necessarily visit a museum (Edson and Dean 1996). This has in some way lead museums to rethink their purpose and value in society. Museums today are more than just buildings and spaces where society conserves and preserves its history, heritage, cultural objects and artifacts’ (RIM ICMP 2005-2012).

Education is one of the prime functions of museums and the reason for its existence. Museums that are governed by charitable trusts should realize their educational objectives are not only to the public but also to the museum personal (Hooper-Greenhill, 1999). Conservative notions are that museums were created to preserve objects from the past. This notion is no longer realistic and museums should take on the role of being institutions of change not just passive collectors of
artifacts (Ceron and Mz-Recaman 1994). Museums should use their collections for the sole purpose of education about the past so that informed decisions are made about the future.

Other research suggests that museums have the potential to play an integral role in and have a function to play in formal education. Museums worldwide have realized that they are not only conservators of the past but are also “centres for learning and information to tell about the past” (Edson, 1994). Hein (1998) suggests that ‘formal’ refers to the setting in a classroom where there is a formal curriculum; there are tests, compulsory attendance and requirements for success. Museums on the other hand do not necessarily conform to these structures but offers learners the opportunity to construct their own meaning. Ambrose (1995) on the other hand states that museums will offer some formal education and learning opportunities as well as informal opportunities. They (Ambrose, 1995 and Hein, 1998) both agree that the museum may on occasion resort to traditional schooling methods of having lectures and that more progressive thinking schools or classrooms may adopt museum principles of teaching and learning with objects.

Griffin (2007) and Hicks (1986) believe that a good working relationship should exist between the museum educator and the school educator to create a meaningful experience for learners. Griffin (2007) refers to this as ‘Learning Circle’ where each component: museum educator, school educator and learner form the three strands of the “learning circle”. These three components
have to work together to make the museum visit a meaningful experience and learners should go away with a better understanding of the museum and its machinations. The experience at the museum should be a catalyst for further investigation and research. Hicks (1986) believes that the relationship between the museum and the school or university should be a “symbiotic one”- one where both benefit and are dependent on each other to achieve a common goal- that of education. Scholars suggest that museums can offer alternative learning experiences to that of the ‘formal’ classroom setting and Nabors (2009) claims that field trips are an alternative to the formal school classroom and provide a space for experiential learning. She (Nabors, 2009) suggests that the value of a field trip is priceless in that it provides the visitor to the museum with “real experiences related to all areas of content”. An example of this is that the learner can and will hear the sounds of the keys and doors and gates banging in a prison museum.

To concretise the view that museums are more than just conservators and protectors of artifacts and tangible and intangible heritage the Robben Island Museum (RIM) Public Heritage Education Department (PHED) states that it will:

“Ensure that every visit and interaction with Robben Island Museum is an educational experience by impacting on tours and delivering value added communication, heritage and training services to the different audiences of the Museum” (Robben Island Education Department business plan 2004-2008)
It is fascinating to note how sophisticated, in terms of current educational theory, the educational methods which developed organically on Robben Island were. Learning was a collaborative and co-operative undertaking, utilising group work and co-operative learning processes. Sisulu (1997) talks about the clandestine huddles they formed while working in the quarries where discussion and debate formed the basis for much education. These ‘classes’ developed organically and would be inspired by either an article in a newspaper or a question from a fellow prisoner. It is evident that despite their living conditions and the stress of imprisonment itself, a new level of thinking was developing. Despite these appalling conditions political prisoners were able to turn this negative space into a positive learning environment by studying and finding other ways of surviving this punitive prison system. 

*Studying was very important, especially to the long term prisoner. It meant he could occupy his time and exercise his mental faculties and that when the time came for him to rejoin society he would find it so much easier to adjust*. (Daniels, 2002)

Political education on Robben Island has its roots in the lime and stone quarries on the Island. Since study and teaching conditions were not ideal, prisoners would huddle around the leader and have their discussions clandestinely (Mandela, 1994). Daniels (2002) claims that the lime quarry was their classroom and that *political, formal and informal education* took place there. Prisoners in the general sections were included in these ‘lectures’ when the ‘lecturers’ sent the notes to them, clandestinely, and they responded with questions. Prisoners who were studying towards formal qualifications
were allowed to study up to a certain hour in their cells at night. The cut off time for those in standard eight would be eight o’clock at night. University students could study until eleven o’clock at night (Kathrada, 2004). Alexander (1994) alludes that official permission was given to hold literacy classes in the general sections but not in the section where the Namibian prisoners were held.

To sum up the education practices that emerged from the Robben Island prison there are strong links to popular education. Teachers were students and teachers at the same time – there was peer learning and teaching which translates to group work. Learning was as much an individual as a group process. Education involved active participation, in which political prisoners took seriously their engagement in the learning process particularly through debate. In other words there was responsible, self-motivated participatory learning with an emphasis on character development. Today these features are all suggested as criteria for an approach to teaching and learning which is effective in stimulating holistic learning, i.e. cognitive, affective and behavioural.

Paulo Freire and Antonio Gramsci are amongst the forerunners in the study of adult education and social transformation. The seminal work of these two educationists and authors will continue to have an influence on the debates on the emancipatory nature and possibilities of adult education. The fact that Freire and Gramsci were imprisoned or exiled for their opposition to the status quo lends credence to the mention of their work since they may have shared experiences with political prisoners. Freire’s work can be categorised
within a social action approach to learning which sees the relationship of the individual to others and the society at large as crucial. Learning in this approach is seen as attempting to improve a society. The prison system on Robben Island where prisoners had literacy classes lends itself to this improvement of a society albeit a prison society. Freire suggests an education in opposition to the “banking method” that saw students as depositories that should be filled by teachers who are the depositors and who consider themselves knowledgeable (Freire, 1972). The banking method led to “education for domestication” that had people accept things as they are. Through this negative education people accepted the role imposed on them and merely adapted to the “world as it is and to the fragmented reality deposited in them” (Freire 1972). The alternative “education for liberation” would allow man to be seen as conscious beings and not merely as empty vessels to be filled. Education for liberation sees the role of the teacher and student as interchangeable with the teacher no longer the authority on knowledge. Both student and teacher have knowledge and both teach and learn at the same time. The political education classes on the Island are an example of this kind of education. The prisoner who had the knowledge and expertise about a topic or subject would be the teacher and the role of teacher and student was interchangeable.

Freire advocated that through a process of “problem-posing” and discussion people would identify their problems and arrive at a joint strategy to change their situation. Through reflection on their problems and a
discussion on the joint action that they would take to change their current situation, Freire claims that a measure of “conscientisation” would be arrived at. The concept of conscientisation was born out of an adult literacy project, initiated by Freire in the 1960s in Brazil, to counter the state-controlled education system of the then military regime. (Rockwell, 2011). However, this process of conscientisation would not be a technical approach where merely functional literacy was taught, but one that would gradually allow the participants to understand the parameters and consciously think about their situation and their place in the world. A tenet of Freire’s work was to move participants from a “magical consciousness to a critical one” where they would jointly fight the oppressors and oppression which could lead to a better life (Findsen, 2007).

Gramsci’s notion of hegemony is extended not only to “situations in which one nation exercises political, cultural or economic influence over others” but he also extended this to also apply to relationships between groups especially social classes” (Entwistle, 1979). He believed that the only way the working class would be able to fight this hegemony was to think and act like the ‘ruling class’. Education was the tool to allow the working class to counter hegemony. However, Gramsci has been criticized for his paradox in wanting a radical political education through a traditional curriculum and pedagogy. His adversaries argue that the only way to counter hegemony was to have a radical curriculum and a liberal pedagogy. Gramsci believed that some of the traditional schooling had revolutionary potential. These aspects relate to the political-prisoner education and formal education that took place on Robben Island. Political prisoners adopted a two pronged approach to education:
political-prisoner education and prison-sponsored education. A combination would stand the prisoners in good stead when they were eventually released.

Robben Island, or simply called, the Island, has a long history of being a place of banishment for those who opposed the status quo or for those considered the undesirables of society. The layered history and use of the Island can be categorise as: occasional occupation prior to 1652; a colonial prison 1657-1921; a colonial hospital 1846-1931; a naval base 1931-1959; an apartheid prison 1961-1996 and eventually culminating in it being declared a national museum in 1995 and a World Heritage site in 1999 (Deacon, Penn, Odendaal & Davison, 1996). A recurring theme throughout the history of the Island is one of oppression—opposition to this oppression, banishment or imprisonment and eventual release or transfer from the Island. It is, however, the recent use of the Island as a maximum security prison for political and common law prisoners under the apartheid government between 1960 and 1991 that the Island gained its significance and importance as a penal Island. In spite of the Island’s notoriety as a prison and banishment place, it has become a symbol of the triumph of the human spirit over adversity and pain and is a tangible reminder of the attainment of democracy in South Africa.

RIM as “a place of lifelong learning”, has one of its main objectives, “to improve heritage Management in the heritage terrain in the world”, as stated in the Integrated Conservation Management Plan (ICMP). In order to
ensure the achievement of this objective, RIM offers a post graduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies which is referred to as; The African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies (APMHS). The programme is collaboration between RIM and UWC. What makes this programme unique and outstanding is that, it is offered at the university and in the heritage institution simultaneously. That makes it possible for students to learn heritage at academic level but at the same time using a heritage institution as a laboratory for learning and therefore providing students’ theory and practical first-hand experience as well.

According to Witz (2008: 1),

“The primary objective of the Program has been to create and extend vocational possibilities in the heritage, museum and tourism sectors. The Program is distinctive in that the education it offers is driven by an emphasis on a conceptual understanding of the terrain of public culture, of the challenges of social and institutional transformation, and of the work of representation”.

Thus, there is a clear correspondence between the broader objectives of RIM and those of the APMHS, hence RIM’s full commitment to contribute to the programme.
THE 1913 NATIVES LAND ACT: 101 years of unresolved land question in South Africa.

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Key words: 1913 Natives Land Act; land dispossession; wars of resistance; African indigenous kingdoms and communities; the Union of South Africa; conventional and alternative sources

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1. Introduction

Land dispossession of the indigenous African people in what is South Africa today, had its origins in the earliest and first contacts between the aboriginal native communities and the earliest European sailors, explorers, travellers, hunters and traders. The earliest Europeans temporarily touched on African shores as they embarked on their various missions of sailing, exploring, travelling, hunting and trading. These temporary expeditions were gradually replaced by more permanent settlement efforts, especially from the second half of the 17th century. The landing of Jan van Riebeeck and his Dutch group in April 1652 represents a shift from temporary periodical journeys by Europeans to a more systematic, permanent colonial presence which would result in dispossession of land, livestock and freedom of the indigenous communities.

The colonial expansion into the interior by the Dutch Voortrekkers (and later the British) led to the confrontation with the indigenous communities, starting with the San, the Khoikhoi, and later the Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, Matebele, Venda, etc. Wars of resistance against dispossession were waged by African warrior leaders such as Hintsa, Shaka, Dingane, Cetshwayo, Bhambatha, Moshoeshoe, Manthatisi, Sekonyela, Mzilikazi, Lobengula, Mokopane, Mankopane, Malebogo, Sekhukhune, Makgoba, Modjadji, Makhado and Ngungunyane. Eventually, the resistance of those warrior leaders was finally broken and the whites-only
administration was set up in 1910. The struggle to recoup disposessions took a new turn with the formation of the South African Native National Congress in 1912 in which new approaches of resistance emerged. Struggles to regain land, livestock and freedom then took various forms as the deprived indigenous people fought against the consecutive white minority governments in South Africa until the a political settlement was negotiated and attained in 1994.

2. Problem statement

By today (2014), the question of land dispossession in South Africa has not been resolved 101 years after the passing of the 1913 Natives Land Act. Even though a political settlement was reached in 1994, the issue of land is still a subject of hot debate and is yet to be decisively resolved.

3. Purpose of the study

The aim and objective of this study is to trace the origin of the land dispossession issue in South Africa, highlight it throughout different historical epochs. Related to this, this study seeks to investigate how land was dispossessed from the indigenous African communities by the European colonial settlers. The study seeks to show how those who were dispossessed tried to fight and resist dispossession while the colonial forces fought to further entrench and sustain what they had looted. The study then looks into how and why the land question was never resolved even when the political settlement was
negotiated and attained in 1994.

4. Methodology

The study will use conventional and alternative sources which include books, journals, web pages, political parties’ manifestos, conference documents, commissions’ reports, etc. The paper follows a chronological approach in tracing the dispossession of land, livestock and freedom of the indigenous African people by the European colonisers.

5. Dispossession of land, livestock and freedom

5.1. Earliest external contacts, purposeful colonial effort

Dispossession – which included that of land and livestock – has its earliest origins in the first contacts between Europeans who landed on the tip of southern African. The available records indicate that as early as the 15th century, the Europeans had sailed up to the Cape. The Portuguese sailors, Bartholomeo Dias and Vasco da Gama were recorded to have touched the Cape shores in 1488 and 1497, respectively. Those earliest European adventurers travelled to faraway places such as southern Africa because of their advantage of ship inventions which enabled them to cover long distances. They also travelled for various reasons such as adventure, exploration, hunting, trading, etc. Those earliest Europeans’ sojourns were mainly temporary and there were no signs of any desire or effort for permanent
The arrival of Jan van Riebeeck’s crew at the Cape’s Table Bay in 1652 marked the beginning of a more purposeful, permanent colonial settlement. While the earlier adventurers stayed for shorter periods and went away, the later Europeans were inclined to settle for good. That implied that they had to establish themselves, and even expand their settlements on the land they found. The earliest colonial and missionary writings have propagated the false and distorted “discovery theory” in which they claimed that colonial territories were discovered by their colonisers. But the truth of the matter is that no people can claim to have discovered a place where they have found other people living.

On the Cape shores, the San and the Khoikhoi were living there, engaged in their various ways of life when the Europeans arrived. The arriving Europeans had basic needs as well. They needed space, shelter, food and security. They did not bring land to live on. Neither did they bring enough food to sustain them. They had to find all what they needed on the new places they had arrived in on the Cape shores. Dispossession began right there when the Van Riebeeck’s Dutch settlers had to drive away the San and the Khoikhoi off in order to establish their settlements. The new settlers also had to find ways of getting livestock from the local communities.

The colonial writings, like with the “discovery theory”, had been misleadingly highlighting the “bartering system” in which it is claimed that the Dutch settlers
mainly acquired livestock through consensual bartering system with the local people, particularly the Khoikhoi. The clashes between the Dutch settlers and the local San and the Khoikhoi communities indicate how the settlers used coercive means to acquire land and livestock. Numerous battles were fought over resources and dispossession took place. It was during those fights over land and livestock that some San and Khoikhoi individuals and leaders were arrested by the Dutch settlers in which some of them were banished to Robben Island¹. The Dutch colonial settlement continued to expand as more and more settlers arrived, even from other parts of Europe. In that process, more and more land and livestock were confiscated as they were needed to sustain the growing number of settlers.

5.2. The frontier wars, land dispossession on the south-eastern coast

By the time of the first British occupation of the Cape in 1795, the Dutch colonial outpost have encroached and dispossessed much of the land that had originally being occupied by the indigenous San and the Khoikhoi. The colonial expansion had extended further inland along the eastern coast, where the settlers encountered the Xhosa. The Dutch colonialists, and later the British, were determined to force the Xhosa off their land, while they also confiscated large herds of cattle and other livestock from the Xhosa. All that resulted in vicious frontier wars between the European colonial settlers and the

indigenous Xhosa. The first such frontier war broke out in 1779 when a Dutch Boer, Willem Prinsloo, shot and killed a Xhosa\(^2\). The Xhosa were furious and they mobilised their forces and raided the Boers. On their part, the Boers retaliated by attacking the Xhosa under their allegedly cruel commander, Adriaan van Jaarsveld. The first war ended in 1781 but it was not long before the second one broke out in 1789, lasting up to 1793\(^3\). During each war, the Boers were determined to annex more land from the Xhosa, pushing the frontier further north along the east coast. It was also during those raids that the colonial settlers accumulated more and more livestock which they raided from the Xhosa.

When the British occupied the Cape for the second time in 1806 for strategic reasons in the height of the Napoleonic Wars, they replaced the Dutch as the new expanding colonial force. The British soon proved themselves to have more avaricious appetite to expand than the Dutch. The British also had grand plans and resources to sustain their expansion further into southern Africa’s interior. They took from where the Dutch colonial settlers left as they continued frontier wars against the indigenous Xhosa communities in which they dispossessed large tracts of land and thousands and thousands of livestock. The British engaged the Xhosa in the third frontier war started in 1799 and dragged up to 1803.


\(^3\) N. Mostert, Frontiers: The Epic of South Africa’s Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People, 1993.
By 1820, the colonial settlers had already fought the Xhosa in the fourth war in the frontier, which lasted between 1811 and 1812\(^4\). The fifth war of the frontier broke out in 1818 mainly because the colonial settlers intended to accumulate as much land and cattle as possible from the Xhosa. The frontier wars between the Xhosa and the European colonialists were not about to end. By the beginning of 1830s when Hintsa was king of the Gcaleka, the two warring sides had fought for five times. In 1834, another war broke out, the sixth one over the frontier. The immediate cause of that war was that the colonial forces had shot and killed a high-ranking Xhosa from the royal house. By that time, Benjamin D’Urban had just been appointed the Governor of the Cape Colony and he had promised to make peace with the Xhosa on the frontier. As part of his peace plans, he hoped to sign treaties with the Xhosa authorities and also to appoint white magistrates among them. However, D’Urban’s peace hopes were dashed by that unfortunate killing of a Xhosa high-ranking royal in December 1834.

In retaliation to that murder, Inkosi Hintsa’s warriors were mobilised under the command of the reputable “father of guerrilla war”, Maqoma, who was also the brother of the murdered official. About 12 000 Xhosa warriors invaded the area which the colonial authorities had claimed to be theirs. The Xhosa authorities also aimed to reclaim that land from which they had been pushed out by the colonial forces. During that attack the Xhosa troops destroyed over 450 homes of the colonial

settlers; killed over twenty colonial settlers; confiscated about six thousand horses, over hundred thousand cattle and hundred-and-fifty thousand sheep\textsuperscript{5}. Given the fact that the colonial settlers did not bring land and livestock from Europe, the Xhosa were mainly recovering and recapturing land and livestock which had been confiscated from them by the European settlers.

5. 3. Wars of resistance against land dispossession in the interior

While the British occupied the Cape and began land and livestock dispossession against the indigenous Xhosa communities on the south-eastern coast, the descendants of the Dutch settlers, known also as the Voortrekkers or the Boers, were to be involved in massive dispossession in the interior of what is South Africa today. Those Dutch descendants did not want to submit under the British authority at the Cape after the latter occupied the area in 1895, and again in 1806. They then decided to leave the British-occupied Cape and venture into the interior in a mass exodus known as the Great Trek around the 1830s.

Featuring chains of cattle wagons, the Great Trek saw the Voortrekkers/Boers trekking northwards in search of “their” place to stay. The movement was led by ambitious adventurers such as Piet Retief, Louis Trichardt, Piet Potgieter, Andries Pretorius, Gerit Maritz, to name just a few. By mid-1850s, the Boers were laying

\textsuperscript{5} G.M. Theal, History of South Africa…
claim to a vast area starting from the Orange River in the south, up to Limpopo River in the north. That vast area was what the Boers claimed to be “their two republics”, the Transvaal (Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek –ZAR) and the Orange River Colony. British colonial authorities later recognised the existence of these “Boer territories” in the Sand River Convention (1852) and the Orange River Convention (1854) respectively.

The reality on the ground was that on the territory which the Boers referred to as their “republics”, there were indigenous African communities that were resident in that vast area. It therefore became inevitable that the Boers, like the British did with the Xhosa on the southeastern coast, had to try and subjugate the indigenous African kingdoms and communities in the interior for them to actually claim ownership of that territory. The Boers effectively engaged in a series of wars against those kingdoms and communities in which land and livestock were the major prizes at stake.

Along their Great Trek route the Boers had to contend with indigenous African communities by trying to subjugate them, in which in some instances, they met fierce resistance. In some cases the Boers were defeated by some indigenous African kingdoms in which they had to regroup and fight again. On their Great Trek trail, the Boers appeared to have initially differed in approaches and destinations; hence there were splits in the movement. The group under Louis Trichardt ended up in the Soutpansberg area, in the present-day Limpopo Province, as early as the 1830s, while a group under Piet
Retief ended being in the present-day KwaZulu-Natal during the same period. The wars against the Boers’ colonial dispossessions of those times are well-documented, and for the purpose of these papers they will not be discussed in details.

The Boer group that was in Zululand under Piet Retief ended by being brutally massacred by Inkosi Dingane on 6 February 1838, in which more of them were further killed when the Zulu made follow up attacks. However, the Voortrekkers later regrouped and defeated the Zulu on 16 December 1838, in which they began to confidently lay claim over the land of the Zulu. In the Soutpansberg area during that period, Louis Trichardt’s group appeared to have made little progress in consolidating the Boer authority over the local communities, especially the powerful Venda kingdom which was not about to surrender their freedom to the colonial forces.

In the mid-1850s, the Boers in their “republic” of Transvaal appeared to have been on the back foot as they tried to subjugate the indigenous kingdoms and communities. Around the present-day Mokopane area in the present-day Limpopo Province, the Matebele of both Kgoši Mokopane and Kgoši Mankopane gave the Boers tough times. For instance, in 1854 the people of Kgoši Mokopane killed about fourteen Boers near Mogalakwena River (and that place was named Moordrif – “murder drift”) while Mankopane’s people murdered the other fourteen at Fothane Hill, including Hermanus
Potgieter\textsuperscript{6}. The murders led to war between the Boers and the Matebele around that period. Another setback for the Boers during that period in almost the same area was when they were forced to withdraw to the present-day Polokwane after they were defeated by the Venda of Khosi Makhado in 1867. The Boers had to run and abandon their northern outpost of Schoemansdal and return to Ga Maraba (Marabastad), around the present-day Polokwane.

In the area which the Boers claimed, and was known as the Orange River Colony, the Batlokwa of Kgoshadi Manthatisi and the Basotho of Kgosi Moshoeshoe also fought courageously against the Boers’ land and livestock dispossession in the 1860s\textsuperscript{7}. Between 1868 and 1869, Moshoeshoe succeeded to offset the Boers’ subjugating tendencies by getting the British to guarantee the protection of his kingdom, to which the British authorities consented. Around that period, the Boers were also involved in a war of land and livestock dispossession against the Bapedi kingdom of Kgoši Sekhukhune.

In 1876 the Boers invaded the Bapedi and the Bapedi defeated the Boers at the Battle of Thaba Mosego\textsuperscript{8}. Although the Boers regrouped after that humiliating defeat, they were never able to defeat the Bapedi on their own, until the Bapedi were later defeated by the British

\textsuperscript{6} T. Setumu, Our History, Our Heritage: Wars of Resistance in Limpopo, 2005.

\textsuperscript{7} T. Setumu, Until Lions Document Their Own Heritage, 2014.

\textsuperscript{8} T. Setumu, Our History, Our Heritage...
with the help of the Swazi in 1879. It was also in 1879 that the British colonial machinery was unleashed against the Zulu which were then ruled by Inkosi Cetshwayo. The Zulu defeated the British at the well-documented Battle of Isandlwana in July 1879, but only to succumb to the British power a month later at the Battle of Ulundi.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Boer colonial wars of land and livestock dispossession had shifted to the far north of “their” ZAR colony. In 1894 they were involved in a brief war against Kgoshi Malebogo of the Bahananwa⁹. Malebogo put up a brave fight in which his warriors matched the Boers’ with sophisticated firearms which they had acquired, but eventually Malebogo surrendered and was taken prisoner in Pretoria. After defeating and dispossessing land and livestock of the Bahananwa, the Boer forces under Commandant Piet Joubert, proceeded to the Lowveld where they confronted the Batlhalerwa of Kgoshi Makgoba and the Balobedu of Kgosigadi Modjadji in 1897. The two kingdoms were also defeated by the Boer colonial forces. During that same period – the end of the 19th century – the Tsonga/Shangana people of Hosi Ngungunyane were being attacked by the Portuguese colonial forces. Hosi Ngungunyane’s Gaza kingdom was destroyed by the Portuguese and he was arrested and sent to exile in Europe where he died.

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⁹ T. Setumu, Our History, Our Heritage….
By the end of the 19th century, almost all the independent indigenous African kingdoms were subjugated under the Boer and British colonial rule, almost all their land, livestock and freedom taken away. Ironically, it was during that time that the two European-originated colonial forces came to each others’ throat as they fought in what came to be known as the Anglo-Boer War. The two forces had always been rivals, and the Boers’ 1830s Great Trek rebellion against the British had shown that. The latest confrontation was ignited by the mineral wealth on African soil which both colonial forces wanted to lay their hands on.

The indigenous communities had long known and processed precious minerals, including gold, but when the colonial settlers began to know about the presence of minerals in the areas where indigenous people lived, they again applied that stereotypical, misleading “discovery” theory. They claimed that they had discovered those minerals, like they did with diamond in the late 1860s and gold in the 1880s. After “discovering” those minerals, the Boers and the British headed into a clash, and they were locked in a war that broke out in 1899, only to end in the new century in 1902.

The indigenous African communities participated in the war for various reasons. Most of them took the side of the British as they resented the Boers who had attacked them and dispossessed their land and livestock. By supporting the British war effort, those indigenous communities hoped that the victorious British would help them to return their land which they had lost to the
Boers. In fact, some of those communities had begun to take back their land from the Boers during the war. The participation of indigenous African communities led to the revision of the reference of the war as the Anglo-Boer War, hence in today’s literature it is referred to as the South African War.

5.4. White peace, the Union government and the native question

When the 1899 war broke out, the British were controlling “their colonies” of Natal and the Cape, while the Boers had “their republics” of Transvaal (ZAR) and Orange River Colony. By default, all land of the indigenous kingdoms and communities had been dispossessed. By implication, all indigenous people were under either the British in the “colonies” or the Boers in the “republics”. However, the two white colonial authorities were never able to entirely stamp their authorities over the indigenous communities who were resisting subjugation, especially in reaction to losing their land, livestock and freedom. The resistance of the indigenous people posed an acute threat to the colonial ambitions of both the Boers and the British. As a result, those two white, European-originated nations began to be drawn together by the common threat of what came to be known as “the native question”. Although the Boers and the British fought bitterly from 1899, by 1902 peace was on the cards, with “the native question” being one of
the items high on their political agenda.

After ending the 1899 war with the conclusion of the Vereeniging Treaty in 1902, the Boers and the British began to work together on, among other things, “the native question”. Eventually, they formally established the Union of South Africa government, which excluded the indigenous people. One of the key items on the agenda of the Union’s “native question” was the land issue. Land was a huge challenge that was to be addressed at that time. The systematic attacks and forcing off of indigenous communities by the colonial forces from their land since the earliest times had resulted poisoned conditions in which colonial forces were constantly trying to contain resistance.

Even before the war and peace between the Boers and the British, the administrations of both the “colonies” and the “republics” had to grapple with taking the native issues – particularly land – under control. The administrations in the “colonies” and the “republics” appointed commissions after commissions, in which native issues were investigated and studied in order to find solutions. Few examples of such commissions that were mainly meant to investigate the land matters were the 1883 Commission on Native Laws in the Cape; the 1893 Glen Grey Commission in the Cape; the 1892 and 1893 Location Commissions in the Transvaal; and the 1902 Zululand Land Delimitation Commission in Natal.¹⁰

¹⁰ www.sahistory.org.za.
The quest to find the lasting solution of the “native question”, especially on land, saw the appointment of further commissions by the Boers and the British as they continued to work towards making peace between themselves after the war. In 1903, Alfred Milner, who was in charge of the administration of the former “colonies” and “republics” following the British victory in the war, appointed the South African Native Affairs Commission under Godfrey Lagden (hence the commission reference as the Lagden Commission) to further investigate the “native question”, with emphasis in land. The commission’s report mostly recommended the demarcation of “native reserves” which the indigenous people were supposed to occupy. The commission further recommended that the British Crown had to administer the natives in those reserves according to their traditional ways of lives under their traditional leaderships. The commission also argued against the “squatting” of indigenous black communities on “white land”, thereby laying the foundation for spatial segregation in future South Africa.

The significance and the enormity of the challenge of the “native question”, particularly land, were demonstrated by the appointment of further commissions. In the Cape, the Departmental Commission was appointed in 1907 in order to investigate land settlement on “unreserved land” in order to deal with “squatting”. In Natal, the Native Affairs Commission was appointed between 1906 and

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1907 to look into the issue of land, whereby it was found that the reserves were overcrowded. In the Orange River Colony, the Natives and Native Affairs Commission tabled its report in 1909 in which it recommended the prohibition of ownership of property by indigenous communities outside the reserves. It also rejected sharecropping which was one of the indigenous communities’ main economic life lines. The reports of all these various commissions shaped the incoming Union government’s policy on “natives” and land. In all the former two “colonies” and two “republics”, now known as four “provinces”, locations or reserves for indigenous African communities had been demarcated.

5.5. The enactment of the 1913 Natives Land Act

“Awakening on Friday morning, June 20, 1913, the South African native found himself, not actually a slave, but a pariah in the land of his birth”. These were the sad words of Solomon Tshekiso Plaatjie, commenting on the harsh effects of the passing of the 1913 Natives Land Act on the indigenous communities. Sol Plaatjie was an author, intellectual and political activist who witnessed all the unfolding developments that culminated in the passing of that Act. His writings, especially his book, Native Life in South Africa, and his political involvement in the movement which resisted colonialism and land dispossession, make his works very significant.

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14 Ibid.
in shedding light on the events and times of the Natives Land Act.

After having tried to investigate and get solutions to the “native question” through numerous commissions discussed earlier, the white colonial authorities that had now formed an exclusive white administration, the Union of South Africa, continued to regard that issue as a priority. The “native question” was so important to the Union government that it warranted a standing ministry, the Department of Native Affairs. The first minister appointed was Henry Burton, and he was immediately instructed to further investigate the native land issue. Burton headed a select committee on the native land issues and the work of that committee combined with that of the Lagden commission and the result was the Natives Land Bill, which was eventually passed into the Natives Land Act, No. 27, on 19 June 1913.

The passing of that Act formalised land dispossession of indigenous people by the colonial forces. Dispossession had started with the earliest arrival of the colonialists, but the Act institutionalised this act of taking away land from the indigenous people. According to the Act, indigenous African communities were not allowed to own, buy or hire land in the 93% of land surface which was set aside for Europeans. Africans, who were far in the majority than European colonial settlers, were only allowed to own, buy or hire land on the remaining 7% of the total land surface. That was according to section 1, sub- section (a) of the Act that declared that, “a native

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16 En.wikipedia.org.
shall not enter into any agreement or transaction for the purchase, hire, or other acquisition from a person other than a native, of any such land or of any right thereto, interest therein, or servitude there over”. The meagre 7% of land was merely augmented by the 1936 Land and Trust Act which increased the total land surface available to African communities to just 13.5%, still leaving the whole 86.5% to the European colonial settlers who were in minority, numerically.

The Act also defined the boundaries of the indigenous communities’ locations which were referred to as “scheduled areas” or “reserves”. It also prohibited squatting and share-cropping by Africans on what was demarcated as white areas. The indigenous communities who were caught up on the newly-declared white areas, were turned into servants and labourers overnight as their rights to own, or at least lease, land on those areas were effectively terminated by the Act. In order to implement the provision of the Act, the National Land Commission was appointed in August 1913 under William Beaumont (the commission became known as the Beaumont Commission). The commission’s main task was to identify areas to be set aside for indigenous communities and areas for colonial settlers.

The 1913 Natives Land Act, in addition to dispossessing land from the indigenous people by the colonialists, it laid foundation for racial and separate development in South Africa. The Act defined a “native” as “any person, male or female, who is a member of an aboriginal race or

17 1913 Natives Land Act, No. 27.
tribe of Africa; and shall further include any company or other body of persons, corporate or un-incorporate, if the persons who have a controlling interest therein are natives.” Boundaries based on racial lines between blacks and whites were made clear by the Act, and future developments like apartheid and homeland policies were going to be built on this solid foundation laid by the Act.

5.6. From 1912: new ways of challenging land dispossession and deprivation

The formation of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) in 1912 was a significant milestone in resistance against colonialism, including land dispossession. The SANNC, which was renamed African National Congress (ANC) in 1923, marked the beginning – and demonstrated the capacity – of organising indigenous Africans at national level, i.e. across the four colonies and across tribal lines. Indigenous people and their leaders were well aware of the intentions of the exclusive Union administration, which was only protecting the rights of the white colonial settlers at their expense. Although some of the indigenous African people had pinned their hopes on either side of the warring parties during the 1899 – 1902 war, it soon became clear that the Boers and the British colonialists were prepared to unite and work together against the indigenous Africans, especially on the significant issue of land. The indigenous people’s leadership then responded by organising themselves into national

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18 1913 Natives Land Act, No. 27.
forums, such as the SANNC, in order to respond to those new challenges and advocate the interests of their communities.

The 1913 Natives Land Act and its harsh negative effects on the indigenous communities were some of the first tests of organised African leadership. There was widespread condemnation as early as the Native Land Bill was introduced in the Union parliament. SANNC leaders used every available platform such as meetings, newspapers, etc., to speak against the bill as they saw how it was going to destroy the lives of millions of their people. Protest marches were organised all over the country. On 25 July 1913, the SANNC convened a conference in Johannesburg and it was agreed that a delegation was to be sent to Britain to appeal against the Natives Land Act. Indeed the SANCC met in February 1914 then sent five members to London in order to seek the reversal of the Act: John L Dube, Dr Walter Rubusana, Saul Msane, Thomas Mapikela and Solomon T Plaatje. The delegation issued a petition to King George V, but the British government did not intervene and consequently the Land Act was not reversed.

Despite all the protestations by indigenous people and their leaders against their dispossession of land livestock and freedom, the colonialists seemed determined to forge ahead with their colonial project. In 1927 the colonial Union government passed the Native Administration Act that made the British Crown to usurp all powers of the

19 www.archiveshub.ac.uk.
African traditional rulers. In 1936, the Native Land and Trust Act was passed to add few hectares of land to the reserves which were heavily overcrowded by indigenous African communities who were being forcefully evicted from the “white” areas. The Native Land and Trust Act followed the recommendations made by the 1916 Tomlinson Commission Report which dealt with the land allocated to indigenous African communities in reserves. Additional 6% was added to the native reserves after 1936, leading to indigenous people occupying 13.5% of land while 86.5% was occupied by the colonial white minority.

The ANC experienced organisational challenges in the 1930s and its role as champion of the interests of indigenous communities in matters such as land deprivation almost diminished. During that period, the voice of the working class grew shriller, notably under the Industrial Commercial Union (ICU) of Clement Kadalie. The ANC’s organisational fortunes were revived in the 1940s under A.B. Xuma’s presidency. The rapid urbanisation in South Africa and the global circumstances around World War II provided the resistance movements such as the ANC with new ideas which were more radical and mass-orientated.

It was during that period that within the ANC, the more militant group, the Congress Youth League was formed in 1944. The formation of the CYL, among other things, brought back the land question high on the agenda. Earlier on, in its conference on 16 December 1943, the

ANC had adopted the document, *African Claims in South Africa and the Bill of Rights*, in which land dispossession of land of indigenous people by colonial settlers was in the spotlight. Among other things the document stated: “We demand the right to an equal share of all the material resources of the country and we urge: that the present allocation of 13% of the surface area to 8 million Africans as against 2 million Europeans is unjust … and therefore, demand a fair redistribution of just settlement of the land problem”\(^{21}\).

The land dispossession question was therefore one of the items high on the agenda of the ANC’s militant youth wing. In its 1944 manifesto, the CYL declared: “The white race, possessing superior military power…has arrogated itself the ownership of land and country. This has meant that the African who owned the land before the advent of the whites has been deprived of all the security which may guarantee or ensure his leading a free and unhampred life”\(^{22}\). Towards the end of the 1940s the CYL programmes and campaigns reiterated the necessity to address the land question. The CYL 1948 Basic Document; the CYL 1949 Programme of Action; and the ANC 1952 Defiance Campaign, all these indicated the radical nature of the demands of the indigenous African people, especially the demand around dispossessed land\(^{23}\). These demands and radicalised, mass-based programmes of the indigenous African people were mainly fermented by the white

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\(^{21}\) African Claims in South Africa and the Bill of Rights, 1943.  
\(^{22}\) Congress Youth League Manifesto, 1944.  
colonial settler government which had been taken over by the Nationalist Party that vigorously propagated and implemented racial segregation through its apartheid policies. The militant masses of indigenous communities were prepared to fight for the restoration of their land, livestock and freedom that had been forcefully confiscated by the colonialists.

5.7. Land, Freedom Charter, and the Pan Africanist break away

The Freedom Charter, which was adopted in 1955 by the Congress Alliance, which included the ANC and its Indian, Coloured and white congress allies, put the land dispossession and ownership under the spotlight. In fact, it sparked a debate about actually, who owns South Africa? The preamble of the Freedom Charter opens by stating that, “We, the People of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know: that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white…” It was around this time that the youthful Pan Africanists within the ANC were questioning the role of white liberals and communists within the liberation struggle. The CYL members such as Anton Muziwakhe Lembede, Ashby Peter Mda, Peter Raboroko, Zephania Mothopeng, Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, Geoffrey Pitje, Nyathi Pokela, Jafta Masemola, Peter Molotsi and Selby Ngendane, were Pan Africanist in outlook, and were very vocal about the land belonging to Africans.

25 M. Pheko, How Freedom Charter Betrayed…
So, when the Freedom Charter declared that South Africa also belonged to the white colonisers, the young Pan Africanists disagreed. That disagreement played itself out until it ruptured in 1958 when the Pan Africanists broke away from the ANC and formed the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) in 1959. To them, land dispossession of indigenous African people by colonisers was very clear, and therefore the struggle was about the return of land to its rightful owners led by Africans themselves. The Pan Africanists were weary of the involvement and leadership of the white liberals and communists in the struggle to return land, livestock and freedom to the indigenous people.

The PAC regarded land as its main priority as reflected in its manifestos, policy documents and conference discussions. For instance, its 1959 founding manifesto, Clause (b), states that, “Land Robbery and political Subjugation: Early Europeans settlement of Africa especially of its southern tip, as a direct result of the rise of European commercial capital”\(^{26}\). The liberation movements in South Africa were attacked and almost crippled by the white minority apartheid government in early 1960.

The liberation movements were involved in mobilising the masses against the apartheid’s policies, and that culminated in the brutal Sharpeville Massacre. Thereafter, the opponents of the state were brutally

\(^{26}\) Manifesto of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, 1959.
clamped down, in which organisations were banned; individuals were arrested; and others fled the country. Although the white colonial apartheid state momentarily triumphed over its opponents who were mostly fighting for freedom and against land dispossession, among other things, those demands did not disappear. Liberation movements such as the ANC and the PAC maintained their demands while their members were either in exile, in prison, or inside the country. The land question, as one of the issues on the demand list, was also still unresolved.

While the liberation movements that had fought against land dispossession were suppressed, the apartheid government continued to consolidate its objectives on land in the 1960s. Building on the initiatives and institutional frameworks provided by previous legislation such as the Natives Land Act, the white apartheid authorities parceled out pieces of land in the reserves in what came to be referred to as “homelands” or “Bantustans”. Here, indigenous African communities were divided into tribal lines in their forced settlements. Although the apartheid colonial authorities tried to address the land question through the homelands policies, the approach never resolved the main problem of land in South Africa because the 13% allocated to the majority indigenous people was creating all sorts of socio-economic and political problems.

5.8. Negotiated settlement, land dispossession question unresolved up to 2014
The South African political conflict was negotiated and that resulted in a compromise settlement of the 1990s. The settlement was a compromise because the liberation movements, with their guerilla armies, could not topple the white apartheid colonial government, while that government was unable to exert its authority over the masses whose uprising had risen, especially in the mid-1980s. During that negotiation process, the land question appeared to still be the main bone of contention as ever. The debate about land occupation and ownership became so enormous that it threatened the political settlement that was being hammered. The Pan Africanists still insisted that “land first, and all shall follow”; implying that dispossessed land should first be returned to the indigenous African communities before any agreement could be reached.

While the Pan Africanists on the left side of the South African political spectrum called for all or nothing on the land issue, on the right, there were groups that were against any compromise or negotiated settlement. The right wing groups were concerned that the Nationalist Party, which had entered into negotiations with the ANC, was selling the privileged whites out. They desperately wanted to hold on the status quo, including land which was dispossessed from the indigenous communities by their forefathers. The rightwing groups threatened the negotiated process with violent skirmishes here and there, but the determination and leadership of those who were committed to resolve South Africa’s political problems prevailed.
On its part, the ANC eventually conceded on the land question in what came to be known as the “sunset clause” whereby the “property rights” clause would be enshrined in the constitution. That would imply that the white colonialists would keep land that they had dispossessed the indigenous people, while the latter would still be without what they had fought to attain.

In its first democratic elections manifesto in 1994, the ANC focused on “Land Reform” in which on this issue it repeated the opening statement of the Freedom Charter, “South Africa belongs to all who live in it.” The manifesto further promised to “guarantee victims of forced removals restitution, which should be carried out fairly through a Land Claims Court”; and “use state land in the implementation of land reform.” On the other hand, the PAC still insisted on the principle of the return of land to the indigenous people. The ANC went ahead to be the dominant political force as it overwhelmingly won the first election in 1994 with 62%. The PAC, with its strong view on the indigenous people’s land dispossession and deprivation, performed poorly at the polls, managing a meagre 1.25%, which qualified it just five seats in the National Assembly compared to the 252 seats of the ANC.

27 En.wikipedia.org

29 Ibid.
On the issue of land, the ANC now in power, set its targets “restitution, redistribution and tenure reform” in which it aimed to redistribute “30% of land by 2014”. The ANC then opened the land claims process in which communities who were forcefully removed from their land after 1913 were called on to apply, in which the state would then buy land for the claimants on a willing-seller-willing-buyer basis”. This approach was doomed to fail from the beginning because it was unrealistic and grossly unfair and flawed for various reasons. For instance, the willing-buyer-willing-seller approach was unfairly advantageous in favour of the descendants of the colonisers because they were being paid huge amounts of money for the land that their forefathers annexed from the indigenous people.

Ironically, those who had land in their hands were being paid by the taxes from the same dispossessed black majority. The 1913 cut-off date was another flaw because much of land was dispossessed by the colonisers far much earlier than 1913 – as far back as 1652. As a result of those flaws and unrealistic targeted outcomes, by 2013 the ANC was changing its tune as it was abandoning the willing-buyer-willing-seller approach and the 1913 cut-off date. What all that implied was that by 2013, the centenary of the 1913 Natives Land Act, the land dispossession issue was not resolved, after the oldest liberation movement in Africa, the ANC had been in power for almost two decades.

Recently, the land dispossession question was revived in the political landscape by Julius Malema, who had
formed his political party, the Economic Freedom Fighters, after he was expelled from the ANC in 2012. Malema preached the “expropriation of land without compensation”, along with the “nationalisation of mines”. This is verbatim in the EFF’s 2014 election manifesto: “It is our firm belief and conviction that economic freedom will be attained through implementation of 7 cardinal pillars, which are: 1) Expropriation of South Africa’s land without compensation for equal redistribution in and use. 2) Nationalisation of mines, banks, and other strategic sectors of the economy, without compensation....”

On its part, in its 2014 election manifesto, on the issue of land, among other things, the ANC promised to “accelerate the settlement of remaining land claims submitted before the cut-off date of 1998”; “re-open the period for the lodgement of claims for restitution of land for a period of five years, commencing in 2014”; and “codify the exceptions to the 1913 cut-off date for the descendants of the Khoi and San, and identify affected heritage sites and historical landmarks”.

The land question did not disappear from the South African radar after the recent 2014 general election. The ANC, which was given resounding 62.2% victory by the electorate in the latest polls, is yet to decisively address land dispossession in South Africa. Land hunger and deprivation had given rise to numerous challenges related to landlessness such as overcrowding in squatter camps; overgrazing and soil erosion in rural reserves; as

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well as poverty in general. Although the EFF tried to articulate this huge issue of land dispossession of indigenous people by colonisers, the 2014 voters gave the Malema party 6.3% – whether this is enough a mandate to address the land question in South Africa remains to be seen.

6. Findings

This paper made the following findings:

- Land dispossession of the indigenous kingdoms and communities began at the earliest time when the colonial settlers set foot on the African shores and sought to settle permanently.
- The colonial settlers began to dispossess land, livestock and freedom of the indigenous communities immediately after they arrived.
- By the end of the 19th century, almost all independent African kingdoms and communities had been subjugated by the colonial forces in which they lost their land, livestock and freedom.
- In 1910 the Boers and the British formed the white-only Union government in which they perpetuated deprivation of the indigenous communities, especially on the issue of land.
- After the formation of the white-only Union, the indigenous people’s leaders united across tribal lines and across colonies in order to resist dispossession by colonialists, forming the South African Natives National Congress in 1912.
- The 1913 Natives Land Act was a formalisation
of land dispossession that had begun much earlier.

- The struggle for the regaining of land, livestock and freedom by the indigenous communities took various forms until a political negotiated settlement was achieved in the 1990s.
- The land dispossession issue was never resolved in South Africa until today, 2014.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

The paper concludes that the land dispossession that began with the arrival of colonial settlers is not yet resolved after so many decades of struggle. It recommends that land question needs full attention and needs to be resolved as a matter of urgency as land hunger and deprivation are related to current challenges of landlessness; shacks and squatter camps; overcrowding and overgrazing; poverty; unemployment; and general inequality in South Africa.
How T-shirts were used in the struggle against apartheid.

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**Key words**: Political t-shirts; political branding; political identity; revolutionary identities; resistance politics; apartheid struggle

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Introduction

When looking back into the struggle against apartheid we observe the use of activist T-shirts during campaigns, gatherings, funerals and rallies. Political organisations that used T-shirts as part of the struggle against apartheid include the African National Congress (ANC), United Democratic Front (UDF), Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) which later became the Azanian People’s Organisation (AZAPO). Lastly other civic youth organisations would have creatively developed and used this media.

It is also apparent that during the apartheid era T-shirts were not only used for political organisations, because the T-shirts collection and other related material at the Mayibuye archive reflects that organisations like Cosatu also used T-shirts for strikes. Messages communicated by the T-shirts reflect anger of workers who have had enough of being exploited by their employers. Through the T-shirts they communicated messages about hard work and low or insufficient income, which was not enough to feed their families, as well as increased poverty. Furthermore, posters and photographs represent students and other groups of people who wore activist T-shirts with powerful statements which opposed the apartheid rule. Judging from the appearance of these T-shirts in the images, those involved might have printed these T-shirts themselves. Apart from organisations
encouraging their members to wear T-shirts, individuals also expressed their political views, allegiance, solidarity and support to particular organisations by wearing the T-shirts every day in order to show their political identity.

With this act T-shirts became an important tool in sending messages to the oppressed and the oppressor and not forgetting the individual personal messages they were sending. Although Mayibuye Archives stores and exhibits a collection of these T-shirts which played such an important role in the struggle against apartheid, not much research has been done on it. Thus, this study seeks to bring out their importance as they were used to identify different organisations and individuals supporting these organisations.

Many scholars have not looked at them as a collection worthy to be studied. I find this worthy of an academic investigation because the people who participated in the anti-apartheid struggle- the majority were not military trained, but they were willing to face the state security forces of that time un-armed during their marches and demonstrations. They would express how they felt about the struggle with only statements written on the T-shirts and banners. Apart from the apartheid era, the contemporary use of T-shirts continues to reveal patterns of popularisation of political leaders, slogans and campaigns. I also find it interesting that during political campaigns, faces of political leaders are made still to fill the fronts of T-shirts as it happened in the past. But, it is also interesting that public T-shirt struggles have now extended to include public T-shirt burnings. The same T-
shirts bearing faces of political leaders can be seen burnt in public by groups opposing ideologies of that particular political party.
Chapter 1

All forms of artistic expression were used to fight the struggle from comic cartoons, craft, posters, banners, murals, poetry, drama, publications, T-shirts, and many body adornment of the time. People used many medium to print on the adornments. Examples of these can be observed on the series of catalogue of grassroots publications of the time, new catalogues like Struggle Ink, Exhibition catalogue, The posters as a South African cultural weapon. 1982-1994, Robben Island Museum (2001) which shows images, media newspapers produced during the struggle and so on.

According to Stacer Portwood, T-shirts are used for communication such as political identity, individual communication and branding. Further Stacer Portwood states that individuals communicate their identity through using global recognisable brands that are linked to political motives. One example she uses is revolutionary identities such as Che Guevara an Argentinean revolutionary. Similarly, Moletsane Relehobile in the book to be reviewed in this paper she mentions T-shirts associated with political icons such as Nelson Mandela, Jacob Zuma and Barack Obama.2

In the business world, the T-shirt concept is viewed as a marketing tool for communication strategy with a broader application than that of a corporate image. Further they show a sense of association with an organisation, company and so on. Labels and symbols are represented for an individual to be identified to a
particular group or society. Most of these representations or designs have to shout to the people presented to, as to make the message clear to everyone. In addition they should send a desire or need of that society or group presented and on the other hand they are also perceived to be manipulative because of the provocative statements written on them. On the other hand some individuals use them to market themselves as a member of a group which shares similar problems and issues.

In her discussion Portwood Stacer further says that T-shirts must bring a new meaning that satisfies some existing longing or desire. In this paper her ideas are directed to the fashion world, personal expression, company branding and advertising. The only political identity she uses is the commodification of the image of Che-Guevara which is printed on T-shirts. The Cuban government has used his image on T-shirts and so on for revolutionary pride to its citizens, though some individuals in the 1960 to 1970’s social movements in the west used Che-Guevara T-shirt for freedom and resistance to authority. In contrast to this, during the South African struggle against apartheid, organisations and individuals also used activists T-shirts of their popular culture of the time and in a similar way youth of today still use them for fashion identity and other personal identities.

According to Moletsane’s view he discusses how, in the South African context, T-shirts currently are mostly used to express township slogans, awareness against drug abuse, domestic violence and that they also express
issues that are difficult to talk about such as sexual abuse, rape and racism. Another interesting example is the shift of T-shirts being used in the struggle against apartheid to the time we use them in the fight against H.I.V Aids which the whole world is facing. The use of T-shirt has remained a powerful medium not only in South African struggles but the world as a whole has used them for activists’ campaigns and so on.

In following Moletsane in the book “Was it something I wore “under the topic “dress for social change” she discusses T-shirts or dress as signifying liberating an individual. Her idea focuses on the liberation of women in dressing and she also touches less on political representation using T-shirts just like in Portwood Stacer’s discussion. Further she does introduce the use of T-shirts in politics in which she gives them the title ‘activists T-shirts’ or campaign T-shirts. Though in this research essay, T-shirts will be discussed in relation to how they were used and how they struggled against apartheid.

This can also be seen during the Apartheid time when T-shirts were worn for various occasions such as burials, various marches and are observed in several images seen in Apartheid publication and archives. Most T-shirts observed in the apartheid era show slogans from different organisations that were fighting the system of the time. The slogans highlighted issues of oppression, anger and a longing for liberation. In regard to this the powerful messages sent by T-shirts is supported. Martin in Portwood Stacer is quoted as saying that ‘the political
motive and moral of T-shirts in particular the wearer as well as the observer both are likely to be stimulated by the message on the T-shirt and think about the various social issues that are affecting them. I believe that was the case with apartheid. People constantly reminded each other about the suffering and oppression they were facing and at the same time expressing resistance.

What can be extracted from these discussions is that Portwood Stacer and Moletsane Rebohile share similar views about the T-shirts being used for advertising and branding, political identity, individual identity, and campaigns which addresses current issues that South Africa and the world are facing.

Scholars have reviewed other apartheid experiences but have not focused much on the T-shirt from the apartheid era. They have not looked at the role they played in identifying political organisations, individuals’ support, the messages it conveyed to the oppressed and the oppressor. I feel that T-shirts served as a platform for people to express how they felt about the apartheid rule. The scholars have not looked at how the apartheid government responded to the use of activist-shirts. So this research will focus on the collection of these T-shirt and analyse the slogans, symbols and images on these T-shirts and find out what they meant to the wearer and observers.

The reason for doing this research is that although there is a range of material produced for the anti-apartheid movement, which consists of art collection, banners,
commemorations, films, videos, photographs, exhibitions and other apartheid experiences, T-shirts are under-explored. Many scholarly writings seem to have not paid much attention to this aspect. Large collections of the T-shirts and photographic images with slogans of different political organisations are stored in anti-apartheid movement sections of archives, but not much attention have been paid to this collection. Therefore, this research seeks to fill and address this issue by conducting a study specific to this collection. My focus is on the political T-shirt in the context of the struggle against apartheid.

This research is aimed at exploring the history and production of T-shirts during the apartheid era from the late 1970s to 1994. This will include the role players involved in the production and printing of the T-shirts, the kind of materials that the T-shirts were made of, the places, workshops or factories in which they were printed and embroidered, as well as the techniques used in their production. I will also analyse how the political organisations of that time used T-shirts in fighting against apartheid by studying a sample of T-shirts to investigate what political organisations used T-shirts, who wore them, the times and occasions during which they were worn and the meanings that the T-shirts could have created and communicated, which may not have been the same as the organisations intended. The study will focus on Cape Town and Johannesburg, the reason being that, as the major cities, they were the hubs and sites of major activity in the struggle against apartheid.
The T-shirts that will be reviewed for this study will be taken from the Mayibuye art collection and archive (UWC). Publications with visuals such as photographs and other related material will also be sourced from the Mayibuye art collection and archive. Oral interviews will be conducted with those who produced the T-shirts and those who wore them. These interviews will be supplemented with literature from different scholars regarding the use of T-shirts in political struggles and other campaigns will be used to support the discussion of the literature.
Chapter 2

This chapter focuses on the politics of T-shirts by looking at how T-shirts were used during apartheid in the late 1970s and 80s. I have chosen this time period because, from the available material. It seems as if this is when we first see T-shirts in South African resistance politics. The discussion will start by giving a brief history of the T-shirt and how it came into being in other parts of the world, namely the United States of America, and how the T-shirts were used by emerging youth culture of 1960. The main discussion will focus on how South African political organisations later used the T-shirts in the fight against apartheid. Here I will draw on my research with the T-shirts, resistance photographs as well as interviews with activists who participated in some of the organisations that were part of the struggle. I will also make use of literature published by several scholars on T-shirts.

Political organisations used the T-shirts in many ways – as branding for their organisation, to mobilise support for campaigns and to honour fallen heroes and comrades. Activists themselves used them as expression of personal identity and at times to use their own bodies as weapons of resistance. On the other hand T-shirts were not used alone they are seen as being accompanied by posters and pamphlets which played a similar role in mobilising the people. For instance the same slogan seen on a poster was also printed on the T-shirt. So this chapter will also touch on how these two worked together giving examples from the interviews and other scholars.
A very brief history of the T-shirt

From my previous study in textile, T-shirts in the UK may have been first used as undershirts in World War two. On the other hand since 1913 in America T-shirts were considered as a formal outfit in the US Navy. Most T-shirt material used at the time was mainly cotton. Cotton is known for its warmth during harsh weather conditions because it helps the body heat not to escape. In the 1960’s Colin Symes discusses how T-shirts were adopted by the emerging youth culture. Later in the decade, images, slogans and phrases were printed on the T-shirts. Some of these slogans and messages were personal; others were inspired by rock music and popular culture of the time. Further he states that T-shirts slogans have also been accompanied by badges carrying messages and the slogan. Wearing T-shirts and jeans was a way to transgress and protest against the capitalist formal dress code of a three-piece suit. In connecting this to Penny’s discussion, he/she mentions that people use all forms of media and fashion to express their cultural activities and political identities.

On the other hand Jeff Larson and Omar Lizardo talk about how, after the death of Che Guevara in 1968, T-shirts bearing his image was used to protest his killing. Contrary to this, Portwood-Stacer also refers to the Cuban government that used his image on T-shirts to instill revolutionary pride to its citizen. Thus as Portwood-Stacer argue that Che Guevara T-shirts were part of a protest for freedom and against the authorities of that time. We can therefore see from Portwood-Stacer
and Colin Symes that the youth culture of the 1960s and 1970s social movements and individuals used T-shirts in resistance to authority of the time.

What can be drawn from these scholars is that by the late 1960s, T-shirts were both for fashion, to express popular culture and, at the same time they were used to assert anti-establishment political views. Some of the 1960s ideas of T-shirts still continue to our contemporary generation in both politics and popular culture. Thus more recently, Che Guevara’s image has been used in fashion clothing and other related adornments.

**T-shirts and politics in South Africa**

It is unclear when T-shirts first began to be used in resistance politics. There seems to be divergent views. According to the interviewee, T-shirts seem to have emerged around late 1970s although in this case they were not all politically motivated. South Africa History Online (SAHO) under the title ‘Apartheid timeline’ records that Ben Martins, in 1976, printed a Steve Biko T-shirt in memorial of Biko’s death. This does not mark the year in which T-shirts were first used for political struggle but it gives us an idea that there might be some individuals or artists who were already printing or having activists T-shirts.

However, according to artist and media activist, Lionel Davis, while individuals did wear T-shirts, it was only when they came back from a conference held in Botswana, Gaborone in July 1982 that a culture of
political branding using T-shirts was seen in political organisations. This conference was entitled ‘Culture and Resistance Festival’ and it was a call to all South Africans artists, musicians, writers, film maker, theatre dance and so on. People like Abdullah Ibrahim, Hugh Masekela also attended the conference. The main agenda of the conference was to find out how best they can use arts and culture as a weapon of struggle to fight the apartheid government. Judy Seidman quotes a few lines in the speech presented by Dikobe wa Mogale Ben Martins in a speech entitled ‘The necessity of Art for National Liberation,” in a paper at the Culture and Resistance Festival, 1982.

“Our art must become a process-a living, growing thing that people must relate to, identity with, be part of, understand: not a mysterious world a universe a apart from them”.

“As politics must teach people the ways and give them the means to take control over their own lives, art must teach people, in the most vivid and imaginative ways possible, to take control over their own experience and observations, how to link these with the struggle for liberation and a just society free of race, class and exploitation”.

At the end of this conference, artists and musicians were urged to go back to their communities and share their skills in teaching those without skills. As a result artist and media workshops were formed in several parts of the country. Lionel Davis mentions Cape Town Arts Project (CAP) and Screen Training Project (STP) which included JODAC activists who were also responsible for
providing media and media training.

After this conference they were taught how to print their ideas on T-shirts or posters using the silkscreen method. Later those who were taught well would print their own in their own home towns. People from as far as Namibia and rural areas had to come all the way to Cape Town for their T-shirt and poster orders. On the other hand Marcus Solomon and Mansoor Jaffer also agree that political organisations took their T-shirts to community art centres for branding. In regard to this it shows that there was a need for political identity using the available media such as a T-shirt because before then, what was most commonly seen was the use of posters for public protests and so on.

Most T-shirts reviewed in the Mayibuye Archive date back from the 1980s. When I attempted to search beyond 1980 I looked at the photographs of the Steve Biko funeral from 1976 to 1978. The images did not show any signs of T-shirts being worn at the funeral. I went on to review the Grassroots newspaper of 1980, 1981, 1982 and it seemed as though it is in the early 1980s that political T-shirts arrived in the South African politics. The SAHO online also states that in the 1980s Dikobe Ben Martins produced numerous T-shirts and posters for United Democratic Front (UDF) between 1979 and 1983.

In the book *Red on Black* (2007) in the early 1980s posters and photographs show several political organisations like UDF and the Non-European Unity
Movement (NEUM), worker organisations such as the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), Grassroots, Federation of South African Trade Union (FOSATU) and others. These organisations branded themselves using T-shirts with their organisation’s names and sometimes a political slogan. Mansoor Jaffer, Lionel Davis and Marcus Solomon also testify that they used T-shirts for funerals, commemorations, rallies, protest and so on. Posters and other images in *Red on Black* also show political activists wearing different kinds of T-shirts in a variety of gatherings such as strikes, rallies, protests, funerals and so on.

**The T-shirt and political branding**

Joel Penny describes political branding as a form of communication because the political organisations use its members to advertise to the public. This act is also adopted from the corporate world whereby companies use its members to wear T-shirts with the company logo printed on the T-shirt to advertise its products or make itself known to the public. Joel Penny describes how “the act of displaying a social movement symbol publicly”, for example by wearing it on a button or T-shirts, it not only identifies the wearer as member of the movement but also helps to increase awareness that the movement actually exists.

Within the South African organisations it became a fashion for them to be identified by a politicised T-shirt. Most organisations seem to have had an organisational T-shirt, for instance the ANC with its slogan “Long
Live ANC”, the UDF with “UDF Unites, Apartheid Divides”, COSAS with – ‘Each one teach one’ etc. The anti-apartheid organisations wore their identity not only on T-shirts but on stickers, buttons, and badges to show identity or represent their organisation. On the other hand people wear them every day, to establish popularity, etc. For instance one popular slogan mentioned by the interviewees was ‘an injury to one is an injury to all, and a NEUM activist in the poster’s images is seen wearing his political T-shirt branded with this slogan.

The T-shirt and mobilisation

Many organisations printed new T-shirts for a specific campaign to mobilise support. In regard to identity and branding there has always been a need for organisations to identify themselves in the world of politics. The Suffragette Women Political Union (WSPU) in the early 20th century also had less means to identify them as an organisation other than being noted by posters which carried the motives of their campaign. When they were campaigning for their rights to vote they used strips of feminist colours of purple, white and green as their identity. The South African Political organisations in the 1980s show both posters and T-shirts being used for identity and political branding.
Branding and Uniform

Apart from organisations branding themselves using their names and slogans they were also identified by their colours. At some point organisations T-shirts were like a uniform. For example masses are seen wearing the same T-shirts on special occasions like May day celebration, rallies, workers unions, UDF meetings and so. These examples can be observed in posters documented in the book *Red on Black* (2007) and other publications that can be seen at Mayibuye archive. Interviewee Mansoor Jaffer mentions that at some point people wore them almost any day of the week and it became a uniform since it was now a centre of identity in saying “this is who we are, this is what we stand for, that what we believe in”. Marcus Solomon also emphasises that it became a uniform in a sense that they were a form of identification. On the other hand Lionel Davis says if the organisation was not banned e.g. Islam, Cape Youth Congress they would wear them freely as a uniform.

The T-shirt and mobilisation

International anti-apartheid movements such as International Development Aid Fund (IDAF), Irish Anti-apartheid, Anti-apartheid Movement-UK, Japanese Anti-Apartheid and Germany Anti-apartheid Movement and many more embraced the anti-apartheid struggle and participated in helping South African people to fight the apartheid rule. They also identified themselves using T-shirts, publications, pamphlets and so on. Irish anti-
apartheid movement is a good example because some of their activists T-shirts and publication can be seen in the archive. In this collection the most noted ones are campaigns to release Nelson Mandela from prison with the slogan “Free Mandela” accompanied by his image as well as “Celebrate Mandela at 70” T-shirt which celebrated Mandela’s 70th birthday.

According to Judy Seidman, the use of Nelson Mandela’s image dates back to the Rivonia trial in 1963 when his images were printed on posters. She states that Garth Erasmus (artist) used an image of Mandela’s face from the 1950s to create a template and his image appeared in every part of Cape Town with the famous slogan “Free Nelson Mandela” which was to become part of a popular form of protest. According to Marcus Solomon, this slogan was also used inside South Africa in a campaign to free Nelson Mandela.

When I visited Lionel Davis and Marcus Solomon they had T-shirts from some of the international organisations mentioned above. Those T-shirts were branded with the organisation’s name and slogans. According to Lionel Davis soon after the conference in 1982, organisations would come with an order and the artists would conduct a workshop so that they could create a platform to educate the comrades and the community. They would let the comrades do individual sketches then they would combine the individual ideas to come up with one concept. This concept would be the one to be printed on the T-shirt or poster.
Within the world of politics we cannot escape from the use of media and political branding which also plays a vital role in sending messages to the community. During an interview with Mansoor Jaffer he states that the Grassroots newspaper distributed pamphlets to the community. He says this was done because the black majority had no voice during the apartheid in the 80s so Grassroots newspaper became a voice for the voiceless. Another similar discussion which a community is seen making use of pamphlets is the oppressed community of the Mexican Farm workers who are immigrants in America. They were denied proper documents to enable them to vote. The American media is silent about their issues since they are regarded as foreigners. As a result the Mexicans have formed an organisation called United Women Farm Worker (UWFW) which has used T-shirts and badges to protest and de-campaign their current political leader who is slow in bringing change. Within this organisation volunteers have distributed media such as pamphlets and flyers to its community mobilising them to join the campaign which will help them present their issues to the government.

This is a similar thing that the Grassroots newspaper did in the 80s. The UWFW used T-shirts and badges but the Grassroots newspaper distributed publications, pamphlets and they also had T-shirts identifying their organisation. Mansoor Jaffer mentions that the first organisation’s T-shirt he wore was a Grassroots T-shirt which was emblazoned with ‘Grassroots Community Newspaper’. They would wake up early in the morning to distribute to the locations like Khayelitsha and
Gugulethu. This tells us that Grassroots played a big role in mobilising the community against the apartheid government. In both cases T-shirts are used in protest and publications are distributed to the community.

In contemporary politics a range of media from posters, T-shirts, television and radio is being used. Political candidates now brand their images on T-shirts accompanied by party slogans to persuade the public to vote him/her into power.

According to Joel Penny the current debates on political branding is on whether ‘mediatisation and commercialisation of politics should be used in political participation or not’. Some scholars disagree because this is seen as undermining politics. On the other hand some view it as a political stratagem. I think current politics is about how fast one can reach a large audience. Politicians cannot stick to the old forms of sending messages across like using posters, pamphlets and newspapers while there are many options offered by the new forms of media technology such as television that can enable them to reach millions at once. The question to be asked is who controls the media such as newspaper, radio, televisions and so on.

The T-shirt and identity

It was not only organisations that were communicating their message. The individuals who wore them were also shaping and asserting their own identities. Marcus Solomon says “that when you see other people and you
are with other people wearing the same T-shirt you get strength, it inspires you it gives you sense of security”. Mansoor Jaffer said “it was an act of unity defiance, act of solidarity and we were conscious that we were sending a message across to the people, when people saw us they would see the message they would also hope that the message had an impact to the people, townships and suburbs”. And lastly Lionel Davis said “with a T-shirt you are saying to the people this where my heart lies, this is how I see myself as part of this force whether it is a cultural force or political force”. In connecting this to the discussion of Joel on political identity he says that when one is wearing a T-shirt of their political affiliation firstly it shows one’s political identity to the public and the wearer represents those that have a similar view to him and that they are not afraid to be perceived as those opposing the current rule.

Wearing a political branded T-shirt seems to have had an effect on the suppressed black communities during the apartheid struggle. The interviewees stated that people would be inspired by them when they were wearing their organisation’s T-shirt. They say that it also gave the people a sense of security and unity. They were embraced by the community, some calling them ‘viva comrades’ and it was seen as an act of defiance. The black community also identified with them in connection with the struggle since they were their representatives. Marcus Solomon emphasised that they were perceived as terrorists who were causing havoc in the country. The activist or T-shirt wearer cannot be separated from the role they play in moving the slogan around, in other
words they function as a banner that moves around with the slogan. In Joel Penny’s discussion the activist’s body is being used as a tool which sends messages to the public viewers. He views it as playing a persuading function together with the slogan it carries with the T-shirt. It becomes more effective if a group of activists are wearing T-shirts with the same slogan as a protest or at a rally. In such a scenario the slogan or message is over emphasised to the public viewers just like banners that can be observed advertising the same product.

There were also dangers associated with wearing political branded T-shirts and worse with a politicised slogan that could result in arrest or torture. Symes (1989) mentions an incident that happened in Soweto Johannesburg where a 16 year old boy was arrested and tortured for wearing a ‘Free Mandela’ T-shirt. In support of such incidences interviewees mention harassment and torture when one was found in possession or wearing an activist T-shirt opposing the apartheid government. T-shirts of banned organisations like the PAC and ANC were also a threat to the apartheid government. Lionel Davis talks of activists and comrades wrapping T-shirts and posters around their bodies to smuggle them into the communities since there were security forces at the main entrances of the community. Mansoor Jaffer mentions cases where people were stopped at roadblocks and searched and if an activist T-shirt was found this would result to one being detained or tortured. Another case he mentioned is of a Saamstam (Stand together) political organisation where one woman hid her T-shirt in a deep freezer in fear that if her T-shirt was found it would be
confiscated. In a conversation with Mandy from District Six Museum she recalls a time when they had to hide their activists T-shirt in a garden in the back yard of their houses. All this was done to protect the physical body of an activist because no one wanted to die. In a telephonic conversation with Shepherd Mati he said during that time he would wear a T-shirt because it was his wish to live and see another day. This shows that people would wear their activists T-shirt with courage and interviewees emphasised that wearing an activist T-shirt of your political organisation was an act of defiance. They took pride in wearing them but at the same time feared for their lives.

Even those that were printing T-shirts for political branding were in danger. Activists talk of silk screens being confiscated and destroyed in some places although Cape Town did not experience this act. So when one looks at the journey of the T-shirts it has been used as a uniform, flexibility and comfort by the American working class of 1920s, US navy, the youth culture use it for fashion, protests, memorial, celebrations, the co-operative world used it for marketing and political organisations use it for political identity. The T-shirt remains a flexible adornment that can be used by any media, or anyone for their own particular reason, it allows anything without boundaries. For instance you can use it to oppose or to support or express the list is endless.
Conclusion

This research aimed at exploring the history of T-shirts during the apartheid time from late 1970s to 1994. To achieve this it included the activists who were involved in the production and printing of T-shirts. Lionel Davis was an activist and an artist at the time. The research also wanted to look at the kind of materials that the T-shirts were made of, places they were printed and the techniques used in printing these T-shirts. However the research did not cover the production of T-shirts because its title (*How did the T-shirts struggle against apartheid*) directed me to the use of T-shirts being used by different organisations, individuals in protest and also used to show identity.

A section of T-shirts reviewed from the Mayibuye archive and collection was reviewed as to investigate and know which organisations used them and on which occasion they wore them. The interviews conducted with Marcus Solomon, Mansoor Jaffer, Lionel Davis, books and related publications helped in coming up with the data needed to ask questions. Sources from other scholars outside South Africa and the internet websites were reviewed to trace the history and use of T-shirts in other European countries. This assisted in giving a brief background to the T-shirt study.

This paper also aimed at finding out how these T-shirts leave the streets to the archive. The paper did not cover this because it was another research topic to be looked on its own considering the time frame given to this
research module and pressure from other subjects within the course.

**Challenges**

In this research I intended to do the following an exhibition on the T-shirt collection accompanied by this paper, to research on the production of T-shirts, look at the use of T-shirts during the struggle and also look at how these T-shirt came to the archive. From the listed options I managed to only look at the use of T-shirts in the struggle and a little on the production of T-shirts. With the production of T-shirts I interviewed only Lionel Davis because he was an activist, artist and was part of CAP. His information alone was not sufficient to cover the history of production. Since I had to do an exhibition with the curatorship class I could not do two exhibitions because the allocated funds only catered for one exhibition project.

To add on it was going to be difficult to give two exhibitions the same attention. At Mayibuye archive and art collection I concentrated on the available books, catalogues and the T-shirt collection, to get an overview of how these T-shirt were used. It also assisted me in drawing up a literature review for this research. As a result I could not start another research on how the T-shirts moved from the archive to the streets. However, at the archive I tried to trace the year which T-shirts were first used in the South African Struggle. In doing this I reviewed Grassroots newspaper of 1980, 1981. In these years there were no traces of T-shirts being used in the
political struggle beside T-shirts used in sports events. The reasons for tracing the use of T-shirt from the 1970’s is because SAHO South African History online under the title *(Apartheid time line from 1964t01994)* records that after the death of Steve Biko, Dikobe Ben Martin printed a memorial T-shirt of Biko soon after his death. So my supervisor Nicky Rousseau suspected that the funeral of Steve Biko could have had people wearing his T-shirts.

The greatest challenge of this research was that they are no scholarly writings on the use of T-shirts being used during the apartheid struggle. In support of this the South Africa History Archive(SAHA) is to conduct a research project that will trace the history of T-shirts and its use in the political struggle in connection with struggle art, struggle posters and other related resistance artifacts. In quoting the author he states that ‘there has been little research conducted into the ways in which the struggle T-shirts form historical records, providing a rich visual telling of our history. There is therefore a need to work with the makers of struggle T-shirts, mostly active in the 1980s, to gather more detailed information about the creation, production and distribution of such T-shirts, and their relationship to other forms of visual resistance like the posters, so as to improve and update the existing historical record’. So in other ways the author agrees with the challenges faced with this research in terms of scholarly sources.
Next Study

The next study will be to expand on the production of T-shirts or look at how these T-shirts were collected from the owners to the Mayibuye archive. Looking at how these T-shirts were collected and how they become heritage. The study will take this turn because it will investigate the practice and process of collecting, interpreting and curating struggle T-shirts in the post-apartheid South Africa. This is so because when objects enter the archive they are given value compared to the time they are not. They are also given value in the process of interpretation, so this will be about who donated them is part of giving value to the T-shirt, because those who donate the T-shirt do so by attaching value to the T-shirt.
PAPER 3

Breaking the museum education tradition: A study of the Heritage Ambassador Project of District Six Museum between 2002 and 2004

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Keywords: Museums; education; programmes; heritage; District Six Museum; Heritage Ambassador Project; traditional; participate; learning; meaning; theory

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Introduction

This research paper focuses on the early development of the ambassador programme that was started by the District Six Museum. It started as a response to partnership discussions that took place between Malmo City Museum in Sweden and the District Six Museum in South Africa. These discussions were followed by planning and actions in the hope of activating a bilateral agreement. It can be understood to be strengthening cultural relations between the two museums and their countries respectively.

The plan was that the two museums namely Malmo City Museum and the District Six Museum; were to come together and exchange lessons on how best they could work with young people. It involved a process where professionals would take turns to visit each other and learn from each other about the different ways they approach working with young people and children. The objective was to vitalise the museum environment by the introduction of this work. This could be seen as an opportunity to initiate a departure from the usual way the museums conducted their educational work. It was seen as an opportunity to cater for the tuition of young children. The ambassadors were going to be involved in a peer teaching and learning approach which was new for the District Six Museum.

The planners concentrated on reaching the youth but did not specify the geographical boundaries. Since the
District Six Museum is a community museum. There is no evidence as to which provinces were initially planned for during the original planning discussions. However, the ambassador project reached at least two provinces outside the Western Cape, namely; the Northern Cape and the Eastern Cape. There were feedback forms from Atlantis and Grabouw near Cape Town in the Western Cape, Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape and De Aar in the Northern Cape.

The account of the ambassadors programme was fragmented and few. Only the District Six Museum archive was used, which meant that there is only one side that has been interrogated. I did not have access to the Malmo City Museum archive. I also did not conduct interviews with the programme leaders of the time. However, the available documentary evidence was very helpful. Some discussions with colleagues were equally helpful to put the story together. It is possible to do more in this area especially if one could access the Swedish archive and conduct oral history research among the planners, facilitators and participants.

It could be possible that the account might be silent on some of the areas. Such silence can be interpreted as a result of the above issues. Some of the silences could be accounted for by the movement of documents. The District Six Museum moved offices in the ten years between 2003 and 2013 from the Methodist church to

32 By this time the names of the people that appear in the archive had left the District Six Museum. Attempts were made to be in contact with Dammon Rice but she could not be reached. There was no trace of her even on the internet.
the Homecoming Centre. Another reason could be the movement of the archive as an active working archive to the institutional archive.

One account I came across came from an online museum publication about the ambassador programme of the term under review. The other material was in a form of newspaper cuttings. Other than these there was not much documentary material available for consideration.

Chapter 1

The District Six Museum started to operate as a community museum in 1994 and started to organise its museum work and programmes for the benefit of the interested and affected groups and individuals. As a new heritage initiative it concerned itself with developing a new museological approach that seeks to be in the rhythm of the new era that was ushered in by the 1994 democratic elections. These elections brought the African National Congress to power which meant a new leaf for South Africa. The new nation brought along with it a new way of looking at the country’s history and heritage. Looking at slowly constructing a heritage that

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33 Discussions with the District Six Museum stuff members. I also worked in the Homecoming Centre in 2003 while there were plans to refurbish it to be what it is now.
34 This is an internet document talking about the programme. The same account is in the museum publication recalling community which unfortunately is out of print by now.
35 Ambassadors programme archive.
reflects the way people think about themselves as a proud nation of the new dispensation. The District Six Museum sought to depart from the old museum practice that was deeply immersed in racist thought and practice. In its formative years the museum entered into a collaborative museum programme with Malmo City Museum of Sweden; an old city museum.

The District Six Museum started to think big and took bold steps towards thinking and acting globally. It used old associations with the ‘friends of the struggle’ that were willing to assist in changing the cultural landscape of South Africa. This was also a result of an international bilateral agreement between South Africa and Sweden in an effort to assist South Africans to effect change in the museum and heritage sector. It was setting to motion the idea of building a desolate nation that has been ravaged by a protracted and intense conflict. The agreement between the two museums, namely; The District Six Museum and Malmo City Museum operated under the broad theme “Memory, Cultural identity and the building of community”. It also took a form of an exchange programme where participants from both countries would travel to the other country and vice versa.

38 A term that has become synonymous with the individuals, groups, organisations and governments that have shown support for the struggling majority of South Africans. These included regional, continental and world bodies that were vehemently opposed to discrimination and oppression of this majority in many ways. A host of activities and ideas were set into motion to rally for and or to show support for the freedoms of the South African people.
The partnership between Malmo City Museum and the District Six Museum is linked to a history of anti-apartheid aid that was provided by the international community including the Nordic countries. Sweden has had a role of giving financial support to the anti-apartheid movement during the years of apartheid. Given this background of pledging solidarity and financially supporting the struggle against apartheid, Sweden occupied a special place in the hearts of many in South Africa. The partnership was seen as a way of seeking to retain the relationship that flowed from the generosity of the Swedish people in support of the disenfranchised majority that struggled against apartheid in South Africa. In the same vein the partnership retained most of the elements of the old donor-recipient relationship that is loosely and generally understood to be called ‘the north and south relationship’. This permeated into the relationship with unaltered attitudes. Understanding that the two countries come from two different ways of thinking meant that difference of opinions and approaches were inevitable.  

Influenced by this agreement, the District Six Museum started a youth program as its response to the working agreement between itself and Malmo City Museum. The influence of the agreement created conducive grounds for exploring the engagement of ‘oral history and sound in developing exhibitions’. It also saw the

establishment of a youth programme that ushered in children clubs in the work of the respective museums. The first step was that museum staff must get training towards the establishment of the clubs. The second step was to establish the clubs using the training they received in step one. A step that followed was to start working with six year old children that are in the same precinct as the District Six Museum. These children were going to be taught by young trainees who volunteered to do things like the archaeological history of the district and baking the popular District Six delicacies. They were also going to be taught some of the games that were played by District Six resident children prior to its desolation.\(^{42}\)

An outline proposes activities for the year 2000 as a follow up or a ‘second twinship’. Here there is emphasis on ensuring active youth participation in museum activities. The proposal lists assumptions about barriers to youth visibility in museum work. These are followed by achievable targets with time frames. Consequently, they list tangible outcomes. The document suggested a break away from the orthodox of pedagogy. It also suggests freedom from the formal education approach. The targets are the establishment and running of youth clubs programs and the Ambassador programs by the end of 2001. These should see the operationalisation of an exchange program where museum professionals and young people of the two countries visit each other. The

\(^{42}\) The kanala club, the little wonder club, District Six museum junior club celebrating cultural diversity document.
purpose is to nurture opportunities of learning from each other.

An annual report of the year 2000 asserts that Linda Fortune, Dammon Rice, Samuel Thelin and Brigitta Petren, museum professionals from South Africa and Sweden respectively worked together. This quartet was in Cape Town for two weeks between August and September. They also worked together in Malmo for another two weeks in December of the same year. The intention was to adapt resident programs for the purposes of the ‘Museum Ambassador Programme’. This was to be used for the benefit of high school youth. The Junior Club was for the pre-school children. These are seen to be efforts of giving voice to youth and children in the museum environment. It can be understood to facilitate youth visibility in museum work and practice. Perhaps it can be seen as a vehicle for an active heritage practice that can have a close association with literal heritage practice for a layman.

During the year 2000 when the Petren and Thelin l were in Cape Town they came into contact with Ambassadors from Manenberg, Kensington and Khayelitsha who formed the core group for D6M. Their participation in the Ambassador Program gave them insight into its nuts and bolts. In that way they were able to engage in the selection of the first group of Ambassadors (teachers and learners) to visit Sweden the following year. A similar set up was waiting for their South African counterparts

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43 Progress report, samp 2000, p 1; The Kanala club, The Little Wonder club: District Six Museum Junior Club; Celebrating Cultural diversity.
during their visit to Sweden in December that year. By the end of the year a program for the following year was already outlined. For instance in September the museum professionals planned for the implementation of the children’s club the following year and that the ambassadors be identified for their first exchange participation.\textsuperscript{44}

The September 2002 report highlights the ‘Ambassador Programme’ as part of the progress made in ‘institutionalising’ the projects of the working relationship since the establishment of the partnership. The ‘Ambassador Programme’ is noted as an aspect of spreading and popularising memory in as far as young people are concerned.\textsuperscript{45} An idea of a ‘Museum Ambassador Programme’ is purported to have immigrated from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco’ in the United States of America about twenty years before the District Six Museum’s ‘Ambassador Programme’ began. It was aimed at motivating youth from weaker economic standing to interact with these museums.

The South African version of the ‘Ambassador Program’ was developed by Dammon Rice for the Johannesburg Art Gallery in 1995. Here Rice saw the learning opportunities that are presented by a museum setup for young people. The same person introduced and developed it in the District Six Museum.\textsuperscript{46} This work is

\textsuperscript{44} Progress report, SAMP 2000.
\textsuperscript{45} September 2002 Report.
\textsuperscript{46} \url{http://www.districtsix.co.za/ambassadora.htm}, p 2; \textit{Heritage ambassador project handbook 2002}, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2002).
seen to be forming part of the second SAMP twinship.\textsuperscript{47} In later communication between Velmont Layne and Elisabeth Olofsson via emails the ambassador programme is understood to be outside the SAMP and that it should be seen as ‘a product and [that it be] rooted in the work of the institutions’.\textsuperscript{48}

A second twinship programme between D6M and Malmo City Museum sought to ‘integrate and engage young people in the museum space. By so doing they attempted to create conducive learning opportunities for the youth. It was also a way of making the museum easily accessible and that it can be seen as a space that youth can associate with.

The Ambassador Programme was seen to be one of the ways the museum takes steps towards constructing a nation. It is seen as a role player of note in intervening in the lives of the young people through their active participation understanding their past. Focus was given to simplified activities of learning and teaching that took place in non threatening ways among groupings that shared a common purpose. Foremost was the intention of necessitating changes in how youth thought about themselves. The hope was that they would revolutionise the manner of their behaviour especially after rolling their sleeves and transact abilities and techniques of doing things for uplifting the people around them.\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{47} Museum youth club and ambassador programme, an education strategy developed by the SAMP twinship between the District Six Museum and Malmo city museum.

\textsuperscript{48} Jennifer Marot’s email of 3 February 2003.

\textsuperscript{49} http://www.districtsix.co.za/ambassadora.htm.
The work of these young immature and inexperienced museum volunteers sought to work in the areas of their daily lives. To interact with inhabitants with the aim of improving their understanding of the world as they know it. At the heart of this initiative lay the quest for a gradual move for all the inhabitants of these areas where the work took place.

The District Six Museum identified and targeted senior high school learners that were left with one year before exiting the system. These were to strictly come from the Cape Town for easy reach. They received tuition that helped in sharpening their abilities to impart knowledge to their peers within their sphere of influence. They were expected to close the gap between their tuition receiving phase and the imparting of this knowledge to others so as to exercise the newly acquired capabilities. The contents of the museum and the stories behind them were the driving force behind the acquisition and utilisation of these new capabilities that foster learning and teaching.

A simple thing as having a museum showing interest in the teaching and learning opportunities it can offer the inexperienced members of a neighbourhood might seem insignificant. This programme induced in different members of the neighbourhood deep seated emotions of pride, courtesy and affection among people that had and still have some connection with the ambassadors. Their peers, relatives, educators and admirers alike shared in some of the important moments of the program when they went to show support to these young heritage workers. When they had to be honoured publicly for
transacting in the teaching and learning exercises all and sundry were excited about the effects. Now these young ones could be of good help in imparting heritage knowledge to others. This could be done with less supervision from the museum professionals.

In the first instance the foremost ambition of the crafters of the program was to assist youth realise some of their interests using available museum opportunities. It was not a simple and straight forward issue or an unintended result. The planners purposed that the program should seek to achieve benevolent attitudes towards others. They thought of impressing in the minds of participants a spirit of emptying themselves of self centeredness by reaching out to others at no expectation of being rewarded. Participants were trained to visit people in their residential areas to conduct face to face story telling with senior members and any other people available to tell relevant stories. This enabled them to store knowledge about where they stayed. They gained knowledge about things that others might take for granted which could be very powerful and uplifting once known.

The areas where the first program was implemented were somehow affected by involuntary relocation that was a firm state policy in South Africa for many years in the hope of separating people. Behind the policy was a held assertion that people who do not share a common ancestor can never stay side by side without conflict. This assertion linked closely with the view that their heritage appreciation will be the root cause of not seeing
eye to eye. It was held that some will over emphasise their appreciation of heritage to the jealousy of others.

The planners felt it important to work with young people, whom they viewed as the hope of a new nation that would share a common future. Since the heritage of the suppressed majority was down trodden, their confidence about themselves was deeply affected and even lost in some instances. So they planned to work out ways of dealing with how participants viewed themselves and help them start to embrace themselves in a positive light. This was looking at putting brick by brick on top of each other to erect a strong sense of belonging and confidence in them. Some of the activities that assisted the process had to do with how participants arranged the knowledge they stored for others to see and listen to. The arranged packages were used for exercises of increasing knowledge and alteration of behavioural patterns where people stayed.

The interactions enabled the ambassadors to understand the story about their own neighbourhoods first and about the museum. Such gained knowledge also crystallised their boldness to share what they received with the less knowledgeable within their reach. In sharing this newly gained advantage they communicated their knowledge through the enablement of the show pieces they crafted and arranged as well as the museum contents. The museum was turned into a teaching and learning hub as participants communicated the messages of their show pieces. This indeed turned the museum space to be a busy hub for youth involvement in museum work. It also
altered how the museum was viewed by those that had the opportunity to witness such innovation by the ambassadors.

The local ambassador programme was seen to be a success in that it had managed to move young people from the periphery and brought them closer to the center of museum practice. With the understanding that the museum has a responsibility for as many people of the nation, another planning spread to other territories. The move to these new areas was inspired by appreciating the story of involuntary relocation policy of the then state machinery. In these areas the program was activated by holding hands with likeminded institutions. In Port Elizabeth for instance South End Museum; is a museum that was established along similar experiences as those of the District Six Museum. Like the population of District Six, its residents were also involuntary relocated to other parts of the city for reasons of separating races. South End Museum was also a new museum that sought to start a dialogue about the inhumanity of involuntary relocation policies of the apartheid state.

The new plan had hopes and impediments in that it hoped to replicate what had been achieved in Cape Town. There was a strong possibility of attaining these hopes. The impediments were logistical. It meant that facilitators and participants had to move from place to place safely and conveniently at any given time. The other was the accessibility of the need resources such as buildings and people of influence. The organisers spent
time communicating with different people and organisations to land a hand in the programme.

In Cape Town Dammon Rice wrote to the head of the administration of the teaching and learning subsidiary of the state on 14 January 2003, to solicit support. A letter acknowledging receipt was written back on 22 January 2003, stating that the email Rice sent to the head of the establishment was referred to the ‘Chief Director: Education Planning’. It further stated that the Chief Director would take responsibility for the ‘response’ on the matter.

Another document was written on 14 February 2002 which was almost a year earlier. This appears to be written to Volkswagen South Africa also asking for support in a form of a VW Kombi. In the document the District Six Museum is said to have fundraised R160 000 to purchase a vehicle for the Heritage Ambassador Programme. Here Rice requests this multinational company to absorb the difference for the cost of the VW Kombi. It does not seem likely that there was any reply to the letter for the vehicle. There is also a remnant of a document that was written to Toyota South Africa. It indicated that a Toyota Condor was identified and that the multinational vehicle manufacturer was kind to absorb the difference of the cost for a 4X4 with a roof rack and air conditioner.

A lot of other letters were written to funding institutions, local government officials and politicians and media institutions. One such document is dated 18 January
2002 where there is mention of a R2 315 000 proposal that was submitted to the lottery Fund on 30 May 2001. It also highlights that the Fund allocated R750 000 to the project. A hand written note suggests that the available funding at the time would carry the project up to May 2003. A letter dated 2002.05.30 written by B A September, Municipal manager Theewaterkloof municipality; in Caledon. It acknowledged receipt of a permission request to use Gerald Wright Hall for the ambassador programme. There is a ‘request to open an exhibition’ that was extended to the then Deputy Minister of Education, Mr. Mangena. The event was to take place in District Six Museum on 20 July 2002. Another one written to Mr. Vermark of Victoria Park High School requesting to use computer facilities between 12 September and 28 October 2002.

On 17 October Rice wrote to Mayor Faku inviting him to open an exhibition called “Ubomi bangoku- Journey through Die ses gesigte van Ibhayi”. On the same day Rice wrote to Colin Abrahams requesting space for the ambassador exhibition in South End Museum. Colin had written to Rice in July requesting that all their communication be in writing including the proposal and financing processes. On 24 July 2002 Dr. Terence Fredericks then Director of D6M wrote a letter to Colin Abrahams as a response to the email he sent on 22 July. This letter detailed how the two institutions were going to work together in this program. D6M took full responsibility for funding and also outlined the financing
processes. About two months before, 7 August 2002 Rice had written to Diane Whitehead of Bay World in Port Elizabeth requesting a concession for 20 ambassador participants for the purposes of accessing Bay World.

The programme extended invitations to individuals and organisations alike. Among others were the members of the press. In the early days of December 2002 a number of media houses were sent invitations for the opening of the ambassador exhibition in South End Museum. The opening lines of the invitation were “the exciting young and fun-filled generation of Port Elizabeth is opening an Exhibition”. Fax sheet covers to CBFM; a community radio station, Radio Algoa; a regional radio station and Mhlobo Wenene; a national radio station indicates the desire to raise awareness about the exhibition. The print media was also targeted because the invitations were also sent to Algoa Sun the local news paper, Rapport a national newspaper, EP Herald a provincial newspaper, City Press, a national newspaper and Die Burger an inter-provincial newspaper.

On 17 January 2003 Rice wrote a letter to the administration of the teaching and learning subsidiary of the state in the Northern Cape Province. It was addressed to Sharon Paulse as an attempt to persuade administrators to concede to a planned intention to involve educators in the ambassador program. The letter brought forward the successes of the previous years

when working with young people. In the letter there was mention of the District Six Museum incurring costs for logistics and tuition.  

In 2002 the ambassador programme had produced a handbook. The cover of the handbook had four hands that held arms; each hand held an arm at the wrist to form a four corner diagram. Next to the diagram there was an image of a pottery machine. The next image was that of a foot print and lastly at the top right hand corner the name of the project, the year and the names of the anchor museums were written. The handbook postulated that young people would interact and acquire skills to build show displays with deep meaning from scratch. They were to acquire capabilities for searching fine details of information and put them together for learning purposes, shaping show displays, capturing images communicating and conducting lessons to mention but few.

All these assist in bringing about a show display to life and imagine its upkeep. The handbook outlines the key components of the programme as ‘research’, ‘design and construction’, ‘media and publicity’ and ‘education’ the activity outline builds a step by step self involvement process. Each step prepares participants for the next activity. The progressive steps slowly build the show

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display and its different elements. Participants are encouraged to look out for each other and to have fun as they continue with the program.

Young people in their mid teenage years made interesting comments as they reflected on what was taking place around them. Participants filled in feedback forms that sought to understand how they felt about themselves, their communities, museums and their will to alter things in their lives. The forms captured various responses; however, there seemed to be common issues that bound communities. For an example, some of the participants from Atlantis have a different outlook of themselves as individuals but harbour discomfort in relation to their community. They consider violence and crime to be threats to the stability and future growth of the settlement. Some felt that a museum is a big room full of old ornaments or statues while others did not know what museums are. A few associated museums with history and learning.

After participation in the programme the museum issued follow up forms to assess if the process could have afforded them space to make changes in their lives. It tried to see if there had been personal discoveries and even the will alter things. Some of the participants indicated new observations about themselves. They even pointed out that the process assisted them to become

55 Feedback forms from the 2002 ambassador program that was implemented in the Western Cape. Young people of 15 and 16 years of age wrote their views about their community. They noted that crime and violence terrified the entire neighbourhood; their wish is that it changes. Most inputs emphasised mutual respect as the missing element.
bold and courageous. They were showing willingness to step up and lead the way in eradicating what concerned them in the first assessment forms. An educator at Saxon Sea Secondary school observed an outlook of positivity, an increased interest in the history of the settlement and the spontaneity as they went about their projects.

The first feedback forms gave an indication that young people know very little about museums if any. Their attitude towards museums could not be clearly marked. Generally young people hold particular attitudes towards things they consider old. Perhaps the old things might be associated with irrelevance to their lives. The second feedback forms gave an indication that they discovered some interesting things about the museum work. At some point they pointed out that they enjoyed conducting oral history interviews or exhibition development and even exhibition research work.

In Grabouw participants expressed themselves in different ways. Some saw their community as a divided community. This related to political changes that took place, they also thought that attitude towards sport has also changed. There seems to be appreciation of the struggles of their forerunners in the struggle against apartheid. Participants saw museums as a platform for growth and making considerable changes in their community. A call for unity and using education as a tool for improving life was put out there. It appears as

56 Second feedback forms from the 2002 Atlantis ambassador programme.
though most of the participants had some leadership engagements in the community. Some were leaders in faith based organisations, social welfare, sports and politics. However, they seem to be influenced to consider heritage more in their engagements. The educator commented that the programme seems to have improved language proficiency levels, self esteem, and practicality and working in teams.58

The ambassadors of Port Elizabeth focused more on community issues. Their main concerns were about environmental degradation as a result of accumulating dirt. They also singled out poverty and underdevelopment as some of their common concerns. In their second feedback forms participants expressed mixed feelings. Some felt that they have not improved while others felt the opposite. The forms had little written on them for the most part.

The Northern Cape programme which focused on educators’ workshops in 2003 had a lot of positive feedback. This workshop intended to find out if museum exhibitions could be used to improve learning and teaching. The educators that responded in the feedback forms expressed recognition for the role of museum exhibitions in the teaching and learning environment. The timing of the workshop coincided with an attempt to reincorporate history in the mainstream of teaching and

58 Feedback forms from 2002 Grabouw ambassador programme.
learning.\textsuperscript{59} At that time curriculum content was being reorganised to accommodate the new and rising demands of the new South African nation.

The District Six Museum had embarked on the programme to interact with young people in their own backyards. That could be viewed as a courageous move by museums of the new era. That kind of interaction which sought to reach young people from far and near signaled a stepping outside the normal practice of museums. The gains of the new nation were laid bare in the work of the museum. Even though the District Six Museum is viewed as a community museum it has reached out to areas that are beyond the parameters of a local museum. Its relationship seeking efforts with likeminded establishments speaks volumes about its courage and determination as a museum.

\textsuperscript{59} The South African History Project which was spearheaded by the then minister of Education professor Kader Asmal remained key in transforming the history teaching and learning in South Africa at the time. There was a need to rewrite history textbooks for tuition as history was being canvassed to the mainstream of the educational work. The project concerned itself with writing a history that eliminated stereotypes about the majority of the population. It also sought to assert the leaders of the new nation in history as heroes and heroines of the new order.
Chapter 2

The District Six Museum is concerned with two main issues, namely: resettlement in the municipal district of the city of Cape Town and conducting ‘memory’ work about the involuntary relocation of residents of the district and ‘the spirit of the place’. As early as 1901 the people of District Six experienced involuntary relocation of the African people owing to a plague that was blamed on them by municipal officials. A few decades afterwards another wave of involuntary relocation of people saw an almost complete evacuation and demolition of this municipal district. The only difference this time is that the involuntary relocation of people was state policy at a national level. After the formation of an organised resistance structure: ‘Hands Off District Six Committee’ the District Six Foundation came into being rolling out a resistance campaign against the ‘gentrification’ of the area.

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61 A documentary produced in 1987 about the forced removals of Africans in 1901 to a nearby military camp that was later called Ndabeni cites these as the first removals in the area.

The noble work of reconnecting with former residents of the district took root under the guard of the District Six Museum Foundation. As the work was intensified increased participation, on the part of the desired audience, bolstered the work of the District Six Museum Foundation. The work of the foundation moved from anti-government and anti-international business gentrification plans under apartheid. It then transcended under the new government to resettlement and reconciliatory advocacy and training. This movement was enabled by the “spirit” of the new government and its policies of democracy and human rights culture. The new government concentrated on wanting to undo the discriminatory policies of the previous state administration. The newly constructed nation and the new District Six Museum, however, could not merge their positions. The museum being a history museum that sought to part ways with the modern museum in its thinking and practice found no favour with the new state. Even the work of entrenching democratic values ‘of forgiveness and healing of memories’ fell off the heritage agenda of the new government.63

This condition of isolation compelled the museum to look elsewhere and broaden its horizon and seek aid from funding agencies. An unfortunate condition transformed itself into an avenue of opportunity. Such isolation had potential to destroy the memory work but

the bold steps of the museum saved the day. These steps reinforced the notions of thinking broadly and increasing horizons while focusing on what you do best where you are. It reopened a space that was closed to the museum since the first ‘great European war’.\textsuperscript{64} The freedom to move about for museum related work was suffocated a great deal between the two European wars, to a point of even changing the configuration of the modern museum. The modern museum changed from exhibiting the collections of the world to narrowly focus on nationalism and specific royal homes.\textsuperscript{65} The post war and post colonial period reintroduced opportunities for museum global networks which the District Six Museum secured by partnering with Malmo City Museum.

It is not clear why such an important element of the people’s struggle against oppression could be neglected in such a manner. There are more questions than answers on the matter.\textsuperscript{66} However, the condition enabled the

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{64} A reference to the First World War that was normally used by Professor Vizikhungo Mzamane in his English literature lectures. He believed that it was a civil war that affected the colonised people even though they had no reason to be part of it. Even the spoils of war were never shared with them.
  \item \textsuperscript{65} T Bennett, ‘exhibition, difference and logic of culture’, in Ivan Karp, Corinna A Kratz, Lynn Szwaja and Tomas Ybarra-Frausto with Gustavo Buntinx, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Ciraj Rassool (eds), \textit{Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations} (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).
  \item \textsuperscript{66} When the new ‘government of national unity’ was launched, the portfolio of Arts Culture science and Technology was allotted to the Inkatha Freedom Party. A political party that started off as an African National Congress mouthpiece to a Bantustan puppet political organisation. This organisation took reigns in Natal and rallied the Zulu speaking people around itself to implement the apartheid racial discriminatory policies. The same party opposed the political negotiations that lead to the peaceful elections of 1994, not without spilling the blood of black citizens. It is suspected that the ANC might not have considered the Arts and Culture portfolio seriously that it made concessions of entrusting this portfolio to the IFP. Another issue is around the fact that the District Six Museum Foundation contingent might have had an increased influence of the New Unity Movements stalwarts who would
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District Six Museum to interact with their international counterpart as equal partners. Notwithstanding the material differences between the District Six Museum and Malmo City Museum, the partnership yielded much respect. The exchange of knowledge and the fostering of friendship among the youths of Sweden and South Africa resonated with notions of international peace and friendship messages of influential leaders of the world. A literal geographic north and south relationship was forged. It gave meaning to the shrinking of the world through communication technology and mutual friendship of diverse people of the world. This also enabled learning from all parties.67

The international support for a just struggle against apartheid had left emotions of warmth in the hearts of struggling South Africans. It is understood that the mission to liberate South Africa was pursued with vigour in the world stage. Among those countries at the head of such debates were Scandinavian countries. For decades they voiced the need to decolonise Southern Africa thereby decolonising the whole African continent. The partnership between the District Six Museum and

be seen to be independent of the ANC propaganda machinery. The determination of developing a museum took root even before the dawn of democracy in SA. The opening of the museum took place in the same year as the first democratic elections thereby not taking into account the tone that government will adopt on the heritage discourse. Lastly museum overwhelmingly reflected on the coloured people’s experience of forced removals. This might have given the museum the outlook of memory work yielding to this category of people. This happened while the ANC must find its feet in government and the IFP sought to entrench itself in the portfolio.

Malmo City Museum could be seen as linked to old attachments of the two countries in difficult times. However, the engagements at a museum level were professionalised. There existed little or no room for gentlemen’s agreements, foremost was commitment and accountability. Between 1:16 PM and 15:36 on February 3, 2003 the exchange of email contents between Velmont Layne and Elisabeth Olofsson indicated a strong sense of tightening controls in the relationship.  

Scholars of the free choice learning give credit to globalisation for the increased demand for information. They argue that even the control environment will be increasingly demanding up to date information. Donors want to see increased accountability for the resources they share. They insist in knowing the difference their resources made in people’s lives. In that case museums found themselves increasingly pressed their role in knowledge production and highlight tangible changes they have effected in the end users. I am tempted to suggest that the email exchanges between Layne and Olofsson are a glimpse of such a control environment.  

The notion of an empty land appears to be a waste of prime land in the eyes of an unaware observer. It highlights the question of economically viable land use. People of different persuasions might react differently to the question. It might be interesting to gather views

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around this question. Peggy Delport seems to suggest that the land is under constant surveillance in the statement “no matter where we are we are here”. It is as if to say do not take any chance by setting foot in that land because we are watching you. It brings to mind a sense of a paradox of empty and full where an empty or unoccupied space is equally fully occupied. In the same vein absence is understood as presence at the same time. It also evokes notions of an imagined community that is not marked by geographical boundaries. However, while the land was empty local and international youths in the ambassador programme learnt invaluable lessons that were underpinned by democratic principles.

The District Six community might be known as a community of an empty land. But one that is bound together by the meanings that people make as a result of a relationship they developed with the space. The empty space seemed to signal an impossibility of the return by any group. When the people were being relocated the intention was that of dismantling a community. This process should have inevitably interfered with community relationships, family and even personal relationships. The manifold effects of the involuntary

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70 P Delport, ‘“No matter where we are, we are here.”Beginnings: the Fresco wall of the District Six Museum’, in B Bennett, C Julius and C Soudien (eds), City. Site. Museum: Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2008).
71 The centenary of the Land Act exhibition that was hosted in Cape Town International Convention Centre echoed a lot of pain expressed by people that were separated from their land and people. It displayed a spectacle of a desolate people that were displaced and dispossessed. The exhibition was a show of victimhood and vulnerability. The unimaginable deep seated pain of the dispossession ran through it. A man and wife were also separated not because of the resettlement but because of
relocations had different but devastating effects on many. Yet through the ambassador project the youth of the world and those that shared in the generational legacy of involuntary relocation were brought together to learn from each other and learn of each other. A truly global youth experience was made possible.

Mandy Sanger suggested that one of the challenges that faced the museum was to increase the consciousness of the people of the city to know themselves as people. Just to know themselves as people who are bound to each other by common hopes and impediments. People that understand that their difference still binds them to each other. People that embrace their humanity. The reason was to facilitate a rejection of the colonial notion of ‘races’ that divided commonality. The modern museum spent a lot of resources in an attempt to invent races. Its intention was to display it as a public spectacle until it is accepted by all. Rejecting this is seen to be important since we live in a post colonial economic, social and political environment. Sanger’s idea ties in with notions of promoting the post-modern museum as a public space that seeks to facilitate the ‘acceptance of cultures in difference’. This is the role that is impressed

the racial segregation laws. In the act of relocation was the act of separation of loved ones too.

on the post-modern museum as a disciplinary institution in a decolonised environment.\textsuperscript{73}

In the past museums were practicing in ways that tended to isolate others while embracing some. Even their depiction of the people of the world was subject to demarcating differences between the ones that are at the centre and those that are at the periphery. Central to museum work was the notion of ‘othering’. This was tantamount to putting some in their place and discourages them from venturing into new grounds.\textsuperscript{74} As this permeated into the social circles people started to act as they were taught. The museum as a platform for the development of public culture seeks to transform itself. “This transformation is a commitment to an anti-racist, non sexist, democratic and participatory institutional culture that upholds the dignity and human rights of all”. Such a commitment will encourage a spirit of learning and heightened debates that lead to the growth of mental and overall capacities of its audiences.\textsuperscript{75}

The decision to set out the District Six Museum practice as memorialisation work sets it apart from the modern


\textsuperscript{74} F Fanon, \textit{Black skins white masks}.

\textsuperscript{75} S Badat, ‘Higher education, transformation and lifelong learning’, keynote address at the tenth vice-Chancellor’s Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Annual lecture on lifelong learning, (Cape Town: University of the Western Cape, 14 October 2013).
museum and from post colonial monumentalisation projects. It did so by choosing to walk the path of revisiting the traumatic past of involuntary relocation project. It is a past that binds most of the people that made up the “imagined community” of the new nation. It is against this background that even the transactionary nature of knowledge production was influenced by engaging the community. The notion of “working with the community and not for or on behalf of” the community that made the museum and the community the museum made continues to influence interaction in knowledge transaction. This sought to give room to knowledge solicitors to become middle people and advocates for the work of the institution.76 Participants of the ambassador programme came from different backgrounds including communities in the Eastern Cape and Northern Cape. This was how slowly it built a community that transcends racial boundaries.

The memorialisation function and the timing of the establishment of the museum imparts lessons of public self punishment. The visitors apply their minds and imagine a life lived and see a sight in its absence. This imagining of life and view of occupation in a desolate land invokes notions of brutality and the inner workings of a segregationist state.77 The geographical mark of

77 Second semester class discussions about creating new nations and representations. Here professor Rassool helped us to question why the new South Africa did not choose to have a museum of the struggle against oppression. Now it is difficult to appreciate the inner workings of that dark past of South Africa.
injury in the city landscape stands like the instrument of public torture during the pre colonial project era. This makes the District Six landscape and the memorial work of the museum to be one that promoted it as the ‘disciplinary institutions’ of the new nation. It threw in the mass of a vacuum. By gazing and reflecting on the memory of the site one stands a possibility of being altered. Sanger believes that the transforming power of the site rested with those that solicited knowledge transaction. That was coupled with the intended consequence of transforming them into catalysts of the same processes within their spheres of influence.

Community museums have been seen as educators of their communities. The communities that made the museum and those that the museum make in the process of audience development. In teaching young people as heritage ambassador to become teachers of other youth and children, the District Six Museum elevated the planes for the young ambassadors. In the same vein it departed from the age old practice that was well established in the museum. The practice that had the museum educator as the one that teaches. Instead the young were empowered to engage in a space that was formerly reserved for museum professionals.

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78 P Delport, “"No matter where we are, we are here."Beginnings: the Fresco wall of the District Six Museum’, in B Bennett, C Julius and C Soudien (eds), City. Site. Museum: Reviewing memory practices at the District Six Museum, (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2008).

79 Mandy Sanger said this in discussion with Duke University interns at the museum about the meaning of the empty space. How different understandings are drawn from the site.
Masa Soko a curator at Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum was at some point involved in the ambassador programme.  

Most museums of the democratic era approach museum education by teaching the values. This value driven approach tends to focus of the values of individuals or groups. The Nelson Mandela Museum tries to revisit the values of the iconic figure. Robben Island Museum also identified some democratic values to impart on participants. This approach seeks to impart the selected sets of values to participants and leave them to deal with the rest on their own. When looking at the District Six Museum ambassador programme you notice a clear departure from the once off engagement. But it is also a departure from imparting only cognitive education. Instead it seeks to train a skills set that has relevance to the core of museum work, namely; all exhibition design processes, organising and marketing of exhibition openings and conducting and processing oral history research interviews.

Robben Island Museum focused on calendar days, a nation building youth camp plan and daily school tours as a driver of public programming. Apart from the spring school most of the museum education work is event driven. Some museums also identify some days especially heritage day and international museum day to organise special events. This is seen as an opportunity to
educate the public about heritage and to some extent it achieves this goal. The ambassador programme for instance, is a five months education programme where young people are theoretically and practically taught to build an exhibition. This has the potential of creating pool of skills that museums need. It is a lifelong learning opportunity that has tangible outcomes.

Museums in general have difficulty to exhibit oral history. This emanates from the text oral tradition dichotomy. A well expressed doubt to exhibit and trust the oral narrative within museums has driven many to shy away from presenting it. The cornerstone of research in the ambassador programme is oral history because it facilitates transaction of knowledge between the ambassadors and community members. Some of the feedback forms completed by ambassadors express wonder at the wealth of knowledge that exists within their communities. These ideas are then arranged and organised into an exhibition to educate others about the important aspects of their communities.

As a disciplinary institution of the new ‘exhibitionary complex’ the museum set about its function of memory work at the same time as the first democratic election year.\textsuperscript{81} This coincidence has a genealogy of deliberate discussion and planning. The focus might have zoomed into an area of one city instead of many cities that suffered relocations. Simultaneously, it turned into a set piece of memorial work whose thrust was to spearhead

\textsuperscript{81}T Bennett, ’The exhibitionary complex’, in D Boswell and J Evans (eds), \textit{Representing the nation}, (London: Routledge, 1999).
revolutionised changes. These changes were closely associated with issues of social transformation. The kind of transformation whose goal was to dissolve the old existing and much alive ‘social relations and institutions, policies and practices’ that were found in society. It was also to drastically invent and adopt ‘new social arrangements’. 82 The ambassador programme focused on the previously disadvantaged communities to impart practical skills in museology.

In recent times, scholars like David Cohen and Lynn Abrams argued that oral history was used as a way of bringing up the suppressed voices of individuals and dominated groups who do not feature or are inadequately represented in the written record of history 83. Fath Davis Ruffins makes a similar point when listing a number of sources that were consulted to rewrite the history of African Americans in America from the 1960s onwards. Davis Ruffins refers to this as a mine of archival information that led historians to yet other archived information that were never used over a long period 84. She further suggests that the different elements of the past that make history were not all put on record. The

82 S Badat, ‘Higher education, transformation and lifelong learning’, keynote address at the tenth vice-Chancellor’s Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Annual lecture on lifelong learning, (Cape Town: University of the Western Cape, 14 October 2013).
ambassador programme of the District Six Museum sought to unearth this history and bring it to the fore by exposing youth to oral history practices. Exhibiting these life stories helped in trying to transform the museum landscape.

At the heart of the required transformation in museums lie genuine and usable entry, participation chances and success for the downtrodden who live in the periphery. Such could be the working class and people of poverty stricken remote and rural backgrounds. If such were to enjoy being ushered in to the centre and partake of social redress in the closed walls of knowledge production and diffusion the post new exhibitionary complex would afford people the needed social changes\textsuperscript{85}.

In the ever changing life of human beings scholars have noticed a shift in how things have been arranged and ranked. There seems to have been alterations in how things are prioritised. ‘The order of things’ and their influences in the affairs of this life continues to be rearranged. In the wake of a world that has been made small by communication technology and the heightened demand for information the world market has been altered. Instead of transacting with commodities the new demand and supply of markets shifted to information and knowledge about markets and commodities. At the zenith of human development of the present day, knowledge is viewed to be taking the centre stage.

\textsuperscript{85} S Badat, ‘Higher education, transformation and lifelong learning’, keynote address at the tenth vice-Chancellor’s Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Annual lecture on lifelong learning, (Cape Town: University of the Western Cape, 14 October 2013).
In the midst of heightened information exchange and knowledge production and transaction the museum is fast becoming relevant. The online services used by the District Six Museum to engage with its publics catch the eye.

People want to be in the know about nations and histories outside the formal learning environment. The post modern museum as a ‘disciplinary institution’ of the new epoch became a relevant source.\textsuperscript{86} People in different geographical locations seek to know about the pasts of other nations through the use of museum networks in the cyber world. Instead of going to the archives and libraries to learn about the country, people visit history museums. They hope to get knowledge grid of the nation in and get an understanding of its social arrangement. The District Six Museum is such kind of a museum that speaks to the history of the landscape and the social arrangement it finds itself in. in 2012 when Michelle Obama visited Cape Town with the intention of visiting Robben Island Museum with her two children the District Six Museum ended up being their hosting museum. On the day of their visit the weather was bad and boats were cancelled.

It appears that some people believe that learning begin and end takes between specific ages in life. They seem to relegate learning to the side for those that live at the edges of the economy. To the contrary lifelong learning

scholars maintain that the very act of life entails learning. For them the centrality of life and improvements in life learning is inevitable. Drawing from Nyerere, Saleem Badat argues that ‘to live is to learn; and to learn is to try to live better’.  

There is an understanding that a huge percentage of people will be out of the formal learning environment in the west. Only a few will remain in formal education system at the time when the demand and supply in the world market will be the dictate of knowledge. Those who will survive in such an atmosphere will require knowledge. However knowledge may be acquired through learning, which makes learning the life blood of such an economy.

Badat believes that the transformation of people from a poor state to a rich state cannot be forced on them. I draw from his statement that “people cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves”. If development is to take any root Badat suggests that it has to be intrinsic. People must find in themselves to want to improve and develop. This fosters a profound sense of development than one that is initiated from outside. I am persuaded to think that this is the essence of Sanger’s idea of working with the community and not for or on behalf of the community.

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87 S Badat, ‘Higher education, transformation and lifelong learning’, keynote address at the tenth vice-Chancellor’s Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Annual lecture on lifelong learning, (Cape Town: University of the Western Cape, 14 October 2013).
It is argued that the knowledge economy might not always need formal education knowledge. As such this economy is not seen to require ‘learned’ participants but ‘informed’ participants. Here the people are self motivated to learn. For them life is about learning and learning improves their lifestyles as Badat argued. Again that flows into a continued or a continuous process of acquiring knowledge on a voluntary basis. It is argued that even for such an economy to thrive it will need knowledge to generate new ideas. All participants will engage on the basis of an intentional choice to learn. They will choose what to learn for what purposes. Museums must position themselves appropriately for self motivated choice based learning for survival.88 The kind of work done by the ambassador programme seemed to have prepared participants for such engagement.

Museums as disciplinary institutions of whichever era play a pivotal role in the shaping of the minds of the populace. Through the modern museum the body politic learnt to be regulated. So the museum transformed itself into becoming some form of an observation tower as you would find in most prisons.89 It afforded the curator and the nation state power to penetrate to people’s lives and constantly watched and punished them. The kind that instructs the population what to do and not to say. The District Six Museum youth programme attempted free

the voice of youth in the confines of the museum. Most of the feedback forms expressed joy and fulfillment. It especially gave youth an opportunity to state their displeasure about some of the conditions of their communities.

One may ask if this work of the District Six Museum has any relations with learning for capital exploitation. That the young people who participated in the programme did so to feed the big chain of exploitation of people by others for huge gains. In as far as the programme was concerned all participants worked towards unearthing stories from their surrounding communities. Their work entailed collecting oral histories of community members. The culmination of that was the exhibition which was viewed by many. These were stories from the working class that helped the participants first and their communities to understand stories about the community. It also enabled participants to exercise their newly acquired knowledge.  

Museums have long held the idea that museum education work comes second to that of research and collections since theirs is to interpret what has been put together by museum experts. The idea of having scientists at the helm of the museum practice sustained the inferior outlook of the museum educator for example. However, the ambassador programme introduced the

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90 Feedback forms
young participants to areas of research, exhibition design and planning, exhibition installation and marketing functions. These are the main functions of museum work. In the end the long term engagement afforded participants more than just the cognitive skill. This is in line with scholar of free choice education where they argue that the museum must widen the learning opportunities.\(^\text{92}\)

In South Africa access to museums was a remote idea for those that lived in the underdeveloped areas of the city. It is needless to say that people that lived in rural South Africa might not have even caught sight of a museum. This might have made the majority of the population to be of no interest to museums. It is also possible that neither were museums of much interest to them too. The wake of the new nation after the 1994 general elections saw the beginning of a new era for museums in the country. Overtime, a number of history museums began to operate. These museums kept the memory of popular struggle figure against apartheid as part of a new exhibitionary complex project. Today there are a number of likeminded museums in the country. Among others, such growth might slowly usher in changes in how services are rendered in museum with similar narratives.

In the pre 1994 period museums served specific target groups and could afford to ignore some groups. Their particular arrangement and categories made them

specialists in their fields with less competition. As the tide turns the rise of the history museums and the growing isolation of ethnographic museums might introduce competition. It is understood that such competition might introduce a sense of ‘free choice learning’ where one will have to choose one museum experience over others. The changing environment might also make more demands to museums to show qualitative outputs.\(^9^3\)

The slow disappearance of the modern museum from the public scene raises concern for the beginning of an end of the museum as we know it.\(^9^4\) Debates around issues of provenance and the morality of some collecting practices brought the museum practice under close questioning. Be that as it may some scholars alluded to transformed museum as an alternative source of knowledge production in society. This leaves the museum with educational responsibilities. While they can be old buildings and open spaces they are seen to be spaces where public memory is performed. They are expected to actively engage in the production of public culture.

The ambassador’s programme took the bold step of introducing participants to all the processes of exhibition development. Like other disciplinary institutions such as


\(^9^4\) Class deliberations by professor Rassool when addressing the debates around the modern museum. He argued that the museum as we know it especially the ethnographic museum will soon give way to museums of history. Its reputation is closely linked with the colonial project as a result the decolonised world might want to radically change it.
universities museums are tasked with responsibilities such as ‘to advance the understanding of natural and social worlds and to enrich our growing scientific and cultural heritage’. Museums play the role of interrogating the understandings of the past and isolate the overcrowding formalities that sought to retain elements of the modern museum. It also means to bring to life the robust debates in the continued historicisation of the people’s past.

There are people who think that museums are homes of stuffed animals, where life is static. They associate them with old information. But museums were meant to be closely linked with the generation and spreading of knowledge. It should be the seat where the innovation of a questioning mind is found. It should be a place where the audiences can ‘have a critical appreciation of the ways in which we gain knowledge and understanding of the universe, of society and of ourselves.’ The museum will have interacted with them so that they appreciate themselves as people that part and parcel of all other people. This will lead them to learn and understand different societies and cultures. The District Six Museum ambassador programme facilitated such kind of learning for its participants. They learnt from their own


community members and from each other. This took some amount of stretching beyond one’s limits for some.

Conclusion

In this work I have attempted to argue that the District Six Museum made strides to introduce a vibrant youth programme for the first time in its history. Since its opening it did not have a similar programme until the ambassador programme was introduced. The museum used to rely on general tours for the education of young people about its narrative.

By taking on such a programme the museum was showing its commitment to the nation building project the new government was advocating. It was also acting out the commitment it made to its sister museum in Sweden. That the programme was one that made history in museum circles by departing from the cognitive orientated museum education most museums did.

The work is an attempt to demonstrate that museum education work is usually inspired by policy positions that flow and influence personal beliefs. In some ways the personal beliefs tend to equally contribute to the direction of museum work. Sometime the influences of the programme might determine how far one might want to venture out to the unknown spaces of museum operations.
I have shown that the District Six Museum set out to make a practical difference in the lives of the young people that participated in the ambassador programme. It also rekindled the memory of involuntary relocation projects of the former administration. It made history as a community museum to move beyond its perceived boundaries and engage at a global level and at a national level.

Some may say that the programme was ambitious and might have used more resources that could have been used elsewhere. I think it was correct that the programme was configured the way it was to reach a wider community. It also broke away from the criticism that it is a museum that is concerned with the issues of the so-called “coloured people” a category that was invented by colonialism. In fact the project resurrected the hope that young people can be active agents of heritage and museums. That the youth can take on agency for the new nation’s value system, a system that was struggled for centuries in South Africa, Africa and the world.

Lastly, I tried to show that the initiative inspired youth to take on new skills and stretching themselves beyond their known limits and became researchers and exhibition experts. It also gave hope that museums can play a role in presenting a platform for lifelong learning. This in turn brings about notions associated with social transformation.
Blue stone quarry in the context of the contests of heritage at Robben Island

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Key words: Robben Island Blue Stone quarry; cultural significance; outstanding universal value; natural and cultural conflict

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Robben Island served as political prison for the leaders of the anti-apartheid struggle from 1961 to 1991. The democratic transition in 1994 with Mandela as the first president of new South Africa saw the Island symbolising reconciliation and became a national museum and heritage site (then national monument) in December 1996. The Island was opened to visitors in January 1997 and work soon commenced on various infrastructural upgrades. In December 1999 the site became a World Heritage Site as a symbol of the ‘triumph of the human spirit over adversity’.  

The Island has many historical sites which are incorporated in its integrated conservation management plan. The Blue Stone Quarry on the northern western corner of the Island is one amongst them. This is the site where both the common law prisoners and the political prisoners many of whom were not in the leadership of the political parties on the Island endured hard labour. Most of the bluestone for the construction of the maximum prison and network of roads on the Island were extracted from the Blue Stone Quarry form the hardship of these prisoners.

Sadly though whether by design, intention or plan the Blue Stone Quarry which really epitomises the motto or brand on which the Island sells itself, ‘triumph of human spirit over adversity’, is never given the lime light and spot light to tourists the way other quarries notably the Lime Stone Quarry enjoys. Thus the interpretation of this site is overshadowed and neglected to the detriment of the history of the site and history of imprisonment on the Island.

Because of its location on the beach side the site of the quarry became a conducive place for the nesting of variety of species of migrating birds. This has given the Blue Stone Quarry a dual status of being one of the important environmental sites on the Island as well as a cultural heritage site. However this state of affairs of the Blue Stone Quarry has ignited and sparked some clash of interest and conflict between the natural heritage and the cultural heritage on the site.

The argument of this research thesis therefore is that a site like the Blue Stone Quarry where there are two characteristics of heritage, both cultural and natural, it is impossible to satisfy the needs of both at the same time and at the same level. One heritage will override over the other and in the case of the Blue Stone Quarry it is the Cultural heritage which will prevail over the natural heritage of the site.

The thesis also argues that the Blue Stone Quarry because of its history of most cruel experiences of torture and hard labour unlike other sites on the Island it
truly exemplifies the narrative of ‘triumph of human spirit over adversity’ and therefore deserves much publicity to the general public more than other sites including the Lime Stone Quarry on the Island.

**Aims of study**

The aims of this research are multidimensional and interlinked at the same time. The research seeks to underscore the historical significance of the Blue Stone Quarry on the Island as being deservedly located within the brand name of ‘triumph of human spirit over adversity and therefore deserves more attention and interpretation to tourists, researchers and the general public as much as other sites on the Island enjoy these privileges. The research also seeks to elaborate the difficulties and challenges involved in conservation when one single site showcases the characteristics and attributes of cultural and natural heritage by exploring some of the debates and conflicts that are involved in managing this site. Lastly the research attempts to show how the dominant narrative of Nelson Mandela on the Island overshadows other histories on the Island.

**Rationale**

Although some acclaimed scholars and heritage experts like Harriet Deacon and others have written extensively about Blue Stone Quarry there are certain aspects of its heritage situation that they haven’t explored. Again there are new developments relating to cultural and natural conservation conflicts on the site that have not been
studied and brought to the attention of interested scholars, for example the current cultural and natural conflict at the Blue Stone Quarry that relates to the reconstruction of the stone wall that the prisoners built on the quarry in order to protect it from the waves of the sea. Finally the continued debates on the Blue Stone Quarry will eventually help in seeking ways to expose this site to people both physically and through proper interpretation and therefore help keep its memory.

**Methodology**

The research used a number of historical methods of inquiry; Semi structured questionnaires were used to interview some of the staff of Robben Island Museum, archival research on published and unpublished materials especially with Mayibuye archives was conducted, recorded oral history interviews on ex-political prisoners who worked on Blue Stone Quarry were used, Library research was done. The research also relied on personal observation from the site visits and the physical attendance on the meetings of the stakeholders on the construction of the wall on Blue Stone Quarry.

**Heritage on Robben Island**

Meanings accorded to heritage in various parts of the world have always varied and continue to do so with time and contexts. In the 1800s heritage in Europe

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was perceived and represented along the lines of ‘biology’ or ‘blood’, inheritance or bequest, ‘pristine or wilderness’ and as something to be preserved for the posterity. Peter Merrington has also shown that in South Africa just as in Australia, notions of heritage had to do with land, inheritance or *efernis* (in Dutch) and later aesthetics, pristine-*ness* exotic-*ness* and the notions ‘natural’ flora and fauna. However a significant amount of literature has also dwelt on the emergence of notion of heritage as an instrument of power, nation building and forging of unity. Scholars such as Erick Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger have perceived the nineteenth and twenty century as a period during which heritage was being invested upon and used to construct national identities.

It was during this period and with the underlining objective of nation building that Robben Island was declared as a world heritage site after meeting the requirements of UNESCO’S world Heritage Convention of 1972. The World Heritage Convention recognises certain sites that have outstanding universal value and therefore need protection and conservation. According to the nomination file of Robben Island it was its cultural and historical significance of ‘the triumph of the human spirit over adversity’ that it was nominated a world heritage site.

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99 Here reference can be made to the European ‘Romantic movements ‘of ancient times dating as far back as the early 1800s.
The decision to inscribe Robben Island as world Heritage Site was thus based mainly on its history as the Mandela’s prison and its symbolic relationship to South Africa’s democratic transition of 1994 and the official policy of reconciliation. This definition of Robben Island’s importance is closely related to dominant representations of the Island’s significance within South Africa. The positioning of Robben Island within the world heritage ambit, specifically underlines the importance of symbolic interpretation in defining both Robben Island’s significance and in determining what sort of museum should be made there. In order to retain its World Heritage Site status, Robben Island is obliged to maintain the symbolic interpretation under which it was inscribed.

This symbolic interpretation of the ‘triumph of the human spirit over adversity’ according to Ahmed Kathrada during the exhibition of Robben Island at Cape Town Museum was meant to imply all the suffering and endurance that the political prisoners experienced on the Island during the time of apartheid regime. The Blue Stone Quarry on the Island is one such site that perfectly fits the triumph of adversity narrative because it’s where the ordinary political prisoners endured much of the torture and humiliation from the prison warders who were the state apparatus for executing pain and suffering. However the narrative of ‘triumph of human spirit over adversity’ has come to symbolise the struggles of one person, Nelson Mandela on the Island. This has an

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103 Harriet Deacon, ‘Memory and History at Robben Island’ (unpublished).
104 Ibid.
adverse effect of overshadowing, eclipsing and sometimes neglecting the narratives from other deserving sites like the Blue Stone Quarry. This focus and emphasis by the Robben Island Museum and its neglect of other sites of equal measure and importance is what Fran Buntman has referred to as ‘Mandelaisation of political imprisonment’. He notes that ‘there is a growing tendency to displace the rich history of political imprisonment, with the torment and triumph, its history and secrets into post apartheid individualisation of political imprisonment in the figure of Precedent Nelson Mandela’.

However he argues that this is not Mandela’s making rather it has become increasingly easy for museum curators and others to personify imprisonment on Mandela. On this Ciraj Rassool writes that ‘from the beginning, the central feature of the museum visits was the encounter with Mandela’s biography at his cell in B-section, where he had spent 17 years. In addition visits to the Lime Stone Quarry served to confirm the constructed history of Robben Island as the space of survival and the ‘triumph of the human spirit’ and the birth place of the nation and of the new nation itself.’

Yet the Blue Stone Quarry which embodies the meaning of this narrative is never put into the limelight for the

106 Ibid.
107 Ciraj Rassool, Exemplary Lives, the Long Walk and Beyond: Public History, Biography and Nation Building in South Africa( Extract from Chapter Four of ’Ph. D Dissertation, ‘The Individual, Auto/Biography and History In South Africa’.
benefit of the public. This is against what the Robben Island Museum ‘preaches’ in its 2013-2018 Integrated Conservation Management Plan. In this Conservation Management Plan the institution pledges to ‘ensure improvement of heritage interpretation, covering hitherto ignored heritage elements in an inclusive and even – handed manner.’\textsuperscript{108} It furthers stipulates ‘an approach to heritage management and interpretation that is inclusive, respectful of cultural diversity, reflecting the different perspectives of different groups about their history on the Island.’\textsuperscript{109} When one sees at how the intangible history at the Blue Stone Quarry is conspicuously missing or glossed over in the narration to tourists one wonders what the conservation management plan meant by those stipulations.

Further research by other scholars has indicated that it’s at Blue Stone Quarry where physical torture happened while those at lime quarries were mostly exempt from such physical abusive treatments although their own work had hazards and was often difficult.\textsuperscript{110} Apart from the challenges on interpretation the Bluestone quarry has become a terrain of contestation and conflict between the natural heritage and the cultural heritage. The paper will fully investigate some of this natural and cultural conflict on the Blue Stone Quarry by

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
drawing on the case study of the challenges that are faced on the project of re-erecting parts of the stone wall that has collapsed. The research will seek among other things to answer such debatable questions as is the Blue Stone Quarry a natural or cultural site? Does the Conservation management plan of Robben Island fully address the conservation conflict between these two dimensions of the Blue Stone Quarry?

The Burra Charter of ICCOMOS Australia the Robben Island Management Plan of 2013-2018 accepts as a guideline in conservation will also be drawn to find out how it interprets such kind of conflict. The research will further investigate and probe the relationship between the tourism and environmental conservation of the site. Can they enhance one another or one is detrimental to the other? Further debates on the interpretation of the site; its embodiment of the significance of ‘triumph of human spirit over adversity’ will be critically explored in relation to other quarries on the site.

The Blue Stone Quarry on Robben Island therefore is one such site that attracts much debate and contestation both because of its history and dichotomy of being cultural and natural in character. This conundrum makes one to ask the question, is the cultural claim of the site one that was constructed and then imposed on an already existing natural site and hence the conflict between the cultural -ness and natural -ness of the site? Only by looking at the history of the Blue Stone Quarry may enable us to arrive at an informed answer.
Chapter 2

History of the Robben Island and the Bluestone Quarry

Robben Island is a flat Island in the Western Province of South Africa, situated 11 km from South Africa’s mother city, Cape Town, in the middle of Table Bay, within clear sight of the city. At its highest point, the Island receives only 300 mm of rain a year. Its 12-km circumference is like a small heart cut from the main land bosom that for years monitored and regulated the pulse of the nation. The Island is low lying, with the highest point, also known as Minto’s Hill (named after the 19-century surgeon-superintendant of the General infirmary), being 24m above sea level. The climate is Mediterranean, as in nearby Cape Town, but the Island experiences stronger winds and comparative extremes in temperature.

The Island has served various functions and purposes in different historical times. The Island was originally inhabited by the indigenous Khoikhoi people long before it came into contact with the European explorers. The Island has for nearly 400 years been a place of banishment, exile, isolation and imprisonment.

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The early European contacts with Robben Island

In recorded history it was the Portuguese explorers who became the first Europeans to come into contact with this Island off the coast of South West tip of Africa. Bartholomew Diaz in his voyage of discovery to India reached the cape in 1488 and there were no human settlements on the Island only thousands of seals and penguins.\textsuperscript{113} The Portuguese found the Island convenient to use it as a pantry to feed and resupply the sailors on their way to India and Europe.

The Dutch were the second Europeans to land on the Island. Their period of control of the Island spanned from 1652 to 1700. During this period the Island continued to serve as a pantry. Thus Jan van Riebeeck had instructions to create a refreshment post where passing ships could obtain water, fresh vegetables and meat.\textsuperscript{114}

In the later years of the Dutch settlement the Island became more importantly used as a prison especially for the cape residents. These were both blacks and whites from the cape on criminal sentences and also the political prisoners from the East Indies.

\textsuperscript{113} Harriet Deacon, Nigel Penn, Neville Alexander. \textit{Robben Island: The politics of Rock and Sand.} University of Cape Town, Department of Adult Education and Extramural Studies (1993).

\textsuperscript{114} Harriet Deacon, Nigel Penn, Neville Alexander. \textit{Robben Island: The politics of Rock and Sand...} University of Cape Town, Department of Adult Education and Extramural Studies (1993).
It was during the Dutch settlement on the Cape and domination of the Island that the commercial exploitation of the Island’s non food resources like lime stone, shells, stone and slate for construction started. When the British subdued the Dutch they became the Colonial masters of the Cape. Thus in 1795 the British annexed the Cape from the Dutch marking the period of 8 years known as the first British occupation.

Even during the early years of British control the Island still functioned as a prison. There was a mixture of the inmates on the Island during this period too. The prisoners were mostly criminals, court-martialed soldiers and later black leaders who were staging resistance and uprisings against colonial expansion were also incarcerated on the Island.

The Island stopped functioning as a prison for ten years when an infirmary on the Island was established in 1846. However it continued to be a place of isolation as patients and people who were considered to be ‘undesirables’ were ostracized and banished to the infirmary on the Island. These included lunatics, the lepers and also the chronically ill. Most of these chronically ill were black Africans who were the poorest of the colonial population and the rest were European immigrants with few community support structures in

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the colony. In 1931 the Island’s leper hospital was closed.

The years that followed the closure of the leper hospital were when Great Britain was actively involved in the Second World War. Robben Island was then identified as a strategic defense site in order to defend Cape Town from the Germans and Japanese who were active on the seas around the Cape colony. In October 1939 three 9.2 inch British Naval Guns were installed on the Island. These are Guns number 1, 2, 3. The Island remained occupied by the army and the navy until 1959. Thus during this time the Island had assumed a new role of a coastal defense. Today the three British coastal Guns stand as a testimony to this historical period and role of the Island.

Robben Island as a prison

The Department of Prisons returned to the Island after the Navy left in 1961. During this time it was predominantly the common law prisoners. The political prisoners began to arrive on the Island in 1962. These were the prisoners who were fighting against the apartheid regime. They came from different political persuasions. The first to arrive were those from Poqo and

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PAC supporters. Other Political parties and movements like African National Congress, Liberal Party, the National Liberation Front (Yu Chi Chan Club) African People’s Democratic Union of South Africa (APDUSA) and Black Consciousness Movement joined their colleagues on the Island. The aim of the prisons department was to completely destroy the free-will or spirit of these men who were anti-apartheid activists.\textsuperscript{118} To achieve this prison system devised a way of exposing and subjecting them to hard labour and torture. It was on sites like the quarries, the Lime Stone Quarry, the Blue Stone Quarry also known as the new stone quarry and the Jan van Riebeeck Quarry they experienced this. However it was at the Blue Stone Quarry where the common law prisoners together with the ordinary political prisoners experienced the most brutality and cruelty of prison labour and hash treatment.\textsuperscript{119}

When the history of Robben Island is being narrated as a notorious place of incarceration the dominant name that comes and overshadows other people who served as prisoners is that of Nelson Mandela. However during my research I came across other figures who served on the Island during its history of imprisonment but they are not put into much publicity and attention. My work is therefore including them in this historical background to keep their memory alive too.

Thus the Island was privileged to have had its prisoners constituted of many great men and leaders in history.

\textsuperscript{118} Harriet Deacon, Nigel Penn, Neville Alexander. \textit{Robben Island: The politics of Rock and Sand...} University of Cape Town, Department of Adult Education and Extramural Studies (1993).

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.
They all had two things in common; they were black, coloured, Indian or African and they were all male. The first prisoner in the history of the Island was Autshumato, a man who tried to take advantage of playing the Dutch off against his own tribe, the Khoikhoi. In 1658 Jan van Riebeeck imprisoned him to the Island for aiding the breakdown of the Dutch livestock trade. Autshumato made the first ever successful escape from the Island.

Another person who experienced the cruelty of the Island as the prison was Neville Alexander. He was sentenced along with other four members of the Yu Chi Chan Club and National Liberation Front, to ten years imprisonment. Their crime was reading about and discussing armed struggle. Jeff Masemola of the Pan African congress was also sentenced to life imprisonment in 1963 after he and fourteen others were charged with conspiracy to commit sabotage. These are some of the figures who suffered the same atrocities like Nelson Mandela on the Island when it was serving as the prison.

The Maximum prison was shut in 1990 when former President F.W de Klerk lifted the ban on ANC PAC and other political organisations and later released Nelson Mandela and other Political prisoners.

**Nature and fauna on Robben Island**

The Island is not only rich in cultural and political history. It is also endowed with the natural resources that
range from different species of birds like penguins, the tortoises, the antelopes and many more. The worth of its natural resources in the past was so immense that an English sailor of 1607 was captivated to declare that ‘in my opinion there is not an Island in the world more frequented with fowls and seals than this Island.’\textsuperscript{120} The records of other sailors who were more practically minded estimate that in 1604 there were about 50 tones of penguins on the Island. Others remarked that the penguins were in such abundance that one may take them up with their hands as many as they would.

It was because of this paradisiacal nature of the Island that the English called the Island the ‘Penguin Island’. However the Dutch knew the Island as ‘seal’ or ‘seal dog Island’ and it was from this Dutch word that Robben Island derived its name. Presently the natural environment of the Island has about 132 bird species.\textsuperscript{121} These include sea birds, water birds and terrestrial birds. There are also two species of the amphibians, eight species of lizards and geckos, three species of snakes and various species of tortoise on the Island. Small herds of bontebok, springbok, steenbok, fallow deer and eland, as well as an increasing number of ostriches live on the Island. There are also large number of seals and whales around the Island waters. This biodiversity has colonized the Island including the Blue Stone Quarry which has

\textsuperscript{120} Harriet Deacon, Nigel Penn, Neville Alexander. \textit{Robben Island: The politics of Rock and Sand}….

culminated into a conflict in determining the significance of Blue Stone Quarry either in cultural and environmental terms.

**The Blue Stone Quarry**

The Blue Stone Quarry is among the three stone quarries on the Island. The other two quarries are the Jan van Riebeeck Quarry also known as old quarry and the Lime Stone Quarry. All these quarries were used for hard labor for the political prisoners. The Lime Stone Quarry was used for hard labor by the leadership of the struggle like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu. Conditions were harsh – limestone dust caused lung damage, the rock was blindingly bright in direct sunlight.122

The Jan van Riebeeck Quarry was first used by the prison authorities opened and functional from 1963 to early 1964. They then moved the operations to the Blue Stone Quarry in 1964 for a number of reasons; chief being the route the prisoners had to take took them close to the village where warders’ children and wives could be threatened.123 The Blue Stone Quarry was then closed in 1977. Both the political prisoners and the common law prisoners worked on the Bluestone quarry. These common law prisoners were those from Group D and C. According to the oral interviews with ex-prisoners who worked on this quarry the first thing was to build a

123 BL stone quarry No1c 11-05-02 PF 044(VHS TAPE) at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, Cape Town.
dyke/wall to stop the water from coming in from the sea. It took five months to build. It could be washed by the sea and again rebuilt mostly during the winter and the rainy period. Some of the testimonies of the ex-prisoner from their memory attest to the fact that the gangsters from group D and C collaborated with the warders to make life tough for the political prisoners.

**Personal traumatic experiences on the Bluestone Quarry**

In 2003 the Robben Island museum conducted reference group project aimed at collecting the memories of the ex-prisoners on the Bluestone quarry. This was partly due to the fact that the Blue Stone Quarry as a site relies much on the intangible stories and not the tangible aspect of it. In fact it’s the intangible that gives this site its significance. The interviews were awash with the traumatic personal and collective experiences that the ex-prisoners had to endure on the quarry. Many got sick due to chill winters and died due to illness. In his biography *Island in Chains*, Indres Naidoo intimates that ‘they worked on the quarry with no socks, no shoes, no pants and they were exposed to freezing cold’. Most of them recalled Van der Berg who was a cruel doctor. He used to ignore to attend to sick prisoners as such some worked while ill and died.

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124 See BL stone quarry No1c 11-05-02 PF 044(VHS TAPE) at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, and Cape Town.
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
later. Torture was being executed in collaboration with criminal prisoners. One ex-prisoner recalled how his colleague Masombo broke his back due to cruelty of the warder as the result of beating while carrying a load of stones in a bag. Some were even denied meals when they had failed to reach the quota of their broken stone.

However many of the ex-prisoners testified how they turned their misery into an opportunity. They were able to teach and educate each other while on the quarry and some even graduated with bachelors from such education. Some still pay tribute to the quarry because it is where they learned the skills of masonry which helped them when they left the prison. Some were even able to point other notable ‘sons’ of the quarry who later became prominent in society like the current president Jacob Zuma.

**Statement of significance of the Bluestone Quarry**

The Blue Stone Quarry and its associated landscape like the Stone wall are the sites of memory, preserving the tortuous history of the apartheid prison system. The intangible memory of the prisoner’s experiences at the quarry and by implication that of the warders is what makes the quarry landscape highly significant. The relict

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128 See Stone Quarry 2, 12.10.2003 Tape 14c RF 0842 at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, and Cape Town.

129 See Stone Quarry 2, 12.10.2003 Tape 14c RF 0842 at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, and Cape Town.
tangible remains of ex-prisoners memories are evident in and around the quarry. Again the materials extracted from Blue Stone Quarry were used to build the maximum security prison. The Blue Stone Quarry is therefore one of the surviving symbols of punishment with production.

In a nut shell the blue stone quarry is another important site on the Island rich with the history of the struggle and endurance itself. Thus the narrative of triumph over adversity as told by the Robben Island Museum cannot be complete if the bluestone quarry is neglected and thrown out of the picture in the interpretation and tourist gaze.

Chapter 3

Conservation issues and challenges on Blue Stone Quarry

Among the major challenges facing the Bluestone Quarry is to do with the conservation of heritage on the site. The problems emanate first from difficulties in determining the exact type of heritage on the site that needs conservation. This therefore puts the cultural heritage side into confrontation and conflict with the natural heritage side. The problem starts with the question is the site natural or cultural?
The natural and cultural conflict on Blue Stone Quarry

The question of whether Blue Stone Quarry is the Cultural or natural heritage site is one which is divisive both among the scholars and the heritage professionals on the Island. The interviews carried out also confirm this state of affairs on the site.

One side of the Blue Stone Quarry there are those who claim that the site is a cultural site. They draw their claim from the historical fact that this is a place where the ex-prisoners toiled, laboured, and survived the humiliation and torture by the state machinery through the work of the prison warders. To them, this is a site that symbolises ‘the triumph of human spirit over adversity’. It is also significant in the historical sense because the stones that were used to build the maximum security prison were dug, crushed, and dressed by the political prisoners on this site. This therefore qualifies the site to be a cultural and historical site and therefore all conservation activities have to be in the legal frame work of cultural conservation.

The other sides there are those from the natural perspective who argue that the site is natural as it is a habitat to a wide range of biodiversity that includes rare species of penguins and other birds like African Black Oystercatcher, Caspian tern among others and therefore conservation should be in respect to the natural heritage of the site. This situation makes the Blue Stone Quarry a heavily contested terrain of heritage on the Island in
respect to conservation.

**Defining the Blue Stone Quarry**

The conflict at the Blue Stone Quarry can only be understood when the history of the site is properly researched and analysed. Using the sources available I attempted to probe onto the site in order to give it its proper definition.

Firstly there is need to reflect on the deeper frameworks that guide conservation on a world Heritage Site of this nature. To begin with, the Island was enlisted as a world heritage site on the basis of its Outstanding Universal Value which is the cultural /historical significance of the site. The Outstanding Universal value of the site is not negotiable. Thus it cannot be disputed. Therefore based on this legal framework of the site, one can ably answer that the Bluestone Quarry is the cultural heritage site.

This conclusion based on its nomination doesn’t deter me from probing more about this site. For example before the ex-prisoners worked on the site what was the nature of it? From the testimonies of the ex-prisoners through the oral history research (The Reference group on Blue Stone Quarry)\(^\text{130}\) the place was a beach and waves could come from the sea and wash it. The ex-prisoners also remember birds on the site before the quarrying started. With no doubt this is the exact description of what a natural environment looks like.

\(^{130}\) See Stone Quarry 2, 12.10.2003 Tape 14c RF 0842 at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, and Cape Town.
History was then made later on the site when the ex-prisoners started quarrying and enduring the harsh experiences of torture. Does this history therefore erode the natural state of the site? In my opinion I think not and that’s why the area is still rich in biodiversity today.

The Blue Stone Quarry therefore is still a natural site but it gets its significance and interpretation through the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the site. However because of the guiding legal frame works of conservation based on the significance on which the site is initially nominated the conservation of its cultural significance will always take precedent on this site. This means cultural significance will always prevail over natural significance on Blue Stone Quarry.

**Restoration of the stone wall: questions on authenticity and integrity of the site**

Another conservation challenge on the Blue Stone Quarry is related to maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the site. This has become more acute and pronounced especially with the project of the restoration of the stone wall. This reinstatement of the quarry wall is proposed as a major restitution of the memory of the site.

When the prisoners first arrived on the quarry they had to build a stone wall or dyke to separate the sea from the quarry because sea water even under moderated tide, was easily gaining entry into the quarry, thereby disrupting operations on the site. This wall was made from the locally available materials on the site like, sand,
sea shells, and some beach pebbles. Not that the government of the time did not have the resources to build a more permanent dyke but the warders cynically enjoyed the futility of offloading sand and grit to buttress the dyke only to find it soon washed away by the waves.\textsuperscript{131} According to the testimonies from ex-prisoners working in the quarry this was the application of punishment with production.\textsuperscript{132} The wall and quarry therefore preserve memories of man’s endurance against adversities imposed by his kind.

In 2001 the wall was severely damaged by the actions of sea waves. However problems arise in terms of the best approach to its restoration and conservation. The engineers propose their own remedial action like, placement of offshore dolos structures, erection of protective concrete wall among others because of their strength to withstand the harsh impact of the sea. The ex-prisoners, heritage department and other heritage practitioners want the wall to be like the one that existed during the times of the quarry. This is because the wall preserves the memories of the tortuous history of the Island and its original form presents the surviving symbols of the political punishment.

During the Robben Island Blue Stone Quarry –Focus group meeting on 23 August, 2013 Greg Ontong of South Africa Heritage Resource Agency said that should the engineers want to add another layer to the design

\textsuperscript{131} See Stone Quarry 2, 12.10.2003 Tape 14c RF 0842 at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, and Cape Town.
\textsuperscript{132} See Stone Quarry 2, 12.10.2003 Tape 14c RF 0842 at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, and Cape Town.
then it needs to be more subtle. According to him this is because the history of the quarry is one of ‘breaking human spirit’ and physiological warfare and that the Blue Stone Quarry was designed for the purpose or raw suffering and brutality. He concluded by saying that the wall therefore should retain that memory so that people who visit the quarry should experience depression but also go back with hope.\textsuperscript{133}

Here restoration and Conservation of the wall is challenged by two views; the best recommendations offered by the engineers and need of preservation of memory as called upon by the ex-prisoners and heritage practitioners.

**What do conservation legal instruments say?**

A situation of this nature therefore invokes the intervention of the Guiding legal principles on conservation of a site with respect to such kind of a project. I feel that since the area is of historical significance restoration of the wall therefore has to be geared to preserving the significance of the site. The Burra Charter adopted both by UNESCO and ICOMOS could be used particularly the clause in article three which says that ‘Change may be necessary to retain cultural significance, but is undesirable where it reduces cultural significance.’\textsuperscript{134} It concludes by saying that ‘amount of change to a place should be guided by the

\textsuperscript{133} Minutes
cultural significance and its appropriate interpretation.” This means therefore that the restoration approach has to be in line in conserving the cultural significance of the site and the suggestion by the ex-prisoners will prevail in this case.

**Challenges to the authenticity of the wall and the site**

Because of the absence of the original materials that the ex-prisoners used to erect the wall, the challenge to the new wall in terms of memory retention will be authenticity in materials. Thus the materials used will not reflect the original ones that the ex-prisoners used to build the stone wall. Again because it’s the engineers that will construct the wall and not the ex-prisoners the new wall will also lack authenticity in workmanship. If the design of this new wall will be different from the one erected by the ex-prisoners it will compromise the authenticity in design. Again if the wall will in any way or by any inch miss the initial location it will compromise the authenticity in setting. All these therefore have implications on the memory and recalling of the original wall by the ex-prisoners. However what can be achieved is the integrity of materials. Thus the same materials that the ex-prisoners used like sand, pebbles that are on the beach can be used for reconstruction of the stone wall. The restrictions by the South Africa Heritage Agency not to use any materials on the heritage site for purposes of construction will only further undermine the integrity of the wall in terms of its materials.

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135 Ibid.
Restoration of the wall and environmental concerns

The environmentalists are not readily welcoming this development of the restoration of the stone wall. The thrust of their argument is that the engineering works and the stone wall are going to disturb the biodiversity of the site. They point that the wall will totally broke the free passage and movement of the penguins as they come from the beach crossing the quarry to nest in other areas on the Island. However in the very same meeting of 23 August, 2013 Greg Ontong of South Africa Heritage Resource Agency argued that the ex-political prisoners (EPPs) are the main clients when it comes down to what the significance of the quarry is to them. He explained that from the perspective of the ex-prisoners the natural environment is secondary and that the cultural component is the most important aspect of the quarry. He concluded by saying that the Island is a World and National Heritage site and that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) require that the cultural heritage component be taken into account. Those from the environmental side still insist that all the stake holders to the project need to accept the fact that if nothing is done for the natural environment then there will be an impact on the natural environment.

In retaliation to this one of the ex-prisoners who worked on the quarry by the name of Monde Mkungwana (A Reference Group Representative) recited one of his

136 Minutes.
poems which described that seagulls were present when they were working on the quarry. He further added that the spirit of the poem represents the spirit of the prisoners and what quarry means to them. He indicated that he spent ten years working on the quarry and the cultural heritage of the site and the design of the wall are important and should be the object of the project. He requested that issues of the birds shouldn’t be a hindrance to the project.\(^{137}\)

During another meeting on 13 May 2013 with the Department of Public Works to discuss the environmental challenges, the environmental department of the company contracted to erect the wall suggested through their ornithologist the use of penguin ramps or walkways from the beach over the constructed wall to guide the penguins to their nesting places on the inland and also a platform for viewing the birds by the tourist. However questions were asked if this intervention would be appropriate one so as not to compromise the authenticity of the site most especially by disturbing and suppressing the memory of the site because these are new additions on the site. It was agreed that the passage way should as much as possible blend well with the area in such a way that the memory of the site is not disturbed.

In these ongoing debates it is true that the construction activities will affect the natural environment of the site but this will only be temporary. Once the construction is done the natural and the cultural will return to

\(^{137}\) Ibid.
equilibrium and interaction. Again it has already been proven on the site that nature tends to take care of itself otherwise the bird life would have been completely decimated during the prison period. The ex-prisoners in their testimonies remember supplementing their diet with seagull eggs and meat to the extinction of the birds but today the birds have increased their numbers\textsuperscript{138}. And again these birds are migratory so the wall can also be erected during the time when the penguins have migrated to other regions.

**Tensions between the environmental aspect and tourism prospects of the site**

There is also a great tension and disagreement between the environmentalists and any proposal to expose this site to tourists and the general public. The environmentalists argue that exposure of the site to tourists is going to disturb the biodiversity of the Blue Stone Quarry. They defend their position by the fact that the penguins on the site are the endangered species in the world and they cannot risk them to ordinary people who will not take care of the birds.

They also further argue that since the penguins move from the beaches through the Bluestone Quarry crossing the road going to some of the nesting places inland there

\textsuperscript{138} See BL stone quarry No1c 11-05-02 PF 044(VHS TAPE) at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, and Cape Town.
is danger on the same with the tourist buses. They point out that the tourist buses speeding at 50km/hour are more likely to hit and kill a lot of these endangered species therefore the site shouldn’t be open for purposes of tourism.

However questions could be asked to the environmentalists like if the heritage of the site is not open to visitors then for whose benefit is the heritage on the Blue Stone Quarry? What about allowing the buses not pass through the Blue Stone Quarry but stop at a distance so that the visitors under the aid of the tourist guide can walk and have enjoy the experience of the site?

On this issue of opening the site with respect to the endangered species I feel there are more options that can be explored other than closing the site to the public altogether.

The politics and challenges on interpretation on the Blue Stone Quarry

The Blue Stone Quarry is also a centre of contestations especially relating to politics and interpretation of its heritage on the Island.

Lack of publicity of the site to the general public

This site does not enjoy the publicity it deserves to the general public when compared to other sites on the Island and especially sites which are similar to it like the
Lime Stone Quarry. When both the Lime Stone Quarry and the Blue Stone Quarry are juxtaposed one is able to see that they were the sites where the ex-political prisoners laboured and experienced the harsh brutality of political imprisonment. Yet today it’s only the Lime Stone Quarry because of its association with Nelson Mandela that gets exposed to the public gaze.

Some scholars, notably Noel Solani have even argued through their research that Mandela never worked in the Lime Stone Quarry but tour guides insist in calling it the ‘Mandela quarry’ under the pretext that he gave advice to those who worked in it.\(^{139}\) Again people who worked at the Lime Stone Quarry were those who were kept in the isolation section. Both prisoners and the authorities regarded them as leaders and were given a V.I.P treatment unlike those at the Blue Stone Quarry. Sadly the tourists and the general public are not taken to the Blue Stone Quarry where the majority prisoners worked during the 1960s. The site is even more significant because the stone that built the present maximum security prison was mined and crafted here. In order to mine the stone on the Blue Stone Quarry the prisoners did not use modern machinery rather they used hammers, spades, ropes, worn out wheelbarrows to fulfill their tasks.

The oral histories of the ex-prisoners testify that it was at the Blue Stone Quarry where many struggles for better food, better clothing and better wheelbarrows were

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\(^{139}\) Noel Solani. ‘The Saint of the Struggle: Deconstructing the Mandela Myth: Kronos No26, August 2000.
It is therefore unfortunate that the museum is not using this as it has great potential to reveal the stories of suffering, pain, resistance and hope as prisoners fought and encouraged each other. In the tourist boat of Sikhulekile one can easily notice the conspicuously missing story of the Blue Stone Quarry in the video that advertises the sites on the Island. The video shows almost all sites for tourists’ attraction on the Island but the Blue Stone Quarry is not beamed.

In the interviews that I conducted with some staff from the Tourism Department on the Robben Island Museum they intimated that the site is not given much attention and publicity because visitors are not taken to the Blue Stone Quarry and that the site not yet part of the visitors experience. They further explained that they are not taken there for the fact that the site is quite a distance. This was substantiated with the argument that time factor is crucial to the tour of the Island, therefore due to limited amount of time given to the prison tour which is 45 min and village tour by bus which is also 45 minutes, there is no time for visitors to see other areas within the landscape including the Blue Stone Quarry.

This is a complete paradox of what the Island celebrates. The Island claims to celebrate the ‘triumph of human spirit over adversity’ and when the history of the Blue

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140 See BL stone quarry No1c 11-05-02 PF 044(VHS TAPE) at Mayibuye Archives, University of Western Cape, and Cape Town.
Stone Quarry is considered it does exemplify and embody this motto and therefore it deserves the attention and publicity like that of Lime Stone Quarry and other sites on the Island.

**Poor implementation of the Integrated Conservation Management Plan on blue stone quarry**

The continued displacement of the narrative at Blue Stone Quarry is contradictory to the pledges of the institution’s Integrated Conservation Management Plan of 2013-2018. This integrated Management plan pledges to ‘ensure improvement of heritage interpretation, covering hitherto ignored heritage elements in an inclusive and –even handed manner’\(^{141}\). It goes on to advocate ‘an approach to heritage management and interpretation that is inclusive, respectful of cultural diversity, reflecting the different perspectives of different groups about their history on the Island’\(^{142}\). The closure of the Blue Stone Quarry to the public therefore does not promote the reflecting of the different perspectives of different groups about their history on the Island. Again in one of the clauses in the interpretation plan it says that the Robben Island Museum will strive to ensure the access of the legacy of Robben Island and conserving its universal value.\(^{143}\) How then can the legacy of Robben Island be accessed when in practice some of the sites like the Blue Stone Quarry are not opened to the general public?

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\(^{142}\) Ibid.

\(^{143}\) Ibid.
Conservation of the outstanding universal value and significance of sites like the Blue Stone Quarry does not only mean maintenance of the site but also ensuring that the intangible of the site is kept alive in people’s memory today. However this can only be achieved by allowing people to visit the site and get to know its history. Therefore its continued closure to the public will definitely entail that conservation of its heritage hasn’t been achieved at all.

Finally heritage is what we keep from the past for the purposes and benefit of today. Blue Stone Quarry as a site is the heritage for the benefit of the people today because of its inspiring histories that it embodies. A very disheartening experience is that of one tourist who had asked the guide where the Stones for building the maximum prison had come from. The guide told him that it was at Blue Stone Quarry but when the tourist had asked if they could go to see the place he was told that it’s not part of the tourist tour. This continued closure to the public means that the people are being denied the heritage that they could have benefited from because of the inspiring histories at the Blue Stone Quarry.
Conclusion

In conclusion the Bluestone Quarry on Robben Island is the site that embodies the history of imprisonment and suffering on the Island. It is also a site that is rich in biodiversity which consequently makes the site a centre of heritage ‘friction’ between the cultural and the natural heritage of on the site.

The paper has shown how the Bluestone Quarry is not exposed to the general public unlike other sites for example the Lime Stone Quarry and has argued that there is a need for it to be accessible to the public since its history is of great significance in the narrative of imprisonment on the Island it’s heritage is for the benefit of the public due to its inspiring histories.

It has also illustratively given the history of the Blue Stone Quarry in order to provide the historical context of the challenges and problems prevailing today on the site. The paper has also described and articulated the Conservation challenges on the Blue Stone Quarry owing to its mixed heritage of natural and cultural and ably proved that it’s impossible to satisfy the needs of both heritages on the site. Thus the cultural significance on the site will always prevail over the natural because the site was nominated as the cultural site.
However with the project of the erection of the stone wall on the site still ongoing and still attracting debates from both the ex-prisoners, the heritage managers on the Island, other stake holders to the project and scholars like me there is need for continued research on the site to see what the outcome of this project will be.
PAPER 5

From Dublin to Mayibuye: The Life History of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement Archive

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Key Words: Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement (IAAM); reading along the archival grain; biography and back-story of an archive; archive as process; power-knowledge complex; archival silences; post-apartheid archives; Mayibuye Archives

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Introduction

The papers of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement (IAAM) constitute an integral part of the wider liberation archive on South African liberation history. The liberation of Southern Africa from white domination has been central event in Africa’s contemporary history. Apart from the resultant political, social and cultural effects, the end of colonialism and apartheid has had a radical bearing on the historiography, production of history and heritage of the region. Among the most engaging issues in the scholarly arena have been issues associated with the representation of liberation histories in public sites of memory including archives. This scholarly interest has been paralleled by an avalanche of projects on the formation, protection and preservation of liberation archives. The University of the Western Cape (UWC)-Robben Island (RI) Mayibuye Archives, where the IAAM records are housed, is one of the most outstanding liberation archives in post-apartheid South Africa.

In South Africa the debates around the constitution archives has been engaging. *Refiguring the Archive* was undoubtedly a landmark in the scholarship on archival discourse in post-apartheid South Africa. It was a celebration of the transformation in archival discourse and practice in South Africa whose seeds were planted in the 1980s but only bore fruits in post-apartheid South Africa. Its approach towards the archive has been to critique the way historians previously saw and used
archives as a storehouse of information and facts. It called for a more critical and self-reflexive use of the archive, which not only questions the production of the information that historians go there for, but interrogates the construction of the archive itself by ‘reading along the grain’

Conversely, it is undeniable that archives are in fact storehouses of information. Consequently, historians will continue to mine them for precious as yet ‘undiscovered or unrecovered’ information, often by reading them ‘against their grain as social historians in Southern Africa have typically done with great success from the 1980s onwards. In this sense archives are still privileged places that provide sources of information in the production of knowledge and narration of histories. Are the approaches of ‘reading along the grain’ and ‘reading against the grain’, of approaching archives as source and archives as process, mutually exclusive? Much of the deconstructionist approach associated with the ‘archival turn’, either explicitly or implicitly, suggests this. Take for example; Ann Stoler’s overstated opposition between her proposal for an ethnographic approach to the archive and what she caricatures as the outdated mode of ‘flat-footed historians’.

Both approaches to archives informs my detailed the reading of the IAAM papers held at UWC-RI Mayibuye

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Archives. I want to propose that we should go beyond an overdrawn dualism between old/naïve vs. new/critical uses of archives, sources vs. subjects. I suggest that archives can be seen as epistemological sites whose-configuration can be interrogated, and at the same potentially rich repositories of historical information from which information can be retrieved and narratives constructed. I aspire to follow Weintroub’s lead in viewing ‘the archive as process as well as place.’

While acknowledging the role of the IAAM archive in the ‘recovery’ of IAAM history, this paper equally subscribes to the suggestions in *Refiguring the Archive*, that archives should be seen as subjects and not as mere sources. Following Carolyn Hamilton, the leading champion of the ‘archival turn’ in South Africa, I seek here to narrate the ‘biography’ of this archive by probing its history and examining the processes of the production of the documents, the nature of the life of the documents in Dublin and the transformation and constitution of these documents as an archive at UWC. This involves in part an examination of the role of Kader and Louise Asmal as the main producers of this archive as well as the influence of individual curators, most notably Annica Van Gylswyk who produced the index that is classificatory grid by which the documents have been ordered and read.

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146 Stoler, ‘Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance: On the Content in the Form’.
The dynamic literature on of archives and archival discourse in post-apartheid South Africa has taken an interrogative approach towards the archive. This discourse is best encapsulated by the debates in the edited volume, *Refiguring the Archives*, published in 2002. Summarizing their theoretical orientation, the editors argue that:

Where previously historians ‘mined’ the archive for ‘nuggets of fact’ in a manner conscious of problems of bias in the record, today scholars pay greater attention to the particular processes by which the record was produced and subsequently shaped, both before its entry into the archive and increasingly as part of the archival record.\(^{147}\)

**Archival Discourse in South Africa**

What is an archive? Previously, archives were simply defined as places where people go to find information about the past. In this understanding, people who did research in archives would gather first-hand facts, data and evidence from letters, reports, notes, memos, photographs, audio and video recordings, and other ‘primary’ sources which were seen to be original and therefore unquestionable. Stolerelaboateson the narrowness of this understanding by warning that, ‘the archive is neither the sum of all texts that a culture

preserves nor those institutions which allow for that record and preservation.'

Postmodernism and deconstructionism has challenged the traditional approach to archives. This sense of archives does not restrict the archive to a spatial understanding, i.e. the place of custody (the archives), or to written documents, but embraces different meanings including orality as an archive, electronic archives and other more abstract forms of archive. Verne Harris suggests that ‘… ‘Archive’ is the trace of process, of event, inscribed on an external substrate. So that the word embraces inscriptions as diverse as tattoos, circumcision, drawings, sculptures, and the trappings in the human psychic apparatus.’ Ann Stoler’s further elaboration on archives as ‘rules of practice’ that inform what can or cannot be archived is particularly useful.

Harris and others have highlighted the (surprising) modernity of normative archival discourse and practice. They trace its origins to nineteenth century Europe. Terry Cook sees the Dutch archival Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives (1898) as a landmark in the creation of modern archival discourse in that it popularised theories and practices that had been

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148 Stoler, ‘Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance: On the Content in the Form’.
149 V Harris, Exploring Archives: An Introduction to Archival Ideas in South Africa, (Johannesburg, National Archives of South Africa, 2000).
150 Harris. Exploring Archives: An Introduction to the Archival Ideas and Practice in South Africa.
151 Stoler, ‘Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance: On the Content in the Form’.
held for centuries. Harris argues that this manual did much to influence archival practice and theory, in South Africa. It laid out many of the most significant archival assumptions and practices that still survive to today. These include the assumption that archives are written, that archives needs to be true to the principles of provenance and original order, that archives are a true reflections of the history they represent and expressions of collective memory of a society, that archives are rightful authority of rulers to dictate what is to be archived.

South African archival discourse was of course also the legacy of the British archivist Sir Hilary Jenkinson who defended these principles of archival theory and practice. In the 1920s he popularised the notion of the objectivity of the archive and one important influence here was the principle of Respect des fonds, which championed the idea that archives should not be mediated by archivists through processes of re-organisation and description, but that they should be left in their original order with minimal intervention. Jenkinson maintained that the role of the archivist was that of a neutral custodian and not mediator. Contemporary theorists of the archive challenge these modernist assumptions. For example they show that it is impossible for the archivist to avoid appraisal of the records and remain detached from in

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153. Harris, Exploring Archives.
154. Cook, ‘What is past is Prologue’.
155. Ibid.
156. Cook, ‘What is Past is Prologue’. 
selection of what is to be archived and what is discarded. It is now rightly accepted that the archivist is an active agent in archival practice.

Harris observes that up until the 1980s, the South African archival landscape was largely influenced by Dutch archival practices, going as far as suggesting that the *Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives* was the ‘bible’ of archival discourse in South Africa. He depicts the apartheid (1948-1990) as a ‘dark age’ in South African archival practice and discourse. At the risk of oversimplifying what is undoubtedly a very complex issue, I would like to pick out two salient features of this era. The first is the appropriation of the social and collective memory of heritage institutions, and especially archives, as forms of political propaganda and legitimisations of apartheid rule.

A key aspect of this process was the state’s control over social memory through deliberate and systematic selection of what was chosen to be remembered and what was chosen to be forgotten. At the heart of this politics of memory was the State Archives Service (SAS), established in 1922 and emerged as the apartheid regime’s chief-whip in the manipulation and

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157 Harris, *Exploring Archives*.
158 For a detailed analysis of this see V Harris, ‘The Archival Sliver: A Perspective on the Construction of Social Memory in Archives and the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy’, in C Hamilton, V Harris, J Taylor, Michele Pickover, RaziaSaleh and Graeme Reid (eds.), *Refiguring the Archive* (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers,2002).
construction of social memory after 1953. This process involved in particular, the deliberate destruction and silencing of the oppositional voices in the government archives. Apartheid archives are more striking for their silences than for the range of voices they accommodated. It is partly for this reason that liberation archives such as the UWC_RI Mayibuye Archive gain increased significance after apartheid, giving the possibilities they afforded for generating oppositional narratives.

The other significant feature that led Harris to characterise the decades of 1948-1990 as ‘a dark age’ was the isolation of South Africa from the international archival profession. This was a result of cultural boycott of apartheid South Africa, one that gained momentum up to the 1980s. It led to an acute stagnation of critical archival discourses and practice.

It is this stagnation that Refiguring the Archive attempts to challenge. The ideas the authors present are self-consciously seen as part of a discourse of transformation, of reinvention, for a democratic South Africa. The authors constantly challenge the traditional view of archives as institutions that preserve and keep the past in original and undefiled form. Hamilton et. al. call for an approach to the archive that not only questions the contents of the archive, but one that puts the archive in a new perspective.

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159 Harris, ‘The Archival Sliver: A Perspective on the Construction of Social Memory in Archives and the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy’.
160 Harris, ‘The Archival Sliver: A Perspective on the Construction of Social Memory in Archives and the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy’.
161 Harris, Exploring Archives.
itself in the spotlight. There is a marked paradigm shift from ‘archive as source [of information] to archive as subject.’ They call for interrogation into the processes that lead to the creation of the archive from its original place to its constitution as ‘an archive’. This investigation of the archive is necessary because it informs researchers of the ways in which the archive evolves over time, the exercises of power that influence what is included and excluded from the archives, and how these inclusions and exclusions affect the integrity of the archive as a custodian of history. The contributors appeal for a constant awareness and investigation of the complexities involved in the creation of archives and the contestations that arise from these complexities and from the archives themselves.

Power is a central theme in current archival discourse. The establishment and preservation of archives in society is about power: the power to control what is remembered about the past and what is passed on to the future generations. The determination of what is privileged to be preserved in archives occurs within complex socially constructed frameworks that are seen to reflect the dominant aspirations of society. These aspirations are in turn influenced by the ruling classes. Governments, institutions and individuals exercise power over archives because of the knowledge (sometimes the secrets) they contain. ‘The archive’ (understood here in a more general sense) has a great

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162 Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Colonial archives and the Arts of Governance: On the content in The Form.’
163 Hamilton et al, ‘Introduction,’
influence over how a society views its past and itself, how people in society form identity over the shape and direction of historical scholarship and heritage construction, and therefore over collective memory.\textsuperscript{164}

The power dynamics in archival discourse discussed above have given rise to the questions of the silences that exist in the archives. If archival power reflects the power of the archive to represent particular voices over others, then the archive is also a space where particular voices are silenced.\textsuperscript{165} These silences, gaps or blanks in the archive represent, among others, the ‘un-archived’ stories of marginalized groups and oppositional voices. How these silences are identified, how they manifest in the archive and the impact of the silences on the collective memories of the groups whose voices are silenced by the archival record institutional complex\textsuperscript{166} are some of the critical areas that inform current archival debates and are issues that I will explore in relation to the IAAM archive.

Since the 2002 call for the archive to be refigured, there has been a growing recognition that archives may be seen to have lives, biographies and ‘back stories’.\textsuperscript{167} According to Hamilton, ‘The concept of biography recognises that the subject of the study- in this case archive- influences and is influenced by, the world in

\textsuperscript{164}Schwartz and Cook, ‘Archives, Records and Power’.
\textsuperscript{166}Carter, ‘Of Things Said and Unsaid’.
which it moves. Back-story can be understood to be the earliest life of the collection. In the case of a written archive, this can go as far back as before it is written, as in the James Stuart Collection. Andrew Bank suggests that the back-story can be seen as the preface to an archival biography.

Following this suggestion, many scholars have engaged with the biographies and back stories of archival collections. Notable among these are Andrew Bank’s telling of the ‘Rich life of the Wilson Collection’. In this piece, Bank takes the notion of life and biography of the archive further, by attaching life phases of infancy, teenage years and adult years to his discussion of the Wilson papers. I also found inspiration in Jill Weintroub’s biography of the Bleek and Lloyd Collection which traces its making and the influences that have acted upon it, through the lens of Dorothea

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170 See Andrew Bank, ‘Introduction’, in Andrew Bank and Lesile J Bank (eds.), *Inside African Anthropology: Monica Wilson and her Interpreters,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 22. In the case of the Wilson collection as Bank elaborates, the back-story includes the cumulative years when the documents in the collection were written or produced.


172 Bank, ‘Introduction’. 
Bleek’s life. With these detailed case studies in mind, I will attempt to reconstruct the biography of the IAAM archive, remaining attentive to the importance of seeing life history as one that may embody contradiction, tension and conflict.

The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement-1964-1994

The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement (IAAM) was doubtlessly one of the most important and effective anti-apartheid movements waged outside of South Africa. From 1964 to 1994 when apartheid ended in South Africa, the IAAM ran as a public pressure group with its headquarters in Dublin. Its activities included, among others, anti-apartheid educational activities to raise awareness about apartheid for the Irish public, campaigns on specific issues related to apartheid South Africa, boycotts and numerous activities aimed at pressurizing the Irish government to take sanctions against apartheid South Africa, and establishing contacts with other anti-apartheid organisations like the Frontline States in southern Africa.

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175 Asmal et al. ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement’.
The Movement enjoyed widespread support cutting across class and including women activists in leadership roles. Its support base included trade unions, representatives of different political parties, the clergy and ordinary people. Against many odds, it succeeded in influencing relations between Ireland and the apartheid regime, and contributed significantly to the impact of the international Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM)\(^{176}\).

The IAAM operated as an integral part of the larger international Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), which launched strong campaigns against apartheid and successfully complemented the efforts of the local South African liberation movement. International anti-apartheid sentiments grew in the 1950s and 1960s due to the growing crises in South Africa and increased publicity on the ills of apartheid especially media coverage of the Sharpeville Massacre (1960) and the Rivonia Trial (1963).

The AAM was a term that became associated with the international boycott campaign against the South African apartheid regime in Western European countries.\(^{177}\) It originated in Britain and was initially called the Boycott Movement. As the initial name intimates, the original aim of the movement was the boycott of South African goods. The main agendas of the AAM were to force the

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\(^{176}\) Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.

\(^{177}\) Anti-Apartheid movements existed in all countries in western Europe except for Luxembourg, Greece, Portugal, and Spain, see Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.
Pretoria regime to bring an end to apartheid through encouraging respective governments to boycott the apartheid regime through severance of ties with it, disinvestment, and economic sanctions and so on. The contribution of the AAM in bringing an end to apartheid is undeniable. Through their activities the AAM managed to isolate the apartheid regime militarily, economically, culturally and politically.\textsuperscript{178} Despite the small size of Ireland and its own problems, the IAAM was the second largest AAM in the world after the British AAM.\textsuperscript{179}

The rapid growth of the IAAM was associated in Sandren Naidoo’s analysis in three main factors. The first was the influence of the British AAM. Due to the large number of South African exiles in Britain, the British AAM had a wide social base and developed more quickly and was therefore more prominent. In fact, Kader Asmal was the co-founder of the British AAM but later became the driving force behind the IAAM.\textsuperscript{180} The IAAM therefore found a ready model in the British AAM.

Secondly, the IAAM had a ready support base among students in Dublin and around the country. Naidoo has

\textsuperscript{178}Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.

\textsuperscript{179}Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.

\textsuperscript{180}IAAM scholars cited above all agree on this point to the point of suggesting that Kader Asmal was largely responsibility for the success of the movement. See for example, Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’, 75/131. And also D. M Sher, ‘How is it that such a small group of people can pressure governments...? : A History of the IAAM, 1964-1990’, in D. P McCracken (ed.), Southern African Irish Studies (SAIS), vol.3.
argued that the student boycott movement in Ireland was in fact the forerunner of the IAAM. The students were made up of South African students exiled in Ireland who managed to garner extraordinary support from Irish students within and outside Dublin.

Thirdly, the IAAM was made more significant due to the support of the trade union movement which, like the student movement, was involved in anti-apartheid activism a decade before the establishment of the IAAM. By the 1950s, for example, the trade unions had spearheaded the boycott of South African goods and had successful campaigns of dissuading Irish citizens from taking up employment in South Africa. Trade union activism continued to be important in the campaigns of the IAAM with most scholars agreeing that a landmark in the history of the IAAM was the Dunnes Stores Strikes (1984-1987) which originated from the trade union movement. The IAAM appropriated the strike and used it to garner more support and publicity for itself, resulting in increased awareness about apartheid and the IAAM among the Irish public.

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181 Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.

182 Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.

183 The Dunnes stores strike were strikes by 12 workers in the Dunnes Store—a supermarket in Dublin—who went on strike for 2 years refusing to handle South African goods in the store in which they were employed.

By the 1980s the fruits of the IAAM’s work were apparent. The Movement had a notable impact on the Irish government’s relations with the apartheid regime. By 1987, for example, the previously ambivalent Irish Parliament was notably more vocal and outspoken in their criticism of the South African government.\textsuperscript{185} From the time it was launched in September 1964, the IAAM was successful in influencing the government, public and companies in Ireland in boycotting South African goods, jobs and investments. Culturally, the movement influenced Irish artists, playwrights and others against performing and having their works performed in South Africa. The demonstration organised by the Movement at the occasion of the Springbok Rugby Team’s visit to Ireland in 1965 introduced the embargo in sports against apartheid South Africa.\textsuperscript{186}

Largely due to the influence of Kader Asmal, the academic boycott spearheaded by the IAAM was one of the most successful in anti-apartheid history, resulting in the first ever demonstration on South Africa soil. This against a visiting academic, Connor Cruise O’Brien, when he came to South Africa in 1986.\textsuperscript{187} By 1965, barely a year after its constitution, the IAAM had

\textsuperscript{185} Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.
\textsuperscript{186} For an extensive treatise on the way the Movement used protests against South African different sports see Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.
\textsuperscript{187} Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’.
influenced at least 150 academics against associating with the South African academy.\textsuperscript{188}

At the time when apartheid ended in 1994, the fruits of the IAAM’s thirty year existence were undeniable. The IAAM boasted a total of more than 30,000 registered members cutting across Irish society. It had 32 branches in different counties around Ireland. Above all, the Movement had singularly influenced the Irish Government’s stance against the Pretoria regime, and conscientised and mobilized the Irish public against apartheid.

The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement Archive

In its thirty-year existence, the IAAM also generated a mountain of photographs and other documentation. In 1994 these papers were donated by the Movement’s Dublin office to the RI-Mayibuye Archives located at the University of the Western Cape. This archive is made up of a huge deposit of publications, correspondence, minutes of meetings, statements, briefings, press releases, press clippings and copies of the Movement’s official publication \textit{Amandla}, other documents and some photographs...\textsuperscript{189}

\textsuperscript{188} Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group From 1964-1990’, 253. For details on the academic boycott spearheaded by the Movement.

\textsuperscript{189} Guide to historical papers (MCH1-MCH120), MCH34_IRISH Anti-apartheid Movement (IAAM) [internet] available at http://mayibuyearchives.org/index.php?[Accessed 14\textsuperscript{th} September 2013]. The photographs were subsequently reallocated to the RI-Mayibuye Photographic Collection.
Chapter 1

A biography of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement Archive

The papers of the IAAM held at the UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye archives form an invaluable source of information on the anti-apartheid struggle waged outside the borders of South Africa and provide evidence regarding the invaluable contribution of the IAAM to the demise of apartheid. The archive contains the raw materials to allow for the telling of the story of the IAAM in the three decades of its existence. Yet the story of these records themselves and their life as an archive is one that is yet to be told, and one who’s telling this chapter will endeavor to undertake.

The significance of this archive is enhanced by the fact that not many scholars have tapped into it for the telling of the history of the IAAM or indeed that of the wider international anti-apartheid movement.

The IAAM collection comprises a wide range of documents. There are documents that reflect the internal work of the movement. These include among others, documents related to the membership of the Movement, minutes of meetings, internal finances, Annual General Meetings and papers from its branches and affiliates.190 There is also a significant collection

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that details the movement’s publicity campaigns. Among documents in this range are conferences, articles, fact papers, speeches and publications such as the Movement’s monthly journal *Amandla*. Among the most significant documents are those that relate to the Movement’s dealings with the Irish government and the press. They describe the Movement’s anti-apartheid activism through organising embargos, boycotts and similar activities. The records also contain a huge deposit of correspondence. The sheer volume of the correspondence—which contains minute details of the working of the Movement—reveals not only the commitment of its members and Executive Committee but also gives a detailed record of the Movement’s day to day work in the three decades of its existence. This correspondence alerts one to the tenacity with which the organisers of the IAAM undertook their work, the various phases that the Movement went through, highlighting its challenges, successes and changing structures and strategies. The newspaper cuttings and an extensive collection of background information on various aspects of apartheid South Africa are also a part of the archive.

The IAAM papers are complemented by the photographs that are located in the Mayibuye Archives ‘Photographic Section. They include images of Mandela’s visits to Dublin and an assortment of other photographs from the early years of the Movement.

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191 UWC-R I Mayibuye Archives.
192 ibid
193 Robben Island Mayibuye Archives.
How might a ‘biography’ of this archive be constructed? Following the suggestion of Hamilton, - this biography would start with the ‘back-story’ of the IAAM records. The back-story of the IAAM records is in essence the story of the establishment and life of the Movement itself as well as the stories of its main authors, Kader and Louise Asmal. From birth of the IAAM Movement in 1964, the records that make up this collection were in continuous and increasing production.

**Childhood**

A cursory survey of the IAAM papers reveals that most of the Movement’s correspondence was written by Louise and Kader Asmal. This is not surprising.

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194 See Bank, ‘Introduction’.
195 Kader and Louise Asmal have been credited as the driving forces behind the success of the IAAM. They facilitated the donation of the IAAM records from the Dublin office to the UWC Mayibuye Centre in 1994. Kader Asmal was an Indian born in KwaZulu on 8th October 1934. His anti-apartheid activism started at an early age. He is noted for having organised a stay at home during his matric years and a boycott against segregated cricket clubs when he was a youngster. He left South Africa for Britain in the 1960s, and there, was one of the founding members of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement. He also served as vice-chairperson of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF) from 1966 to 1981. His commitment to human rights and the betterment of marginalised people is further highlighted in his service in various international human rights commissions and enquires.

195 In 1964, shortly after taking up a junior law lecturing position at Trinity College Dublin, Kader Asmal helped found the Irish Ant-Apartheid Movement, serving as its chairperson from 19972 to 1994. His commitment to the liberation movement was so tenacious that he was aptly nicknamed-Prof. IAAM.

195 His wife Louise Parkinson, an Englishwoman whom he met during his stint in Britain, was one of the most dedicated to the cause of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement. His views and compassion for fighting against racial segregation were influenced by the chief Albert Luthuli. Kader Asmal’s privileged position in the ANC is further reflected in some of the high profile positions he held within the ANC. Apart from his ministerial positions, in 1990, he was part of the team that negotiated...
given the fact that the two were at the forefront, first as founders and then in their respective positions within the Executive Committee. From 1964 Kader Asmal was Vice Chairperson, while his wife was Administrative Secretary. In the 1970s, Kader Asmal was Chairman and Louise Asmal the Honorary Executive Secretary. However, from the time the movement was launched Kader Asmal chaired most of the meetings and Louise Asmal was secretary until the late 1980s when the Movement hired a full-time secretary for the first time.

Apart from the Asmals and other Executive Committee members, the IAAM records were generated by the different ad hoc subcommittees of the Movement. The subcommittees were an important component in the generation of the IAAM papers as they were responsible for specific work within the movement. The secretaries of these subcommittees reported back to the Executive Committee and also prepared reports and materials for the Movement’s work. All these make up an important component of the production of the IAAM papers.

with the De Klerk’s government to bring apartheid to an end, he saved as ANC’s national disciplinary committee chairperson, Chaired the Mandela cabinet’s arms control committee as well as the parliamentary subcommittee on ethics.

196 Minutes of Anti-Apartheid working committee Meeting, 10 August 1964, IAAM papers.

197 IAAM, Against Repression in South Africa: International Campaign (leaflet), March 1978, IAAM papers.


199 Secretary’s report 1965/1966, IAAM papers.
The most interesting aspect about the early life of the IAAM archives, what we might think of as its infancy, is that for most of its existence in Ireland, the records of the IAAM were housed in the flat and later the house of Louise and Kader Asmal. The Asmals’ residence, located in Foxcroft, Dublin, was the headquarters of the movement for most of its existence, with members meeting there twice monthly on Monday nights.

The movement footed the house’s telephone and electricity bills. It was in this personal space that the IAAM records spent their early life, intertwined with the personal and private lives of the Asmals. A photograph of the Asmals’ living room with the papers of the IAAM on the tea-table and shelves evokes this early childhood of the records. The Asmal residence was the effective hub for the production, movement and circulation of documents in Dublin, Ireland and beyond. These included the Movement’s branches scattered across Ireland, international organisations such as the IDAF and the United Nations, local organisations within Ireland such as the Irish Parliament, government and media houses among others as well as correspondence with the liberation movement in Southern Africa and sympathetic media organisations in the region.

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200 See attached photograph of IAAM records in appendix.
203 See attached photograph, IAAM photographs, Mayibuye Archives.
Louise Asmal gives this vivid first-hand account of the state of the IAAM ‘archive’ in these early years.

“Much of the work was not at all glamorous, though [it was] essential to our success. I think of one woman who stood for hours at a time in our garage painfully inking our antiquated duplicating machine and churning [the] members ‘newsletters; of another who wrote hundreds of envelopes by hand every month for the same newsletter; of those, mostly women, who secretly sent out postal orders to the families of those in South Africa….They trekked out every other Monday to our house to attend meetings or stuff envelopes.”

Louise Asmal recalls having been systematic about the ordering and preservation of the documents.

**From Adolescence to Adulthood**

We might think of the teenage years of the IAAM archive as been those years when the papers were donated from the IAAM’s Dublin office to the Mayibuye Centre at UWC. The IAAM was disbanded after the demise of apartheid with the successful ushering in of Nelson Mandela’s government in 1994. This period was also formative the establishment of Mayibuye Centre as

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an official liberation archive. The donation of the records to UWC was brokered by Kader Asmal. Asmal, arranged for the transportation of the papers from Ireland to Durban, South Africa by ship in a container. Presumably, the papers were transported from Durban to UWC by road in boxes. At the time of their arrival, the papers were disorderly.

The UWC-RIM Mayibuye Archives was originally called Mayibuye Centre for History and Culture in South Africa under the University of the Western Cape. Even at this early stage, the Centre was a liberation Centre for academic and scholarly contribution towards the history of apartheid and liberation of South Africa.

This is not surprising given UWC’s history as the ‘University of the Struggle’. It is from this legacy that the Mayibuye Archives was conceived. Initially most of its collection was made up of the IDAF papers, which were relocated from London to South Africa after the IDAF was disbanded in 1990.

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206 Personal Communication with David Scher, September-October 2013.
207 Personal Communication with David Scher, September-October 2013.
208 Ibid.
209 Ibid.
210 Robben Island Museum, ‘Mandela in Dublin’, temporal Exhibition, Nelson Mandela Gateway. Established in 1959 as a university for colored people only, UWC has a long history of innovative struggle against oppression, segregation and disadvantage. Its leftist personality is well known, acknowledged and hauled. UWC, once described as ‘the intellectual home of the left’, has been historically hauled for its practical engagement in helping the historically marginalized to have a place and voice in the life of the nation. From as early as the 1970s, the university through its staff and students was active in the struggle against apartheid. By the 1980s and 1990s, the university was at the heart of anti-apartheid debates and protests.
In September 1996, cabinet along with the decision to establish Robben Island Museum as the first heritage institution in the new nation also recommended that the Mayibuye Centre be incorporated into Robben Island Museum. In April 2000, the Mayibuye Centre officially became part of Robben Island museum, officially opening as the new UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye archives on 13th June, 2001. During this period and hence documents were stored in ad hoc ways around the University of the Western Cape and especially in the Centre for Humanities Research.

Because of these unsettled years when Mayibuye was been established as an official archive, the IAAM papers seemingly remained in limbo until 2000 when Annica Van Gylswyk the records. This marked their ‘initiation’ into adulthood. In 2001 the records were sorted, indexed, catalogued and inventoried. This saw their transformation from the old order, as kept in Dublin, to what they currently are under Van Gylswyk’s direction. As the archivists who worked on the records, the late

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213 Since its inception, the Mayibuye Archives has grown to become one of the most conspicuous liberation archives in South Africa. Its vast collection of 100,000 photographs, 10,000 films and video recordings, 5,000 artifacts , 2000 oral history tapes ,2000posters of the struggle and more than 300 individual and organisational collections allows for a comprehensive, but contested telling of the South Africa’s liberation history. Guide to historical papers (MCH1-MCH120), MCH34_IRISH Anti-apartheid Movement (IAAM) [internet] available at http://mayibuyearchives.org/index.php? [Accessed 14th June 2013]
214 Interview with Maliki Victor and Caroline Wintein, Cape Town, 1st October, 2013.
Annica Van Gylswyk was central to the transformation of the records. A closer examination of the background of the Van Gylswyk may help to illuminate the influences to which the IAAM papers were susceptible during their early adulthood at Mayibuye. Annica Van Gylswyk (18th August 1930-14th June 2012) was a Swedish -born journalist who settled in South Africa in 1956, upon her marriage to Niok van Gylswyk at the age of twenty-six... The couples were ardent supporters of the liberation struggle. Due to her involvement in the Black Conscious Movement and her work in the Black Sash, Annica was arrested and put in solitary confinement in June 1986. She was deported to Sweden in 1987 where she was taken on as a librarian by the Nordic African Institute. Her Liberation activism led her into an interest in documenting the lives and struggle of ordinary South Africans. In 1987, she had been tasked with archiving the Ruth First records for the Ruth First Memorial Library in London. In Pretoria she helped found UNISA’s African Studies Documentation Centre. In Pretoria she helped found UNISA’s African Studies Documentation Centre.

In 1999, she and her family returned to Cape Town. In Cape Town she had the main responsibility for the Ruth and Ray Alexander Archives. Despite being of retirement age, Annica continued with her work in the documentation of liberation archives and histories. In Mayibuye Centre at the University of the Western Cape

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and Robben Island Museum she worked with ANC archive material. She also trained librarians in archive organising in Fort Hare University when Annica began working on the IAAM records, the Robben Island - Mayibuye Centre did not have a policy regarding the cataloguing and indexing of their collections. In the absence of such a guide, archivists like Annica were forced to rely on their own discretion and personal experience, which in her case was substantial. Such a scenario obviously enhances the impact of the individual archivists on the shape of the archive.

Under Annica’s hand the papers were significantly reorganised. Here the agency and influence of the archivist is apparent... For example, whereas the Dublin office kept the correspondence all together as incoming and outgoing correspondence, Annica changed its order by separating the correspondence and archiving it according to the issuing body. This system of sorting was applied to other papers, such as speeches, circulars, articles, statements and others. The role of the issuing bodies was thus enhanced. For example, correspondence originating from, or relating to, the Irish government was archived under ‘The Irish government’. Similarly correspondence and related materials from trade unions, churches, and other organisations were filed under these respective headings. Documents that could not be associated with an issuing body were filed together in a single ‘general’ category.

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216 Interview with Maliki Victor and Caroline Wintein, 1st October, 2013, Cape Town, Ms. Victor is the Manager at Mayibuye Archives and is one of the few people who were at Mayibuye Archives in its early years and Ms Wintein is a collections Management specialists with Robben Island Museum.
At Mayibuye, as in Dublin, the newspaper cuttings-which make up a significant part of the records-were filled in chronological order. The IAAM newsletter *Amandla* was filled separately. In Dublin and on their arrival at Mayibuye, photos were a part of the documents. During their preparation for archiving, the photographs were separated from the papers and relocated to the photographic section of the archive.
Chapter 2

Whose story does the Irish Anti-apartheid Movement archive tell?

Can the more self-reflexive approach—that this paper has engaged with thus far—be applied to the archive of a movement involved in the liberation struggle like the IAAM? Here it is necessary to explore the extent to which the IAAM archive has become an institutionalized expression of a new post-apartheid ANC-dominated ‘nationalist narrative’. The role of the prominent ANC activists, Louise and the late Kader Asmal as ‘authors’ of this archive calls for close investigation, as well as the institutional structures of the Mayibuye Centre in collaboration with Robben Island. To what extent are these structures of power and governance in the post-apartheid period responsible for creating a grid of knowledge that privileges certain narratives and readings over other narratives, that silences as well as gives voice?

As explained earlier, this archive has contributed significantly to the record of the history of the liberation struggle in South Africa. Literature on archival discourse shoe that is in the nature of archive—both colonial and post-colonial—to be selective. A close reading of the IAAM papers leads one to conclude that the papers in the way they were produced, constituted and indexed privilege certain narratives over others. Notably, the archive privilege ‘heroes’ particularly Kader Asmal and
Nelson Mandela. At the same time the archive does not accommodate the stories of certain groups such as the Pan Africanist Congress, the Frontline States which where an important component of the IAAMs work as well as individuals like Chief Albert Luthuli who has been credited with the initial appeal for boycott of South African goods that led to the formation of Anti-Apartheid Movements.217

As noted earlier, liberation archive projects have been one of the central aspects of the memory work in post-colonial and post-apartheid Africa. These projects have included amongst others, the Aluka project, A History of the Liberation Struggle Archive, Towards Understanding Africa and Research Archive, Digital Imaging South Africa, Nordic documentation of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa.218 The urgency, with which these liberation archives projects were developed, can be understood against the perceived threats to the liberation records due to the fact that there was a lack of systematic way of organising and accessing them. This is because the apartheid and colonial archives excluded liberation archives and therefore liberation archives were not stored securely as they were either held by individuals or organisations that faced challenges of curating the records and allowing access to the public. This endangered the liberation histories.

217 See Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Po.
In South Africa, the post-apartheid government’s archival reconstitution projects were part of a wider agenda in the arts and culture arena that was tailored towards nation building in the new democratic state. Many scholars assert the close relationship between politics and the construction of national histories and heritage.

For example Joan McGregor and Lyn Schumaker argue that, “The construction of heritage is intimately linked to identity politics and has a particularly close relationship with nation and state building projects.” Consequently, government heritage projects are tailored towards telling narratives that the ruling regimes wants to tell and sidelining or even silencing of narratives that are not in line with their political aspirations.

South African heritage, and particularly archival discourse, can draw lessons from Terence Ranger’s discussion of the thin line between nationalist history and patriotic history which is narrower and more subjective...

It is necessary to question whether liberation archives in South Africa like the Mayibuye...

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221 Harriet Deacon, ‘whose stories will our archives be witness’, http://www.archivalplatform.org/blog/entry/on_the_liberation/, accessed 20th October, 2013.

Archives are in danger of becoming biased uncritical repositories of South African struggle histories. How does an archive like the IAAM archive feature in this wider picture of mobilization of memory?

In the case of the IAAM papers, it is easy to see how the connection between Mayibuye Archives and RIM, the Asmals who were members of the ANC, and the classification, indexing and cataloguing of the papers by someone who is associated with liberation movement and liberation archives, leads to the privileging of a pro-ANC narrative that privileges heroes of the ANC.

Kader Asmal’s views and compassion for fighting against racial segregation were influenced when he was still a young man ANCs Albert Luthuli at a very young age. Kader Asmal was a member of the African National Congress throughout his political life, serving in various distinguished capacities within the ANC.

The IAAM took its cue from the ANC and adopted ANC policies—notably the isolation of South Africa in every way possible. An examination of the structures and activities of the IAAM show that the movement was pro-ANC. All South African members of the IAAM were members of the ANC. All of the South African members of the IAAM were members of the ANC Youth Brigade.

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224 K Asmal et al, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement’.
225 Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group’.
226 Naidoo, ‘The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement as a Public Pressure Group.’
Furthermore, the establishment of the Mayibuye Archives as an appendage of Robben Island Museum, places it right in the center of debates around the construction of heritage and anti-apartheid struggle heritage by Robben Island Museum.

The construction of the Robben Island Museum (RIM) 227 heritage by the post-apartheid government of Nelson Mandela and subsequent regimes has been tailored towards state building of post-apartheid South Africa. Through the policies of reconciliation and reconstruction, post-apartheid governments have sought to construct a South Africa that is all inclusive, racially tolerant, triumphant over a long and traumatic history, and in line with the constructed slogan of ‘rainbow nation’. The RIM narrative- summarized in the eye catching motto-‘the triumph of the human spirit over adversity’- and embodied in Nelson Mandela was done in this wider political context. This representation presented the Island “…as a model of hope and memory in the new democracy. Robben Island’s symbolic meaning was thus aligned not only to South Africa’s official government policy of reconciliation and redress but also to its broader international role as human rights advocate.”228

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227 Robben Island was opened as a museum in 1997 after it was handed over by the department of correctional services. It was declared a world heritage site in 2006. Since its opening, it has become the most coveted tourist destination in South Africa for both international and local tourists with visiting peaking at 2000 per day in 1999.

Against this background, I argue that Mayibuye as a liberation archive, is predisposed to been constituted by specific archives that ‘tell’ a specific story of the liberation struggle. According to Harris and Hatang, the archive “Never speaks to us as a thing in and of itself [but that it speaks to us] through the specifics of particular relations of power”. The structure of the Mayibuye and its particular position in relation to the political power structure in post-apartheid South Africa, and its constituent collections such as the IAAM papers, presupposes a selective narrative of South African history and liberation history in particular.

The Asmals undeniably played an important role in the production of the IAAM records. However, Annika Van Gylswyk gave their persons a lot of significance in the way that she authored the catalogue. A survey of the IAAM papers show that there were a lot of correspondence and between the movement and many other people, including leading notable persons such as Irish parliamentarians, government officials and prominent politicians like former Irish President Mary Robinson. These prominent persons also gave speeches at different times during the life of the movement. And yet Ms Gylswyk in the catalogue, elected to give the Asmals prominence by isolating correspondence, speeches and articles produced by Louise and Kader Asmal. Item number fifteen (15) of the catalogue is

entitled ‘Speeches’ goes ahead to list 15.1 as Kader Asmal’s speeches and addresses.\textsuperscript{231} The other speeches are then all lumped together under the title ‘speeches by others’ with no indication of who the ‘others’ might be. Similarly, item sixteen (16) lists ‘Articles and Facts on South Africa’.\textsuperscript{232} The catalogue then goes on to list 16.1 as ‘Articles by Kader and Louise Asmal’, following this up by the generic title ‘Fact papers on South Africa and Apartheid’ as 16.2.\textsuperscript{233} This system of attaching significance to the Asmals continues throughout the catalogue. What is made more interesting is that the Mayibuye Archives has a separate collection comprising specifically Kader and Louise Asmals personal papers.\textsuperscript{234}

A further survey of the IAAM papers reveals a distinct privileging of the ANC and Nelson Mandela. The IAAM was supposedly a non-partisan in its work and represented the wider liberation movement not only in South Africa but also in neighboring such as Rhodesia, Namibia and Angola, as well as dealings with the frontline states.\textsuperscript{235} However, the catalogues and inventory gives added significance to the ANC by giving ANC records dominance, at the same time disadvantaging other parties such as the PAC, the

\textsuperscript{231} UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, ‘The Records Of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, Catalogue No.23’.
\textsuperscript{232} ibid
\textsuperscript{233} ibid
\textsuperscript{234} http://mayibuyearchives.org/index.php? [Accessed 14\textsuperscript{th} June 2013]
\textsuperscript{235} Kader and Louise Asmal and Alberts, “The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement”.
student movement and others that were equally important.\textsuperscript{236}

The photographic archives which is relatively small in general under the heading in the inventory ‘ANC Banner Ceremony 1986’, boasts a total of seventeen color photographs and 3 press photographs related to the ANC and non-related to other liberation parties in Southern Africa like the PAC and others\textsuperscript{237}

Furthermore, there is a bias in the way that the IAAM records, inventory and catalogue honors Nelson Mandela. The inventory of the IAAM records then goes to list specifically documents under ‘Nelson Mandela’, which date from 1982 to 1993.\textsuperscript{238}

From the foregoing, it is clear that the IAAM papers emphasise the Asmals, the ANC and Nelson Mandela. This makes the records a site of contestation by others who are excluded such as others who were involved in the IAAM as well as other liberation heroes and liberation political parties like the Pan African Congress.

The IAAM records sustain the wider nationalist history narrative of Robben Island Museum and other sites of memory in post-apartheid South Africa. Its privileging of the ANC and Nelson Mandela, influences readers of

\textsuperscript{236} See the UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, ‘The Records Of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, Catalogue No.23’.
\textsuperscript{237} UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, ‘The Records Of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, Catalogue No.23.
\textsuperscript{238} UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, ‘The Records Of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, Catalogue No.23’.
this archive and orients their thinking towards the conclusion that the ANC and Nelson Mandela were the embodiment of the liberation struggle.

This narrative is sustained by the results of the uses of the archive. A recent exhibition by Robben Island Museum entitled ‘Mandela in Dublin: A legacy of the IAAM’, that drew solely on the IAAM papers and photographic exhibition is evidence of this assertion. The exhibition celebrates, “…the life of Nelson Mandela focusing on his ‘long walk to freedom’ through visits to Dublin.” Nelson Mandela only visited Dublin three times in his political career. The first time was in 1990 upon his release. There were many others before him who had direct impact on the IAAM throughout its career such as Oliver Tambo, Albert Luthuli and others. This exhibition exemplifies how the IAAM papers and photographs and catalogue and the resultant uses of the papers compels a selective telling of the Movement’s history leading to the forming of certain grids of knowledge at the expense of other narratives.

The ‘Mandela in Dublin: A legacy of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement’ exhibition opened at Nelson Mandela Gateway to Robben Island on 2nd October 2013. The exhibition almost solely drew its exhibits from the IAAM papers and photographs housed at

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239 This exhibition curated by Dr. Olusugen Marikinyoand co-curated by Jabulile Chinamasa and Alex will be open in Cape Town at Nelson Mandela Gateway to Robben Mandela from 2nd October 2013 to 30th January, 2014 and at Mansion House Dublin, from 21st March 2014 to 30th May 2014.
Mayibuye Archives. These exhibits include a sizeable number of documents such as letters and excerpts of speeches as well as photographs.

The visually appealing exhibition whose attraction results from the beautifully designed and graphically appealing photographs and texts can be summarized in four parts. The exhibition is located on the second level of Nelson Mandela gateway. As the viewer reaches the second floor after a climbing a short staircase, he/she is presented with a huge floor to ceiling, two one to two meters wide diorama of an immaculately dressed Nelson Mandela addressing crowd. The gigantic diorama is complemented by a big poster advertising the title of the exhibition.

The second part of the exhibition deals with some historical background on apartheid and Robben Island where Mandela was imprisoned. One of the titles here is ‘Meaning of Apartheid by Mandela’.

The third part of the exhibition is a background of the IAAM. This background is in essence the biography of Kader Asmal. Exhibits here include pictures of the Asmal, excerpts from their book as well as a floor to ceiling 2 meter wall on which are pasted copies of letters either written by or addressed to Kader and Louise Asmal as chairperson and secretary of the IAAM.

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241 Personal communication with Olusegen Morakinyo, 31st October, 2013
242 I have viewed the exhibition four times since it was put up. My descriptions here are based on my observations as well as the storyline or summary of the exhibition obtained from the exhibitions curator Olusugen Morakinyo.
243 Exhibition Storyline, ‘Mandela in Dublin: A legacy of the IAAM’.
The exhibition continues in its third part by giving a brief outline of the growth and activities of the IAAM. Here there is one not very outstanding photograph of Albert Luthuli and a quotation of the words he used when he called for the international community to boycott apartheid South Africa in 1957. Other exhibits include photographs of activities with Kader Asmal featuring in a good number.

The fourth part makes up the main body of the exhibition and here Mandela’s ‘long walk’ through Dublin is elaborated. This part has three outstanding components. First is a timeline of Mandela’s association with Dublin dating back from 1964 to 1990. Highlights here are: 1964, Mandela was appointed as an honorary member of the Philosophical Society of the TCDD, celebrations in Dublin to mark his 60th and 70th birthdays respectively, 1983 Mandela head sculpture in Dublin, 1988 Mandela was awarded the Freeman of Dublin city award which was received on his behalf by Adelaide Tambo, 1990 celebrations and symbolic gestures in Dublin at his release and others. In the second part here the highlighted events are accompanied by photographs and banners bearing the respective activities. The highlight here is a ceiling to floor excerpt of the liberation hero’s speech to the Irish Parliament in 1990 in which he appealed to Ireland ‘to walk the last mile with us’.

The exhibition concludes with a larger diorama of Nelson Mandela than the one that it opened with. In this closing scene, Mandela is seen giving the speech to the
Irish parliament. As visitors move towards the visitors’ book, they have the privilege of viewing photographs of the IAAM committee with Mandela. In the last photograph in this series-drawn from the Mayibuye Archives IAAM photographic collection of course- the two heroes of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement papers sit next to each other, smilingly taking their place in history.
Developing an integrated environmental education programme for Iziko Museum and Fossil Park

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**Key words:** Robben Island Museum; Iziko museums; Fossil Park; environmental education; outreach programme; public programming; natural environment; biodiversity

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Background to the research project

The study was prompted by a need for a comparative analysis of and developing an Integrated Environmental Education Programme for Iziko museum and West Coast Fossil Park environmental education programme from 2008 to 2013. In the process of the study there arose a realization for conducting comparative study of Iziko and Robben Island museums environmental education programmes. The study, most of us will understand, is a relatively untraversed field. I have paid visits to few sites of Iziko museums of South Africa, including West Coast Fossil Park. The visits prompted me make some observations and recommendations and commented on each of the site I visited. I began the journey of the study by first examining the meaning, changes in it and influence of those changes in the environmental education of museums under review.

Introduction

The study has been an uneven venture. The amount of work demanded by my studies seemed insurmountable; however, I managed to cover much ground. There is still a lot to be done. The project itself involves considerable work. There is limited written material on the subject matter and one is left with very limited options to study the subject and that is through qualitative and empirical research.
The bulk of the information sourced emerged out of interviews I conducted with experienced educators of Education and Public Programmes of Iziko museum. Museum of South Africa, as it was known or called then in the early 20th century developed intimate working relationship with the University of Cape Town which still exists to date. In one of the interviews with one of the directors Doctor Wayne Alexander, in the Education and Public Programme stated in no uncertain terms that the museum sources of curators hail from UCT.\textsuperscript{245}

The study examined the meaning of environment and changes in the meaning of the concept of environment in the stated period. Iziko Museum of South Africa has divided its environmental education programme into two, Natural history and Social history. Over and above that the museum has two libraries relevant to each. The reasons for partnering academic institutions with museums are well captured the words of Emmanyeli Nakenyi which say: “It can be taken for granted that anybody can work in a museum without proper training, because our ever changing complex world, professionalism can be only through constant training and specialization.”\textsuperscript{246}

\textsuperscript{245} Dr. W, Alexander, interview with APMHS on Challenges Iziko Museum of South Africa is facing, 28 May 2013.
\textsuperscript{246} E, Nakenyi, Jos Centre for ‘ Museum Studies and Training of Museum Personnel in Nigeria’, Arinoze, Lagos, Nigeria,2006, p.97
Iziko museums of South Africa colonial background

Museum of South Africa was inscribed Southern Flagship Museum. The museum is the oldest in South Africa. Established in 1825, 247 is the first in South Africa regarded as a colonial museum it served the interest of a few white colonial community. Basically museums were a preserve of few privileged people right from their inception. 248 The South African Museum was no exception. In her educational approach she adopted the classification/ taxonomy philosophy of the Western colonial countries. The museum’s natural history education centres on mammals, birds, whales, fossils, rocky shores and rocks. Iziko Museum of South Africa former Chief Executive Officer, Professor Henry Bredenkamp, conscious of this practice writes: “Like many museums that have their roots in their colonial period, tended in the past to interpret the objects in its collections through limited range of perspectives.” 249

In realising the need for change in its colonial past he goes on to say: “there is an emphasis on tangible and intangible relationship between people and natural environment.” 250 During my internship at Iziko Museums I visited five of the twelve sites, namely, Castle of Good Hope, Bo Kaap, in the Betram House, Groot Constantia

250 Ibid.
and the Fossil Park at Langebaanweg\textsuperscript{251} in the West Coast. I also compiled reports on observations and opinions on environmental education regarding the sites. Each was characterized by absence of connectivity to one another. All these sites have one thing in common, that they were used by slaves instructed by their masters to interfere with natural environment either to tend food or flower gardens or perform chores related to natural environment.

The concept of natural environment has, however, undergone negligible change over the period under review at Iziko museums. The term used before was ‘natural environment’, as attested by former CEO, Professor Henry (Jatti) Bredenkamp, which in the Western world was understood narrowly as ‘natural environment’ with the exclusion of human aspect. The exhibition at natural history section of Iziko museums of South Africa follows raw interpretation of ‘natural environment’ as interpreted by the Western environmentalists. It is only in the developing or post-colonial world where ‘natural environment’ is understood differently. It is my contention that the content and the structure of environmental education has not fundamentally changed at Iziko Museums of South Africa.

\textsuperscript{251}Q, B, and Hendey’ Langebaanweg: Record of Past Life, South African Museum, 1982.
Change in the exhibitions in the natural history section of the museum where the diorama of the casts of the Khoisan people has been removed from display on ethical grounds is just a scratch on the surface. That has automatically influenced the content of Iziko museums environmental education. Iziko museums are as a result still the only museums that have a progressive policy on how to handle human remains in South Africa. This means that the museum is indeed on its way to adapting to post-colonial museology. Again the statement of former CEO, Professor Henry Bredenkamp bears testimony to the understanding of the environment that it has a pedigree in the twentieth century South African historiography, a distinctively recent and immediately noticeable feature of the period since the 1990s the degree of which it has witnessed increasing scholarly involvement in the understanding of heritage outside the formal museum arena.”

This expression clearly portrays the significance of environment and less attention paid to it by historiography.

Another change is in the environmental education is inclusion of Climate Change based on the Fossil Park, Langebaanweg, West Coast. That is an additional site which was produced by phosphate mining. Mining came to a halt and the site became the subject of research by scientists who concluded that the remains of a wide range of animals. Some extinct animals are thought to have died as a result of floodplain caused by Climate

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253 Ibid.
Change. This is a discovery that belongs to and can fascinate human kind as whole. The flooding at Fossil Park is estimated to have taken place about five million years ago whilst, on the other hand, there is no evidence of human existence then. Impression is, however, now given by the mass media that Climate Change is caused by humans or is a human phenomenon.

What could have been the causes of Climate Change then? Are those causes different to those of today?

Fossil Park compels us to pose more questions that contribute to the production of knowledge. With close analysis of the cleavage in the conduct of environmental education, in particular, and public programming in general, it alerts the museums to the limitations of the use, dividing and narrowing of knowledge. Each site of Iziko Museums should be speaking to each other, for example, less or nothing at all is said about the mother body history and relationship between the two or other sites. Each of the sites is historically related to one another environmentally or otherwise.

**Lack of connectivity in sites narratives**

The history of the Company Gardens cannot be narrated without touching on the Castle of Good Hope but the opposite is the case. Both sites were tended by slaves, have beautiful gardens and water in abundance. The

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disjointed manner of presenting environmental education is immensely influenced by the colonial legacy of the museums. The classification of its collections has permeated not only the content but also the structure of different sites of environmental education programme. The challenge to the Iziko museums is how to address its current practice of “taxonomy, categorization and putting in hierarchy of everything”\(^{255}\) that has given rise to approach environmental education of different sites in a mechanistic mode.

Closing the gaps by creating connection or link between the different sites in their narrative would project a connected and uniform interpretation of the sites. That would enable the visitors/audience to leave the sites more educated, not only about sites but also about the sustainable use of natural environment of the region at the time of colonialism and that of post-colonial period. Professor Bredenkamp has advised that the understanding of the relationship between the tangible and intangible connection between natural and humans would place the museums with colonial background on par with post-colonial museums.

That would be a move away from “steatopygia”\(^{256}\) days of understanding museology. In recognizing the shortcomings of Eurocentric patterns of museum practice and need for transformation, former Iziko Museums CEO, Professor Bredenkamp advises: “The last two

\(^{255}\)Meaning of Museum:’ Poetics and Politics of exhibiting’.

\(^{256}\)C, Rassool, Lecture at APMHS class, UWC, 3 August, 2013.
decades in particular have seen the reworking of heritage policy and conservation from a hegemonic colonial or “first world” construct into an inclusive post-colonial practice, which has resulted in transformative discourse.”

This assertion emphasises the need for Iziko Museums of South Africa to go beyond the stage of “steatopygia.”

Although the Iziko museums Education and Public Programmes Director once indicated that there is a video material on Fossil Park in the collections of the main museum in Cape Town but that is rarely shown or presented to the public. Fossil Park is a living site or exhibit of likely effects of Climate Change to humans and need to be projected consistently to the museum different audiences. In my interviews with some of the museums’ educators they indicated that their offerings are often than not conducted according to the requests or needs of the public or schools about to visit. Fossil Park is a treasure of humankind situated in Africa. It can be one of the travelling exhibits as it was done at Cape Nature-Iziko-Robben Island museums celebrations on the 19th September 2013. The audience was emotional and shaken by the visual exhibit of Fossil Park.

However, classification does not always by its very nature present a skewed or narrow approach to education. For example, there are scholarly subjects such

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258 W, Alexander, comments on author’s presentation of the project, 3 August 2013.
as paleontology and classification of animals into mammals, vertebrate, carnivores, omni-carnivores, that are offered for education at schools and classification is used positively in this regard. The criticism lies in the mechanistic approach and interpretation of sites. It is this form of classification that creates or leaves huge gaps which can be filled only by identifying and highlighting the interrelatedness of different sites of Iziko museums. The closure of the gaps stands to enrich the interpretation of Iziko museums sites.

That is the critical analysis of the environmental education content and structure of Iziko museums, including Fossil Park. Fossil Park plays huge role in educating the public about effects of neglecting their surroundings. Education on waste, water, energy and biodiversity can be part of education programme on the site. The previous and current uncaring treatment of our environment has placed humans in a potentially perilous situation. Hence “sustainable development has been firmly placed on world agenda.”

The concept and practice of travelling exhibits was initiated in 1934 in South Africa by Albany Museum. Although the practice began and was initiated during colonialism it is still relevant, productive and very effective today. Mostly, it is referred to as an Outreach Programme in order to reach out to those disadvantaged

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259 Policies and Legislations, Chief Directorate Communication, Department, Pretoria, HSRC, September, 2008.
260 American Association for State and Local History, ‘Introduction to the History and functions of Museums’, 1400Eith Avenue, Southern Alville, TN37203.
by distance/ transport for purposes of accessing the
museums to the public. During my internship at Iziko
Museums of South Africa I became part of these
travelling exhibits exercises.

The outreach programme educates the public about wet
and dry collections which are all about natural
environment education. On 4 April 2013, World Earth
Day we were part of different environmental education
NGO’s and the school in Lansdowne, 9 September
2013 at the Golden Acre Shopping Centre in Cape Town
and on 19 and 30 September 2013 at Cape Nature
travelling exhibits were displayed. In the latter travelling
exhibits adult and student audience flocked to the
exhibits and were awed by the variety of the collections
which ranged from krill’s, Blue bottles, Stingray fish,
porcupine fish, shark jaws, whale ( blue & killer) teeth,
poffuder, Octopus, whale vertebrate bone, sediment
rock, taxidermised penguin, penguin skin and many
others. Questions were posed on each of these objects
ranging from how to acquire them, whether the museum
could assist in acquiring some of the live collections.
How much does one have to pay to gain access into the
museum? Environmental education in that form was
used as a tool of social cohesion. Travelling exhibits
remain a powerful and effective tool of environmental
education for educating the public.

**Robben Island-Iziko museums comparative analysis**

Robben Island Museum was inscribed in 1999 by
UNESCO as a World Heritage Site on the basis of its
cultural significance. This fact led to the neglect of natural resources by successive management structures of the heritage site. This practice reflected the narrow understanding of the environment. The observations and comments of the 2004 ICOMOS delegation pointed at ‘13 natural environmentally and only 5 culturally related’ weaknesses that Robben Island Museum had to address.

It was that revelation that jolted RIM management to introduce the post of Environmental and Cultural Heritage Education Manager post. The creation of the post was a subject of contestation and its raison’detret could hardly be explained because there was no consensus in the understanding of the meaning of environment, save in a post-colonial museum setting.

Worse still, the overpopulation of rabbits on Robben Island, caused a lot of criticism and stir on the Island. Natural vegetation like grass was virtually grazed out. For natural environment conservation RIM needed an extremely experienced Environment Manager with holistic strategic environmental maintenance plan. For that to be balanced out Cultural and Environmental Heritage Educator to give sense by interpreting conservation practices is a requirement. However, despite all confusion, RIM continued to receive target audience whose interest and requests were for environmental education that is centred on factors narrowly interpreted as the Island’s natural environment, for example, flora and fauna. In essence, the nature of RIM environmental education is gradually being
influenced by both internal and external stakeholders to undergo transformation.

Robben Island Museum was the first after democracy or post-colonial museum in South Africa. In post-colonial museums natural environment once it has a relationship with humans it assumes a cultural aspect. This is in fact, “the relationship between tangible and intangible” factors that make natural environment a cultural heritage. It is the disjuncture between tangible and intangible that brings in narrow colonial interpretation of environment. Environmental education in the Education Department of Robben Island Museum had to, holus bolus; adopt the mutually exclusive interpretation of natural environment. For example, there are about 68 shipwrecks around the Island yet no deeper education about the trees that were cut down to build those ships. It is the utilisation of nature by humans that has, today, reduced distanced between countries and continents by seconds. In other words, ecology has played this role.

**Challenge of post-colonial museum**

For RIM to be a complete post-colonial museum she has to be a full cultural museum. Iziko Museums of South Africa, just like RIM, is situated in Cape Town. Both are faced with the challenge of integrating and appreciation of the tangible and intangible heritage to be fully-fledged cultural museums. Secondly, Iziko Museum of South Africa an all-round professional institution and as

indicated elsewhere above in the study the museum draws her curators mainly from the University of Cape Town. Emmanuel Nnakeli words of wisdom need not be over-emphasised on the importance and necessity of “constant training” of museum staff. Museums have to enter into partnerships with academic institutions and embark on joint inter-museum activities that would enhance their progress and achievements. RIM has to strengthen its relationship with Universities of the Western Cape, Stellenbosch, Cape Town and others in the country and abroad.

Conclusion

Based on the factors raised above, it has been my observation that RIM under-utilises her potential both in built-up and environment for educational and revenue purposes. RIM is legally a Protected Area, in term of the law, National Environmental Management Act and there are extinct birds and insects. During environmental educational camps schools are taught about penguins, swift terns, oyster catchers and others that make Robben Island Museum a culturally rich museum. The sedimentary rocks around the Island and existence of Jan van Riebeeck Gardens and Blue Stone Quarry make Robben Island Museum the finest example of co-existence between tangible and intangible heritage.

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Current activities of Iziko Museums are actually positioning herself to assume the character of ‘open university’ which RIM possesses already but with contrasting backgrounds. Iziko Museums have a colonial origin while RIM has post-colonial roots. The challenge is, however, how both restructure their environmental education Programme to reflect the post-colonial practice and museology. All museums in the post-colonial period have a tinge of colonial influence adapted to their existing socio-economic and educational practice. It is more of a challenge to Iziko Museums than RIM because the latter was inscribed on cultural reasons.
Robben Island as a place of life-long learning

Heritage is a broad process which has four main components: collections, conservation, management and communication/education of tangible and intangible heritage. It involves a comprehensive approach which focuses on sustainability of the past of the nation’s history which helps in mapping the route to the future, an approach enabling the nations to know their identity. In discussing heritage, there is emphasis, firstly knowledge on heritage and secondly passing knowledge from one generation to the next generation. This emphasis is very clear in the education collaboration that was initiated by Robben Island Museum (RIM) and the University of the Western Cape (UWC).

Heritage discourse needs to be learnt at all levels. The APMHS has produced many graduates who are contributing to the heritage profession in different ways and in different countries in Africa. Some are ensuring that the heritage institutions in the continent are well managed through their work in the heritage institutions. If heritage is well managed, it will exist and as such it can be learned by both adults and children. The
knowledge can be passed from one generation to the next as a way of avoiding its extinction. The APMHS programme is intended to ensure the maintenance and sustainability of heritage in all its different ramifications. Some of the APMHS graduates are educating learners at different levels about heritage and therefore making sure that the heritage knowledge is sustained. The multiple contributions of the APMHS graduates in the discourse of museums and heritage have a positive impact in museum and heritage and in ensuring the identity sustainability.

We are who we are because of our past which maps our future. The knowledge of our heritage gives us identity, “who are we”. Society with identity becomes firm and stable but the one without identity becomes confused. The lack of knowledge about heritage results in social disintegration which causes the erosion of social capital. There is a need therefore to focus all our energies on educating the nations on heritage and ensuring that the management of heritage is addressed through educational programmes such as the APMHS. The APMHS programme is one of a kind and it gives heritage value to all nations in the continent.

UNESCO; (2002) states that currently poor heritage management threatens heritage by focusing on the economy more than the management and education of heritage itself, thus altering or diluting its core mandate. We have to be clear of our efforts in ensuring the continuation of our heritage. This can be achieved by the education of heritage managers at all levels through
programmes such as APMHS. The APMHS programme is currently expanding. The programme is offered at both Honours and Masters Degree levels. Learners are intensifying their knowledge in the field of heritage and further making amazing positive contributions to the heritage terrain. One can conclude that APMHS is unifying weaponry for heritage improvement and it therefore needs to continue.