

An uncertain remaking: Changing the Hout Bay Museum, 1979 -2013

Lynn Abrahams

Student number: 9029521

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Declaration

I Lynn Michelle Abrahams declare that *An uncertain remaking: Changing the Hout Bay Museum, 1979 -2013* is my own work and that it has not been presented for any other degree at any other university. I also declare that all the sources I have used or quoted have been referenced and acknowledged in full.

Lynn Michelle Abrahams, Cape Town, May 2014



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Abstract

This mini-thesis is premised on the notion that museums in the past operated from a platform of certainty. Objects had always been the heart and soul of museums and were seen to provide factual evidence, especially in establishing cultural hierarchies. In South African museums, objects were used to represent and signify the progress of those who supposedly had origins in Europe, while subaltern classes were depicted in ethnographic displays where they were locked in time. Since 1994, a new certainty for museums had been demanded. Museums have been called upon to become what is called “inclusive” in their collections, displays, exhibitions and general museum practices and processes. This created a certainty from which they had to transform their institutions, thus making them relevant to the broader community. The Hout Bay Museum, in responding to these demands for transformation, encountered many challenges. In the re-thinking, re-imagining and re-making of the museum, they were continuously faced with the tension between certainty and uncertainty. In the many phases of re-making the museum, they resorted to add-ons; adding the stories of previously excluded people, first on a temporary basis and then through new permanent exhibitions, the latter, being part of a complete renovation of the museum. It was during this final phase of transformation that human remains were discovered in the museum storeroom. This created a great deal of uncertainty as the museum did not know how to respond to the remains, especially during the debates and contestation on human remains, repatriation and reburial as a way of respecting and restoring the dignity of death. I symbolically use the discovery of human remains to conceptualize how a museum responded to the call for transformation and a new certainty in scenarios that keeps producing uncertainties. The museum’s first response was to remain silent until more information on the remains was available, through a forensic investigation to discover the age of the remains. However, at the time of concluding this mini thesis, no further information was available about the remains, but I argue that, should the museum respond with a reburial of the remains, they would not only break away from a long institutional history of museums and human remains, but would serve as an example of how museums can transform. I therefore conclude this mini thesis by arguing that the museum, haunted by tensions between certainties versus uncertainty, is rendered uncertain, thereby opening up a platform for contestation and dialogue.

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Introduction

In 2008, I moved back to Cape Town from Johannesburg, where I had worked as an educational and curatorial assistant at the Apartheid Museum. After a very brief stint in parliament, I joined the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS), Museum Services, in the Western Cape as a Museum Human Scientist in January 2009. One of my key performance areas was to conduct research projects for existing and new exhibitions for assigned provincial or province aided museums affiliated to the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports (DCAS) in the Western Cape. My initial reaction to the collections, displays and exhibitions in the province aided and provincial museums was one of dismay. Collections of European style wedding dresses, children's dolls, and rooms filled with European household items greeted me. Their collections placed these museums in a European narrative of certainty in the production of settler knowledge. Here and there, they would have visual displays with imposed captions, on the indigenous people of South Africa. However these were minimal and did not point to any sign of fundamental change in museum practice and thinking since 1994. Although my experiences of museums are that they are generally underfunded, I initially believed that with the will and the knowhow, they had the potential to be transformed. But it appeared to me that most museums in the Western Cape remained stuck in older and conventional ways of practices and processes.

The Hout Bay Museum, opened in 1979, was in many respects, no different to the rest of the museums under DCAS. Like most cultural history museums in South Africa, it mostly collected, recorded and preserved the material culture of Europeans, and excluded the voices of people who had lived there for centuries. This museum, having no budget for transformation, had post-1994 held back on more elaborate plans, while approaching the

Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport for financial assistance. In 2010, the Head of Department made money available to the museum to develop new exhibitions and expand collections to include histories and voices of communities who may have been marginalized. This “transformation project” was assigned to me in 2011 as one of my key deliverables as per my annual performance plan. I had to conduct research, and assist the museum with changing their displays. From the year 2000 there had been various attempts to alter the displays in the Hout Bay Museum, first with a series of additive exhibitions and then later with a more substantial change that saw a complete overhaul of the museum, which I was involved with. My intention is to track the museum from its inception in the 1970s, to the changes effected in the early 2000s through its new exhibitions. My study will identify the uncertainties produced as the museum continuously attempted to create a new certainty as demanded by the call for transformation. I will investigate the issues of power and authority in the making of the museum and the continuous attempts to re-make or re-model the museum post 1994, focusing on collection practices, displays, exhibitions, interpretations and the messages conveyed, and the tensions and contradictions which emerged in its quest to produce a new certainty.

Museums in South Africa after 1994

The transition to democracy in South Africa ushered in a new discourse around transformation of the heritage sector and of museums in particular. One of the key debates centered on the production of knowledge, on what constituted appropriate representations and on how museums should represent local histories. A dominant line of argument was that museums, based on their previous representations, needed to produce a new set of certainties. What museums did in the past was set against a prospective, new certain future. Hence, Andre Odendaal’s view in 1995, that change would not be an easy task because many of South African museums not only emerged through, but also celebrated and reflected the

colonial and apartheid past.¹ He argued that museums were still “enmeshed in contradictions with regards to collections, staffing, conservative and timid mindsets, etc” and were therefore “inadequately prepared to make the big conceptual leaps and develop the intellectual capacity needed to implement change relevant to the new dispensation”.² J.M Gore similarly argues that most museums continued to be “haunted by the legacies of their colonial history”.³ He put forward the argument that they were “hampered by their collections, their often old palatial-like museum buildings, but most importantly by the ideas that still pervade them”.⁴ He analyzed such museums by saying that they therefore continue to be “irrelevant and offensive” to the communities they served. Furthermore, he argued that if museums wanted to function properly and be inclusive of society, they have to be aware of this. One area that Steven Dubin identified was that if blacks were incorporated in museums, it was in ethnographic terms where they were “locked in time”⁵ depicting difference between them and the powerful settlers who were represented as making history and bringing about change. He therefore argued that transformation in the museum world required transforming exhibition policies, acquisition policies, human resources and audiences.⁶ Transformation, according to Dubin, called up notions of “undermining those social structures, and the myopic modes of thoughts and behavior” and demanded new ways of thinking, doing and understandings.⁷ He argued that “museums should broaden the scope of exhibitions to be as inclusive as possible and to incorporate multiple perspectives in them”.⁸

¹Andre Odendaal, “Museums and Change in South Africa”, *Innovation* no. 10, (1995), 1.

²Odendaal, “Museums and Change”, 1.

³JM Gore, “A Lack of Nation: The Evolution of History in South African Museums c.1825-1945”, *South African Historical Journal* 51, (2004), 23.

⁴Gore, “A Lack of Nation”, 23.

⁵Address by Nelson Mandela, “Address by President Address by Nelson Mandela On Heritage Day”, Robben Island, September 24 1997, <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/1997/1010PRES397.htm>, accessed on 8 /09/2011, 1.

⁶Steven Dubin, *Mounting Queen Victoria: Curating Cultural Change*, (Auckland Park: Jacana Media, 2009), 5.

⁷Dubin, *Mounting Queen Victoria*, 5.

⁸Dubin, *Mounting Queen Victoria*, 5.

While these arguments were about how to transform, there have been those who have tried to analyse and present what happened from 1994 in museums in South Africa. Jack Lohman, the then Chief Executive of Iziko Museums, said, “museums in South Africa sat on the margin of the big changes that were transforming society. It is as if they were observing but not participating in transformation”.⁹ Some museums, including the Hout Bay Museum opted to fill in the gaps using add-ons into existing displays or allocated a room within the museum for more inclusive displays. Hence, Steven Dubin’s argument that museums were “playing catch up, striving to fill in what they recognize as wide gaps in their holdings”.¹⁰ According to Dubin, the crucial focal points of museum add-ons was that of “collecting traditional arts and crafts, utilizing indigenous knowledge systems and gathering previously overlooked native information about flora and fauna, and appraising native cosmologies and medicinal lore in order to understand how they may complement Western scientific knowledge and practice”.¹¹ Witz et al argue that add-ons such as these enabled museums to insert themselves into the discourse on “South Africa’s public history and the heritage of all citizens”.¹²

Witz et al’s argument is similar to that of Irit Rogoff. She argued that the add-on effect is carried forward by the “belief that we can simply insert other histories into a grand narrative of Modernism and its various crises and collapses over the past thirty years, an assumption that ignores the conflict between hegemonic and marginally located cultures”.¹³ Her critiques of add-ons is that it leaves “intact the concept of plentitude which is at the heart of the

⁹Jack Lohman, “The trouble with history: Iziko Museums of Cape Town and the healing of South Africa”, *Locum Destination Review* (2002), 55.

¹⁰Dubin, *Mounting Queen Victoria*, 5.

¹¹Dubin, *Mounting Queen Victoria*, 6.

¹²Leslie Witz, CirajRassool, and Gary Minkley, “The Castle, the Gallery and the Sanitorium: Curating a South African Nation in the Museum”, Paper presented at the Workshop “Tracking Change at the McGregor Museum”, at the Auditorium, Lady Oppenheimer Hall, McGregor Museum, Kimberley, March 27, 1999, 12.

¹³IritRogoff, “Hit and Run- Museums and Cultural Difference.” *Art Journal* Vol.61. No. 3, Autumn, (2002), 5.

museums project”.¹⁴ Hence, it assumes a possibility of “change without loss, without alteration, without remapping the navigational principles that allow us to make judgments about quality, appropriateness, inclusion, and revision”.¹⁵ Rogoff is of the opinion that if museums want to engage with cultural diversity they have to “recognize the shift from the compensatory projects of atoning for absences and replacing voids, to a performative one in which loss is not only enacted, but is made manifest from within the culture that has remained a seemingly invulnerable dominant”.¹⁶

An argument has been put forward that museums should perhaps remain uncertain, instead of continuously trying to create certainty. Carolyn Hamilton, in her paper addressing the transformation of MuseumAfrica in the mid-1990s and the challenges brought by mapping out a new identity, compared museums to chameleons, which are always in “colour harmony with the hegemonic view”.¹⁷ Following this, she questions whether museums would be able to “challenge” or change “that hegemony” so that they don’t become trapped in “presenting a dated orthodoxy”.¹⁸ She uses Duncan Cameron’s conceptualization and argues that museums should be able to make a shift from “temple to forum, from sanctioning outcomes to initiating debates”.¹⁹

Following on to Hamilton’s argument, some historians argue that maybe museums should rather become spaces of dialogue and debate that would develop critical thinking. The argument put forward is that uncertainty in museums therefore challenges the traditional view of museums as proclaiming certainty. David Cohen, in referring more broadly to the production of history (rather than museums specifically), argued that in producing historical

¹⁴Rogoff, “Hit and Run- Museums and Cultural Difference”, 5.

¹⁵Rogoff, “Hit and Run- Museums and Cultural Difference”, 5.

¹⁶Rogoff “Hit and Run- Museums and Cultural Difference”, 3.

¹⁷Carolyn Hamilton, “Against the Museums as Chameleon”, *South African Historical Journal* Nov. 31 (1994), 189.

¹⁸Hamilton, “Against the Museums as Chameleon”, 189.

¹⁹Hamilton, “Against the Museums as Chameleon”, 189.

narratives, historians are consumed with “the want of certainty”. The “demand for the final answer”, he maintains, “seeks to claim a privileged political position against other interpretative usages, against other political projects, against the immeasurable possibilities of uncertainties”.²⁰ Instead he posits the possibility that uncertainty can open up debates which would allow for “other histories and different narratives as well as to new frames of critique and debate”.²¹ The implication of this is that uncertainties bring forth dialogue, which allows for multiple interpretations and therefore become spaces of contestation and critical thinking. In a similar vein, Luise White has argued that events are experienced and interpreted differently by various groups who would “claim the event as part of their histories”.²² In other words, no event can be interpreted from one perspective, but for different people it might hold different interpretations. According to White, there is no “perfect closure to any event”, but that each interpretation of the event “contains inborn absences specific to its production”.²³ What this implies is that, depending on who interprets the event, silences about certain aspects of the event are bound to occur. White therefore argues that “not everyone can be included in historical narratives of the past”.²⁴ It is uncertainty therefore that “signals a distance from closure in the construction of the historical record” and consequently, “uncertainty is itself constitutive of social and political life and, also historical knowledge”.²⁵ Contrasting to certainty, Cohen argues that “uncertainty opens the way to more pluriversal repertoires, to other histories, and to different narratives as well as to new frames of critique and debates”.²⁶ Simply put, uncertainty creates platforms for debates, contestation, and multiple interpretations and creates the possibilities for museums to be spaces of contestation and critical thinking.

²⁰David Cohen, “The Uncertainty of Africa in an Age of Certainty”, Paper written for UWC and UCT, (March 2010), 20.

²¹David Cohen, “The uncertainty of Africa in an Age of Certainty”, 2.

²²Luise White, *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo: Text and Politics in Zimbabwe*, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2003), 2.

²³White, *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo*, 2.

²⁴White, *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo*, 2.

²⁵Cohen, “The Uncertainty of Africa in an Age of Certainty”, 29.

²⁶Cohen, “The Uncertainty of Africa”, 2.

Supporting these demands for multiple interpretations in a museum context, Sara G Byala has called for “narratives which would balance one narrative with multiple interpretations of the past”.²⁷ Rooksana Omar is of the opinion that museums should have the “desire to transform and become more responsive to audience participation and visitor scrutiny” and should become “relevant in a dynamic situation of democratization and diversity”.²⁸ This she argues, would allow museums to become a “platform of debate about evolving issues rather than didactic”.²⁹ Leslie Witz has similarly suggested that museums should “rethink the content and methodologies of histories in the public domain” and become “sites of debate and contestation” that “challenge the authority of the museum as the possessor and controller of the artifact as fact”.³⁰ Furthermore, he questions whether museums should either “open up the possibility of interrogating their very classificatory formations or strive for inclusivity by adding more and more voices, objects and explanations and give them the authority of a factual past”.³¹ The former would allow for multiple interpretations, dialogues and multiple voices, whilst the latter would keep museums trapped in the very same agencies of power and authority produced in the production of knowledge in certain museums.

Transformation at the Hout Bay Museum

It was the demand from some representatives of the local community and the provincial museum service for inclusive narratives that became the foundation for transforming the Hout Bay museum from the late 1990s. By conceptualizing these debates, I examine in this mini-thesis how the Hout Bay museum responded to uncertainty of change in scenarios that

²⁷Sara G Byala, “The museum becomes archive: reassessing the Johannesburg’s Museum Africa”, *Social Dynamics* 36 (1): 11-23, 16.

²⁸Rooksana Omar, “Meeting the Challenges of Diversity in South African Museums”, *Museum International* No. 227, Vol. 57. No. 3. (2005), 53.

²⁹Omar, “Meeting the Challenges”, 53.

³⁰Leslie Witz, Leslie, “Making museums as heritage in post-apartheid South Africa”, Paper presented at an Inaugural Conference of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies: Re/theorising heritage, organised by the International Journal of Heritage Studies and the Heritage Seminar at the University of Gothenburg, June 5-8 2012,13.

³¹Witz, “Making Museums”, 13.

continuously sought new certainties. I investigated the role of the museum in a changing society, specifically reflecting on how knowledge was produced, interpreted, and disseminated through its collection policies, exhibition practices and processes, its education and outreach programmes since the establishment of the museum in 1979 up to the year 2013. The discovery of human remains in the museum storeroom plunged the museum into uncertainty. I looked at how the museum responded to this discovery during a sensitive period of contestation and debates over reburial and repatriation. I specifically drew on the argument presented by Ciraj Rassool and Martin Legassick³² and others, supporting the call for repatriation and reburial of human remains. Even though the circumstances are markedly different, the context of repatriation calls impacted upon how the museum dealt with the remains in its storeroom



In general, I argue that the Hout Bay Museum in its making and re-making opted to add indigenous people into its displays. In the first phase of transforming post 1994 it added displays such as *the History and lifestyles of Imizamo Yethu* in 1997.³³ This temporary exhibition, allowed the visitor to gaze upon the lifestyles of people in Imizamo Yethu by using various visual interpretation such as photographs, a reconstructed house, newspaper clippings and captions. The museum in its attempts to strive for certainty, continued to add more temporary displays to the dominant western narratives. Between 2005 and 2007, a picture collage on the *People of Imizamo Yetho (Mandela Park)*, an exhibition celebrating *10 Years of Democracy*, an exhibition on *Hiv/Aids*, and an exhibition on *Aunties of the Cape Winelands* were temporarily set up in the display areas of the Hout Bay Museum. In the 2009 and 2010 financial year, other temporary displays on *Untold Stories of Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu* and *My Eye Photo Exhibition* were added to the display areas. These were

³²Ciraj Rassool and Martin Legassick, *Skeletons in the Cupboard: South African museums and the trade in human remains 1907 -1917*, (Cape Town, South African Museum, 2000). .

³³Hout Bay Museum Invitation to the opening to the Imizamo Yethu exhibition, Museum Special Events Album 2.

photographic exhibitions, mainly depicting the lifestyles of people in these separate communities. In addition to adding temporary exhibitions, the museums co-opted people designated as “coloured” and “African” into the Board of Trustees and the Friends of the Museum Society. It was in an attempt to alter the permanent display in 2011/2012 that I was called in to do research for the museum and that experience is reflected upon in this mini-thesis.

In order to carry out this investigation into museum practices and processes, extensive field research was conducted at the Hout Bay Museum. The first site visit was in July 2013 when I examined the museums archives for minutes of Board meetings, annual reports, museum correspondence, visitor statistics, visitor feedback books, newspaper clippings, photographs, brochures, magazines, pamphlets and the museum special events albums. These special event albums and photographs allowed me a glimpse of the museum exhibitions since its establishment in 1979 up to 2010. These documents not only gave me insight into the making of the museum in 1979, but also into the various phases of transformation the museum underwent, the challenges faced and the museum’s response in dealing with such challenges.

My second site visit in April 2014 was to conduct interviews with key stakeholders, like museum managers, members of the board of trustees, provincial government employees and heritage professionals. Questions to current and former Board members were related to the vision of the Board, how they imagined transforming the museum and their views on the new museum. I also wanted to find out from those directly involved about the making and re-making of the museum. Although I had a set of questions, the interviews were conducted as an open discussion, which allowed me to probe responses to questions. In addition, I was

concerned to follow up and find out more about the “unknown remains” in the storeroom. I spoke to Odette Papier, who was the museum manager at the time human remains entered the museum, and to relevant officials in the SAPS forensic and biology unit. I also visited the Hout Bay Police station to find out more about the human remains as a case number was attached to the remains.

Through this research, I have been able to begin tracking a history of the Hout Bay Museum. My first chapter conceptualizes the making of the museum, providing an overview of its history, its collection policies, and practices since its establishment up to the year 1994. In addition, I investigated the various stages in the development of the museum as it moved from one certainty to another in its quest to transform its exhibitions, staff, education, and outreach programmes as well as audience development.



Chapter 2 focuses on the re-thinking of the museum. In this chapter, I specifically focus on the various phases of transformation the museum underwent between 1994 and 2010. I argue that, instead of allowing for multiple histories and stories that would make the museum inclusive and accessible, the museum instead opted for an additive method.

In my third chapter, I focus on the period from 2010 to 2013, tracking the changes that occurred in the institutional make-up of the museum, its collection policies, museum practices, and processes, and the complete overhaul of the museum. It was in the last phase of developing a new exhibition that human remains were discovered in the museum storeroom in 2011. I tracked down the museum’s response to the discovery of the remains and the uncertainties that kept cropping up. I look at this alongside the new displays as a way to analyse how the museum negotiated the terrain between uncertainty and certainty.

Chapter One

The making of Hout Bay Museum

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the history of the Hout Bay Museum and its collection policies and practices from its establishment in 1979 up to 1994. This chapter will look at various stages in the development of the museum, the types of objects it collected, the target audiences, production and dissemination of knowledge and messages conveyed.

Traditionally, museums viewed their core functions as those of “acquisition, conservation, research, communication, and exhibition of collections of objects of artistic, cultural, or scientific significance”.³⁴ This produced not only an assumption of certainty from which museums operated, but also shaped their role as public institutions in service of the respective communities they purportedly served. This was reflected in museums policies, mission statements, themes, staffing component, practices and procedures that specified what “cultural resources were collected or protected, how these resources were supported and interpreted, who was involved in the allied professions, and even who had access to using the cultural resources”.³⁵ In the specific case of conventional cultural history museums the premise was to “acquire and conserve material evidence of people and their environment”.³⁶ Coupled to this was the institutionalization of museums as public institutions who became the custodians of objects and who exhibited these “collections of objects with artistic, cultural, or scientific significance”.³⁷ These collections of objects became the heart and soul of the museum. They became a core function of a museum’s existence, and shaped the way knowledge was produced and disseminated for public consumption. Because they were

³⁴Moira G. Simpson, “Revealing and Concealing: Museums, Objects, and the Transmission of Knowledge in Aboriginal Australia”, in *New Museum Theory and Practice*, ed. Janet Martine (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 154.

³⁵C. Kurt Dewhurst, Narissa Ramdhani, and Marsha MacDowell, “Lessons Lived and Learned in Developing and Managing a Bi-National Cultural Heritage Sector Project in South Africa”, *Museum Anthropology Review*, September 21, (2007), 27.

³⁶E Grobler, “Collection Management Practices at the Transvaal Museum 1913 – 1964 Anthropological, Archaeological and Historical”, (PhD diss.; University of Pretoria, 2005), 34.

³⁷Simpson, “Revealing and Concealing”, 154.

deemed to be factual records of the past, objects entered museums as cultural treasures and therefore worthy of preservation.

In museums in colonial and apartheid periods, a white South African identity was constructed, whose foundations were based on ideas of “civilization” and “progress” that stood in contrast to ethnographic collections and displays of backwardness and stasis. Museums were traditionally established as institutions “both reflecting and serving cultural élite”.³⁸ This was done through the collections of objects which came to “represent and comprehend nature through the collection and interpretation of material culture”.³⁹ Susan Pearce therefore argues that “objects that come to us from our past, and which have been assembled with intention by someone who believed that the whole was somehow more than the sum of its parts”.⁴⁰ It was within this framework of certainty, that cultural history museums collected objects for display and preservation purposes. In critiquing this process of collecting for display purposes, Nicholas Thomas argued that, “Objects are products of human work and craft, but when collected for display purposes, they are abstracted from their human uses and purposes”.⁴¹ In other words, when objects are detached from their environment in which they were used, their cultural and traditional value and functions alter.

The Hout Bay Museum was in many respects no different from any other cultural history museum in South Africa. Historical narratives produced since its establishment in 1979, were around the collection of objects that largely signified settlement from Europe and were located within a national discourse of progress, modernity and advancement of a European material culture. In a critique of cultural history museums, Chris Bruce argues that the

³⁸Moir G. Simpson, *Making Representations: Museums in the Post-Colonial Era*, (London: Routledge Publishers, 2001), 1.

³⁹Sharon Macdonald, *The Politics of Display: Museum, Science, Culture*, (London, Routledge Publisher, 1995), 6.

⁴⁰Mieke Bal, “Telling Objects: A Narrative on Collecting,” in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), 99.

⁴¹Nicholas Thomas, “Licensed Curiosity: Cook’s Pacific Voyages,” in *The Cultures of Collecting*, ed. John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), 116.

terminology “museum” called out notions of “timeless and unimpeachable” institutions who represented “culture’s signature achievements and present the highest expressions of the human spirit”.⁴² Settlers were depicted as “agents of historical progress”, and “the colonized were represented as passive receivers of such progress”.⁴³ Museums captured and narrated these signature achievements through the collection, display, and preservation of European objects, and excluding the cultural history of subaltern classes.

It is a spectacle of performance, which manifested itself in a Hout Bay/ Llandudno Cultural and Arts Festival held in Hout Bay from 3 to 27 September 1975, under the auspices of the Thomas Library, which is seen as the inaugurating moment of the Hout Bay Museum. Through musical and drama presentations, exhibitions, and artefacts, the festival displayed what was called the “rich historic past”.⁴⁴ The items displayed were supposedly a testimony to “the wealth of talent and diversity of cultural interest”⁴⁵ in Hout Bay and Llandudno. Exhibitions ranged from the “strandlopers, early Hout Bay, and the shipwrecks”⁴⁶ to exhibitions on the manganese mines and the forest. The “strandlopers” were represented in an archaeological exhibition and a display of artefacts on loan from the South African Museum, and “indicative of the strandloper culture”.⁴⁷ Included in this exhibition was a lecture and slides by Graham Avery, an archaeologist from the South African Museum. In the festival programme this lecture was presented on the 17th of September 1975 at 8:15pm in the Library Hall.⁴⁸ In addition, a photographic exhibition on “Bushmen” paintings by

⁴²Chris Bruce, “Spectacle and Democracy: Experience Museum Project as a Post-Museum”, in *New Museum Theory and Practice*, ed. Janet Martine, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 130.

⁴³Susan Legêne, “Powerful ideas-Museums, Empire Utopias and Connected Worlds”, keynote speech for Museums and the idea of Historical Progress, (ICMAH/ COMCOL Annual Conference , Cape Town 8-11-2012), 8.

⁴⁴Hout Bay Museum, “Hout Bay Museum mission statement”, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

⁴⁵P. Le Cordeur, message from the Chairman of the Hout Bay and Llandudno Ratepayers Association, in *Hout Bay- Llundudno Arts Festival Kuns fees, festival pamphlet* , September 1975, no page numbers.

⁴⁶Tony Westby-Nunn, *Hout Bay: An illustrated historical profile*, (Cape Town: Westby-Nunn Publications, 2005), 120.

⁴⁷*Hout Bay and Llundudno Arts Festival- Kuns Fees*, Festival pamphlet, September 1975, no page numbers.

⁴⁸*Hout Bay- Llundudno Arts Festival Kuns Fess*, Festival pamphlet, September 1975, no page numbers.

Townley Johnson was exhibited at the Kronendal Old School.⁴⁹ Walks to the manganese mines and the historic coastline also formed part of the festival programme. Similarly to museums, festivals are about aligning the past and present and projecting into the “future so that that the trajectory of the nation is formulated as following the same historical path”.⁵⁰ However, such a trajectory, in this instance, was based on a colonial historical path of people who had come to settle in Hout Bay. According to Jim Steele, the Chairman of the festival committee, Hout Bay Valley and Llandudno have attracted “artists, writers, scientists, sculptors, musicians and people interested in all forms of art and culture”.⁵¹ The festival was therefore organized to display the creativity of those who came to settle in Hout Bay and to depict the progress of a “rapidly increasing population”.⁵²

How did the “strandloper” culture that was exhibited fit into this story of creativity and progress? It was interpreted through an archaeological lens and framed in the past. I draw my argument from the Hout Bay and Llandudno festival programme, which under the heading “exhibitions”, stated that exhibitions will be displayed on “historical material and early photographs of Hout Bay, and Archaeological exhibition, and Photographic exhibitions of Bushmen paintings by Townley Johnston”.⁵³ To me, this is evident of how the Khoi were framed through the discipline of archaeology, which mainly focused on the study of pre-historic people versus settler modernity, which was constituted as history. In addition, the festival programme, under the heading, “archaeological exhibitions”, stated that the “strandlopers frequented the coasts in the vicinity of Hout Bay and Llundudno”,⁵⁴ and therefore the excavated Khoi objects, on loan from the South African Museum’s

⁴⁹*Hout Bay and Llundudno Arts Festival- Kuns Fees*, Festival pamphlet, September 1975, no page numbers.

⁵⁰Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's Festival: Contesting South Africa's National Past*, (USA: Indiana University Press, 2003), 10.

⁵¹Jim Steele, “The Hout Bay and Llandudno Arts Festival”, in the *The Hout Bay-Llundudno Arts Festival – Kuns Fees, festival pamphlet*, September 1975, no page number.

⁵²Jim Steele, “The Hout Bay and Llundudno Arts Festival”, no page number.

⁵³*Hout Bay and Llundudno Arts Festival – Kuns Fees*, no page numbers.

⁵⁴*Hout Bay and Llundudno Arts Festival- Kuns Fees*, no page numbers.

archaeological collection, and found in Hout Bay area were included in the festival. Many archaeological sites in Hout Bay attest to an indigenous lifestyle before the 16th century. In 1947, Khoi remains of two adults and a child were discovered together with an ostrich eggshell bead bracelet, pottery shards, stone artefacts and limpet shells.⁵⁵ Again, in 1977, a cave was excavated in Hout Bay by the Archaeology Department of the University of Cape Town. Radiocarbon dating dated the lower layer to 100 AD and the top layer as 500 AD.⁵⁶ The collection of artefacts displayed at the festival was found in the area, and therefore served as a historical truth of the existence of Khoi in Hout Bay. However, these indigenous objects entered the festival to “show the progress the settlers had made, as indigenous culture was seen as primitive and totally irrelevant, to European civilization”.⁵⁷ J.M. Gore argues that “indigenous people were the subjects of scientific racism” which highlighted the biological differences of racial groups and “provided the ideological basis for the domination of the white race over the black”.⁵⁸ Indigenous objects were therefore collected and placed within the “ancient and natural history of the world”, and therefore indigenous people were denied “their own history and culture”.⁵⁹ In addition, colonial societies in the nineteenth century regarded South Africa as a “young country” with no history to construct a national identity and therefore “museums succeeded in perpetuating traditionally narrow images that relied on the nation being white, British, or European”.⁶⁰ Therefore, in South Africa, indigenous objects and remains were collected and had “historically been exhibited in natural history museums, as opposed to cultural history museums or art museums”⁶¹ as a means to “illustrate the progress made by European civilization and the white race, compared to

⁵⁵*The Sentinel*, “Discover your Environment”, June/ July, 1979, no page numbers.

⁵⁶Jean Bambury, “Hout Bay Museum: a contribution of a village to tomorrow”, *Antiques in South Africa*, 1981, 103.

⁵⁷Gore, “A Lack of Nation”, 31.

⁵⁸Gore, “A Lack of Nation”, 33.

⁵⁹Gore, “A Lack of Nation”, 34.

⁶⁰Gore, “A Lack of Nation”, 36.

⁶¹Annie Coombes, *History After Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press: 2004), 209.

primitive cultures”.⁶² This was largely because, in the eyes of Europeans, the Khoi were primitive and uncivilized. However, they knew nothing about Khoi culture and therefore projected an image of the Khoi as being prehistoric versus the settlers as modern and progressive, having contributed to bringing civilization, thus constituting history. Annie Coombes argues that in South Africa, Khoi people have been included in museum displays as “way-maker in the political history of South Africa as an emerging country with its own political and economic contribution to make within the British Empire”. Such representations of the Khoi, Coombes argues is used as a “sign of a specifically South African indigeneity” at a time when the “construction of an image of the country as more than just another outpost of the British Empire” was underway.⁶³ Simply put, the representation of the Khoi in South African museums was about asserting European indigeneity as settlers and constructing a white South African identity. In addition, displays on Khoi material culture promoted notions of preservation of what was believed to be of a “dying race in need of safeguarding”⁶⁴ in the care of museum curators. In contrast to displaying indigenous objects and people as “primitive”, “classical antiquity” was displayed in museums to highlight the “classical heritage of the Western world”, thereby celebrating “Western civilization and re-affirming the colonies of Europe’s white history”.⁶⁵ In such re-affirmation of settler history and identity, the excavated indigenous objects were displayed in a static and primitive way, versus objects, exhibitions, and performances depicting European advancement and modernity. These indigenous objects were therefore transformed and given new meaning under archaeological collections, thus omitting “the history of dispossession”.⁶⁶

⁶²J.M Gore, “A Lack of Nation”, 33.

⁶³Coombes, *History After Apartheid*, 210.

⁶⁴Coombes, *History After Apartheid*, 211.

⁶⁵J.M Gore, “A Lack of Nation”, 36.

⁶⁶Leslie Witz, “Commemorations and Conflicts”, cited in Annie Coombes, *History After Apartheid*, 209, 211.

The rest of the collections displayed at the festival constituted 'history' and, according to the festival committee, were deemed worthy of preservation for future generations. According to Tony Westby-Nunn, festival organisers felt that this "fascinating history" had to be preserved and that the artefacts should be displayed on a more permanent basis.⁶⁷

This festival gave birth to the idea of a museum for Hout Bay. A steering committee was appointed with Jim Steele, the then chairperson of the Hout Bay and Llandudno Arts Festival, as chairperson. The festival organisers mandated the steering committee to negotiate the establishment of a museum that would be recognized as a public institution and ascribe to norms and standards set out by the South African Museums Association (SAMA), a voluntary organization, consisting of museums and museum personnel across South Africa. The committee appointed a curator who was tasked to gain provincial recognition as a museum. The steering committee agreed that the main theme of the museum would be "fishing". However, displays covering the cultural and natural history of Hout Bay would also be included. A local newspaper, *The Sentinel*, reported that it was the intention of the organisers to "present a comprehensive history of Hout Bay commencing with the strandlopers, the early ships that sailed around the Cape, Van Riebeeck's visits and the historic items of importance".⁶⁸ In addition, exhibitions on the "fishing, farming, manganese mining, historic personalities, and well known families in the area",⁶⁹ would also be displayed. This chronological listing and unfolding of events, would not only become the museum's narrative, but would ensure that the indigenous people were offered a beginning and an ending, with the latter being locked in the discipline of archaeology and not making the cut of history, as argued above. To substantiate this claim I draw on the work of Annie Coombes who argues that the Khoi were "continuously inscribed as an integral part of an

⁶⁷Tony Westby-Nunn, *Hout Bay: An illustrated historical profile*, (Cape Town: Westby-Nunn Publications, 2005), 120.

⁶⁸Pam Wormser, "From the Museum: Hout Bay Museum", *The Sentinel*, January 1979, no page number.

⁶⁹Pam Wormser, "From the Museum", no page number.

originary account of history in South Africa,” which conferred “legitimate” status on the Khoi not only as the “first South Africans,” but also as a primitive version of early man,” therefore giving “way to superior civilization of the European”.⁷⁰ It was such conceptualization that found expression in the Hout Bay Festival in 1975. All of this created a certainty within which the museum was set up, and provided a framework for the museum’s collection policies and practices as well as the production of knowledge, which had to focus on the progress, advancement, and modernity of people designated as being of and from Hout Bay.

With the support of the Hout Bay Ratepayers association, Jim Steele approached the Divisional Council of the Cape for financial assistance, as well as the Kronendal School Board to rent part of the school. Towards the end of 1978, the non-indigenous community of Hout Bay donated a range of artefacts and memorabilia depicting a history of farms, shipwrecks, and the fishing industry, to the museum. Set to open on 5 April 1979, the steering committee, assisted by community volunteers, worked tirelessly to ensure the museum’s opening. According to Pam Wormser, the then curator of the museum, “a tremendous spirit of enterprise and community spirit prevailed”.⁷¹ Three months prior to the opening, the museum was “converted from a virtually empty shell into a building filled with displays”.⁷² An exhibition floor plan was designed, consisting of three rooms, which would chronologically list the unfolding of historic events as they occurred in Hout Bay. Grouped together according to themes, the first room narrated the *Early history of Hout Bay* which would include stories of archaeological sites in Hout Bay, *Early voyages past Hout Bay* (prior to 1652), *The first written records (1607)*, *Khoi khoi, Van Riebeeck and the forests*, *Early farming*, and *Hout Bay in the early 1900s*. In trying to understand why there is such a huge

⁷¹Pam Wormser, “From the Museum: Hout Bay Museum”, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

⁷²Wormser, “From the Museum”, Special Events Album 1.

jump from the 1600s to the 1900s, I came to the conclusion that during this period, there was little “history” available, “both textually and visually to construct the historical drama”.⁷³

The exhibition items on the Khoi were displayed in a huge lockable glass cabinet. According to Elizabeth Bishop, Townley Johnston, an archaeologist was responsible for setting up this exhibition.⁷⁴ In this exhibition, the nomadic lifestyle of the Khoi was depicted through the use of various illustrations showing, for example, a travelling Khoi family with their cattle, a woman wearing a skin cloak, a fishing scene, set-up of a Khoi kraal and an illustration on how to assemble a Khoi hut. A caption reading, “Early voyagers around the Cape traded with the Khoikhoi and described their mode of living”,⁷⁵ is substantiated through illustrations of what was supposedly the Khoi lifestyle. Alongside the illustrations and captions were displays of various Khoi objects such as ostrich egg shells, spears, a calabash, a reproduced Khoi kraal, and various stone tools. Underneath the display cabinet, a caption reads “late stone age sites” and there was a depiction of the various archaeological sites in the area. The reference to the Khoi being from the late “Stone Age”, together with the “stone tools” and weapons is once again indicative of how the Khoi were framed and presented through the discipline of archaeology in the Hout Bay Museum. Caged in a lockable glass cabinet, their histories were also locked in time. The second room focused on the natural history of the area, with displays depicting *Snakes of Hout Bay*, *The story of the Aloe Soccotrina*, the *Velvet Worm (Peripatopsis)*, and the *Shells of Hout Bay*. The third room narrated the story of fishing, the forts of Bay, photographs of the Manganese Mine on Chapman’s Peak and other miscellaneous items. To complement these narratives, there were objects such as fishing nets, a wheel barrow and manganese deposits; photographs of, for example, the manganese mine, groups of fishermen and the forest; and illustrations showing how to make a “trek net”

⁷³Leslie Witz, “Eventless History at the End of Apartheid: The Making of the 1988 Dias Festival”, *Kronos*, no 32 (November 2006), 175.

⁷⁴Elizabeth Bishop interviewed by Lynn Abrahams, voice recording, Hout Bay, 9 April 2014.

⁷⁵Photograph of the initial Khoi exhibition, Hout Bay Museum.

were placed in glass cabinets and display cases, confirming the museum as the “home of real and authentic objects”.⁷⁶ The collections were “devised to invoke a moment in time, perceived from a point of view, and often organized into a visual narrative about a sequence of points in time”.⁷⁷ The Hout Bay Museum, much like many other museums, “provided readymade narratives for interpreting the objects and displays in them”.⁷⁸

The museum was officially opened on 5 April 1979 at the Thomas Library Hall. Councillor Bairnfather Cloete, the acting Chairman of the Cape Divisional Council, conducted the opening ceremony. Festival organisers and members of the “white” community saw this opening as an historic event, because for the first time, a museum had been set up by a local authority in the Cape Peninsula in service of the “local community”. In his opening speech, Councillor Bainsfather Cloete emphasized that Hout Bay had a fascinating history and that the establishment of a museum to “record its birth and growth” was a worthy example of civic enterprise. In addition, he said that it was regrettable that the museum had not opened years ago, “to preserve objects which have no doubt just disappeared in the course of time”.⁷⁹ A museum, he said, should be a source of local pride for its residents. Who those residents were was not specified but drawing my evidence from the museums “special event albums”, the visitor statistics, and the collections, I have concluded that this museum became a source of pride for the settler inhabitants of Hout Bay. They were actively participating in the production of knowledge, and were thus represented through the collections and exhibitions. The contribution of the settler community towards the development of fishing, timber, and farming in the area were highlighted. To commemorate this spectacular performance of history, a *Podocarpus Latifolius* (yellowwood) tree, indigenous to the area, was planted at the

⁷⁶Ivan Karp, “Real Objects, Simulated experiences and cultural differences: Paradox and tensions in the making of exhibit”, *Museums, Science and Education, SAMAB-* Vol 25 No 2, (March 2001), 67.

⁷⁷Karp, “Real Objects”, 67.

⁷⁸Karp, “Real Objects”, 69.

⁷⁹“Hout Bay Museum Opened”, *The Sentinel*, April-May 1979, no page numbers.

museum. The yellowwood tree was similarly to the “postal tree” in Mossel Bay, used by Pedro de Ataide who, on his way home in 1501, left a message for João da Nova, the captain of ship heading east. The yellowwood “postal tree” in Mossel Bay was declared a national monument in 1962.⁸⁰ In presenting my argument that this yellowwood tree was planted to symbolically assert European claims for settlement, I draw on the work of Leslie Witz, in his argument that the “yellowwood postal tree” in the 1988 Dias Festival, symbolically represented “more than a moment of white landing,” but also established a “greater sense of a European ancestry.”⁸¹ The tree symbolically asserted rootedness and connections to the land through claiming the indigeneity of settlement.

The museum by proclamation No. 258, 1979, in accordance with section 34 of the Museum Ordinance 8 of 1975, was declared a Local History Museum and its name assigned to it. In December 1985, as per section 12 of Ordinance 8, in Government Gazette Notice No 136/1985, the museum was assigned provincial aided status and in compliance with Ordinance 8, the Administrator of the Cape appointed a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees oversaw the administrative, financial and curatorial functions of the museum and was comprised of two members of the Cape Provincial Administration, two representatives from the Cape Divisional Council and two representatives from the Friends of the Museum Society. The latter was a society, launched in 1978, to provide fundraising and marketing assistance to the museum and to assist with the collections and outreach programmes of the museum.

Being a province aided museum meant that the museum should “have an approved theme which will be developed by the board of trustees”.⁸² The theme of the Hout Bay Museum as

⁸⁰Witz, “Eventless History at the End of Apartheid”, 167.

⁸¹Witz, “Eventless History at the End of Apartheid”, 167.

⁸²Department of Cultural Affairs and sports, Discussion paper, “Towards a new provincial museum policy for the Western Cape Province”, March 2011, 78.

per proclamation 136 of 11 November 1985 centred on the “history of Hout Bay with particular reference to the natural resources of the Hout Bay environment. The development of the local fishing industry is specifically emphasized”.⁸³ This theme was to be reflected in all the collections, exhibitions and outreach programmes of the museum from its establishment and remained unchanged up until the late 1990s.

Objects, which made it into the museum’s collections over time, not only highlighted the achievements, progress and advancements of settlers and their descendants but also served to reflect lifestyles. These objects had been “gathered together and preserved for the future”.⁸⁴ Repeated calls were made to the community to donate or loan objects to the museum. The community was re-assured that the “museum can never become a success without their assistance and contribution”.⁸⁵ According to Pam Wormser, “outstanding contributions”⁸⁶ were donated to the museum to conserve. The *Gurney Papers*, for example was a collection of photographs, letters, newspaper cuttings, citations, programmes, and receipts relating to the building of St. Peters Church in Hout Bay Valley. In 1887, Sir Walter Gurney bought a seaside bungalow below the Sentinel, from which he started a Sunday school. Later the building served as a venue for church services for adults, children of fisherman and residents in general. Gurney believed that they had been neglected in religious matters. According to an article in the *Sentinel*, the Gurney Papers “represented a capsule in time tracing the lives of a family in England and South Africa, their contribution to world events at that time”.⁸⁷

⁸³Department of Cultural Affairs and sports, “Towards a new provincial museum policy”, 79.

⁸⁴Pam Wormser, “A tribute to Jimmy Steele founder of the Hout Bay Museum”, *The Sentinel*, June 1988, no page numbers.

⁸⁵Pam Wormser, “From the Museum”, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

⁸⁶Pam Wormser, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

⁸⁷*The Sentinel*, December 1981, in Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

By 1990, the museum had 3,150 items in its collection and the conservation of these objects was regarded as one of the “most important functions of a museum”.⁸⁸ Donations, such as old fishing equipment, household furnishings, books, clothing, photographs, and personal papers, made their way into the museum’s collection. Set up within the framework of conventional cultural history museums, the Hout Bay Museum became a “storeroom”⁸⁹ of artefacts that captured and narrated the legacy of Europeans who had settled in Hout Bay. This legacy was further carried out and mirrored in both the permanent and temporary exhibitions of the museum. Between 1980 and 2000, the museum launched a range of permanent and temporary exhibitions, portraying the achievements of settlers in the area. Exhibitions ranged from displays on the *Disa River*, *Shipwrecks*, *Manganese at Hout Bay*, *Life in Hout Bay in 1930’s*, *Fish as Food*, *Crawfish Canning in S.A. 1874 -1940*, *Doll exhibitions* and an exhibition on *Veldkos*. The “*Veldkos*” exhibition was a natural history display of various “indigenous plants which were used by the Hottentots and early settlers as food, for medicinal purposes and simply for getting high”⁹⁰. Although this was not a display on settlers and settlement, it nevertheless depicted European innovation and achievements in converting veldkos into medicine. In *The Sentinel* of September 1983 it was recorded that a Mrs. van Outshoorn, a herbalist in the area, still made use of such plants, and her “knowledge of herbal remedies was passed down to her from her grandfather who was a herbalist in Montague”.⁹¹ What is evident from this exhibition is an association between knowledge as progress versus knowledge as indigenous. Although veldkos appeared to be part of Khoi knowledge systems, it was framed in an alternative way, through Mrs. van Outshoorn, as a portrayal of European progress and part of their cultural knowledge systems. An example of another exhibition was one that focussed on the beaches of Hout Bay. The exhibition called

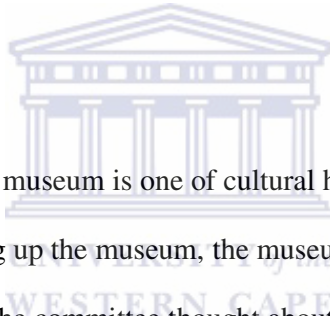
⁸⁸Pam Wormser, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

⁸⁹Moirra G. Simpson, *Making Representations*, 1.

⁹⁰John Battersby, “There is food in that there veld, it seems”, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

⁹¹“Veldkos in Hout Bay”, *The Sentinel*, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

Our Beach Exhibition was opened on 17 December 1980 and was aimed at creating awareness about the Hout Bay coastline. Items such as shells, seaweed, seabirds, intertidal zones, etc. were included in this exhibition. This was at a time when beach apartheid was intensifying in the 1980s. Through the re-enforcement of apartheid legislation like the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act, beaches in Hout Bay were racially segregated. The exhibition chose not to focus on the impact of apartheid and policies of racial segregation and instead depicted the beach as somehow neutral, as “our beach”. In a critique of this exhibition, Timothy Jacobs, a political activist and former member of the Board of Trustees, informed me that, because of beach apartheid, black people were excluded from beaches in the valley and even in 2014, the beach apartheid legacy still prevailed as people still referred to the “white beach”.⁹²



Thus far, I have asserted that the museum is one of cultural history but according to Elizabeth Bishop, who assisted with setting up the museum, the museum was initially started as a natural history museum. When the committee thought about what the museum could offer to the public, the response was that the history of Hout Bay was that of natural history.⁹³

Townley Johnson, an archaeologist, had apparently discovered rock paintings in the mountain and therefore, according to Bishop, the “strandlopers” had been included in the museum as part of its natural history.⁹⁴ In addition, exhibitions on forestry and fishing were displayed alongside that of the “strandlopers”. What appears to me is that the museum set itself up within a framework of natural history as certain, but shifted to a cultural history museum, depicting a one-sided settler history of progress and modernity. In chapter two, I will discuss how the museum embarked on the search for a new vision and name change that would enable them to assert themselves as a cultural history museum.

⁹²Timothy Jacobs, interviewed by Lynn Abrahams, voice recording, Hout Bay, 8 April 2014.

⁹³Elizabeth Bishop, interviewed by Lynn Abrahams, voice recording, Hout Bay, 9 April 2014.

⁹⁴Interview with Elizabeth Bishop, 9 April 2014.

Incorporating this alignment of past and present, these exhibition narratives highlighted the arrival of Europeans and their contribution to the social, cultural, and natural landscapes of this area. History was narrowed down to a spectacle of European performance to be internalized by their descendants for future preservation and education. Although the museum claimed that it shared an inclusive history of Hout Bay, the knowledge produced and disseminated by these exhibitions was based on the principle of exclusion. Those who had come to Hout Bay as explorers and ultimately ended up with the land and resources were included into the exhibition narrative and all other people were framed through an archaeological lens as static. Together with the gradual loss and disappearance of indigenous identity, language, and culture, the indigenous people's social, economic, and cultural lifestyles were narrowed down to archaeological remains and interpreted in the museum as part of the natural history of the area. Placed in a time capsule as a spectacle of European gaze and curiosity, it appeared that their descendants had disappeared from the historical narratives of Hout Bay. Written out of history, the descendants of Khoi, slaves and Africans became the recipients of a white history and culture, which became the embodiment of civilization, progress, and modernity. This was the kind of message conveyed by the museum to a participating European public for consumption.

Ownership of the museum was placed in the hands of the descendants of settlers who had settled in the area to ensure the preservation of settler culture for future generations. Evidence of this can be found in the management structure of the museum, from curators, staff, Friends of the Museum to the Board of Trustees. From 1994, this management structure was challenged by post-apartheid policy formulation, like the White Paper on Arts

Culture and Heritage in 1996⁹⁵, which demanded that previously excluded people be included in the staffing component of museums. The museum's visitor statistics and its Special Events Albums is evidence of the absence of black people from the visitor population of the museum. Timothy Jacobs, argued that the Group Areas Act contributed to the absence of black people in the museum. He says that they "were not even allowed to walk in the valley during the 1980s so how could they even go and visit the museum".⁹⁶ In addition, I would suggest it is also because they could not identify with the historical narratives of the museum. These messages were conveyed through the education and public programmes of the museum. These public and education programmes included temporary exhibitions, lectures, film shows, monthly bulletins, one-day festivals, papermaking, bookbinding, calligraphy, weaving, making Christmas decorations, methods of printing Christmas cards, toy making workshops and guided walks. The latter was to educate the public on various aspects of both the cultural and natural history of the area. Initially, guided walks were started to create an interest in the new museum and to educate people to appreciate and preserve the "often taken for granted natural heritage of flora and fauna".⁹⁷ Volunteers led these guided walks to sites of "historical interest and nature walks along the river".⁹⁸ The first guided walk was over the Dunes to Oudeschip in 1979, led by Townley Johnson. Interestingly, all race groups were invited to participate in these walks, although most of the identified areas and places would have been restricted by the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act. Various walks were arranged by the Friends of the Museum to, amongst others, "Kasteelpoort on the Apostle Traverse", "Constantia Traverse", "Llandudno corner", and "along the slopes of Skoorsteenkop".⁹⁹ These walk became very popular, especially amongst school groups. To

⁹⁵ *White Paper on Arts Culture, Science and Technology*, (Pretoria: Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, June 4 1996).

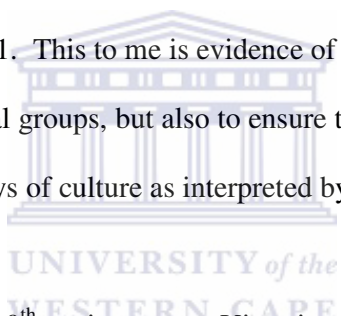
⁹⁶ Interview with Timothy Jacobs, 8 April 2014.

⁹⁷ Heather Mockridge, "Become a friend of the Museum, Hout Bay Museum", Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

⁹⁸ "Discover your Environment", *The Sentinel*, June/ July, 1979, no page number.

⁹⁹ Hout Bay Museum, Special events Album 1.

expand the museum's education programmes, an Outdoor Education Centre was established in 1984. The purpose of this education centre was to teach children and adults about the environment. The mountains, beaches, and wetlands were regarded as "excellent outdoor laboratories".¹⁰⁰ The Outdoor Education Centre also included cultural and environmental aspects of Hout Bay and focussed on the fishing industry and historical themes. The centre aimed to teach an "understanding of earth processes and a respect for our natural and cultural heritage".¹⁰¹ In 1989 a Malay Evening was organised by the Friends as a fundraising event. Malay food was served and the "Cape of Good Hope Singers" provided entertainment. Other than these singers, no people previously classified as "Malay" by the Population Registration Act 30 of 1950 participated in this event. Evidence of this can be found in the Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1. This to me is evidence of how constructed identities were created not only to separate racial groups, but also to ensure that blacks ended up represented in museums only through displays of culture as interpreted by a white curator.



In celebration of the Museum's 10th anniversary, a Victorian Garden Party was held, whereby people dressed up in Victorian dress. Victorian memorabilia were exhibited. Arbor Day celebrations were also included amongst the museum's public programmes. The museum's Special Events Album 1, provides insight into the racial groups who attended these events since the museum's establishment. Examples of such events were, amongst others, the "veldkos event", the "boere sport and snoek braai evening", "the Houtbaai fees and opening of the river exhibition" and "Ou Kaapse fees". Only towards the late 1980s, does the picture change, and one starts seeing what might appear as black attendants at these public programmes. Before then, if people who may be defined as black were visible in the albums, they were in the role of labourers in the employ of the museum or as assistants to others who

¹⁰⁰"An outdoor education centre for Hout Bay", Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

¹⁰¹"An outdoor education centre for Hout Bay", Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

exhibited their crafts. The first of such photographs showing black people attending such events is of a group of “coloured” women attending the Victorian evening and a group of “coloured” schoolchildren attending the Arbor Day celebration in 1988. Evident from the museum Special Events Albums all the collections and exhibitions, as well as the composition of the Board of Trustees, the Friends of the museum and the curatorial staff, were representative of the white community. Other than the display of archaeological Khoisan objects, black people remained voiceless and faceless in performance of history in the museum. The people indigenous to the area were “obliterated from the museum record by political process that had its effects not so much through the assertion of values as through the setting of priorities”.¹⁰² These priorities were to place emphasis on the preservation of a European material culture set up against a backdrop of progress, modernity, and advancement in the historical narratives of Hout Bay and Llandudno. The agency of power and authority at play in the production and dissemination of such knowledge gave power over those who were seen as the passive recipients of such knowledge. The curatorial staff and the board decided on which objects were fascinating enough to be preserved and for which public. Based on the principle of historical exclusion, black people did not make the cut of history, although they played a major role in the social and economic aspects of the Valley, be it as fisherman, farm workers or general labourers. This exclusion was emphasized in an article on the museum’s contribution to the preservation of culture, published in the *Suid-Afrikaanse Panorama* of May 1988, which was an official publication of the then Department of Information. In this article, reference was made to the existing community in Hout Bay as being descendants of European settlers who had settled in the area since 1677 and who were mainly interested in fishing, farming, and agriculture. This article concluded that the museum had successfully managed to get the community involved in the natural and cultural

¹⁰²Ivan Karp, “Other Cultures in Museum Perspective”, in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 382.

environment and therefore it maintains that history should also be celebrated and not only be displayed.¹⁰³ This article omitted the history of the descendants of the Khoi, the slaves and Africans, who together made up the biggest population of the valley for decades and whose way of life and cultural traditions had been destroyed by the arrival of these very same settlers and their descendants who were being glorified in the museum. As argued earlier, the exhibition on the Khoi at the museum was a way of acknowledging previous forms of cultural existence, albeit framed in the natural history of the Valley and displayed in a static way, keeping them locked in time. Black people became “spectators”¹⁰⁴ to history and were not involved in the production and dissemination of knowledge. This was the kind of certainty, which prevailed in museums across the country. This spectacle and performance of history played itself out in Hout Bay Museum from 1979 up to the end of the 20th century.



¹⁰³Diana Dannhauser, “Handhawer van kultuur”, *Suid Afrikaanse Panorama*, Mei 1988, 29.

¹⁰⁴Gary Minkley, Leslie Witz and Ciraj Rassool, “South Africa and the spectacle of public pasts: heritage, public histories and post anti-apartheid South Africa”, Paper presented at Heritage Disciplines symposium, University of the Western Cape, 8-9 October 2009, 19.

Chapter Two

Re-thinking the Hout Bay Museum

It was the assertion of power and authority over the production of knowledge in depicting the history of Hout Bay, which was challenged from the late 1990s. In South Africa's transition to democracy, museums had been under tremendous pressure to re-think, re-imagine and re-position their role within communities and to re-align their museum practices, processes and narratives to be in line with government imperatives of social cohesion and nation building. After the African National Congress received an overwhelming majority vote in the country's first democratic elections in April 1994, "a new struggle over South Africa's past was just beginning".¹⁰⁵ South African museums were pressurized to become racially inclusive and to contribute to nation building and social cohesion. Coupled with this, "the traditional understandings of museums and heritage have been challenged in terms of how meaning making, heritage construction and knowledge production were conducted in the colonial past".¹⁰⁶ Post-apartheid policy formulation and legislation like the Arts and Culture Task Group (AGTAG),¹⁰⁷ the White Paper on Arts and Culture,¹⁰⁸ the Commission for Reconstruction and Transformation of the Arts and Culture (CREATE),¹⁰⁹ the National Heritage Bill,¹¹⁰ and the Western Cape's Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS) Transformation Workshop Report¹¹¹ amongst others, were expected to bring changes that would make museums more "representative, inclusive, and relevant for South Africans".¹¹²

¹⁰⁵Coombes, *History after Apartheid*, 17.

¹⁰⁶Gerard Corsane, "Transforming Museums and Heritage in Postcolonial and Post-apartheid South Africa: The impact of processes of policy formulation and new legislation", *Social Analysis*, Volume 48, Issue 1, Spring (2004), 1.

¹⁰⁷"Report of the Arts and Culture Task Group", presented to the South African Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, (Pretoria: Dept. of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, 1995).

¹⁰⁸"*White Paper on Arts Culture, Science and Technology*." (Pretoria: Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, June 4 1996).

¹⁰⁹Corsane, "Transforming Museums", 1.

¹¹⁰Corsane, "Transforming Museums", 6.

¹¹¹"Transformation Report: Western Cape Sub-Directorate Museum Service", facilitated by Anthony Hartman and Chris Albertyn, (Workshop 4-6 March, 2002), 2.

¹¹²Corsane, "Transforming Museums", 2.

During the transition to democracy in South Africa, an Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG) was put together by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology to investigate the role of museums in a changing society and to ensure that there was a “mutual interchange of knowledge and understanding”.¹¹³ Following the recommendations made by ACTAG, a White Paper on Arts and Culture followed in 1996 and called on the heritage sector to redress previous imbalances. Museums were tasked with the responsibility of playing a pivotal role in contributing to nation building and social cohesion. This set the tone for transforming museums in the “new South Africa”¹¹⁴ and demanded that museums become more inclusive in their practices, collections, staff and knowledge production. It was demanded that museums “assume new roles and responsibilities and develop new ways of working and to clarify and demonstrate their social purpose and, more specifically, to reinvent themselves as agents of social inclusion”.¹¹⁵ In the words of Nelson Mandela, museums were urged to take the opportunity and ensure that their institutions reflected “history in a way that respects the heritage of all citizens”.¹¹⁶ The demand was for museums to redefine their role and purpose within communities and to rethink their collections and displays of history. These demands for change and inclusivity destabilized the foundation of certainty from which museums operated. A colonial history produced around the collection of objects which stood in for a verifiable past, was now to allow for a multiplicity of voices and the broadening of collections in museums that would include previously marginalized publics. According to Ben Ngubane, the then Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and

¹¹³Arts and Culture Task Group, Report of the Arts and Culture Task Group: presented to the South African Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (Pretoria: Dept. Of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology 1995), 61 in Leslie Witz, “Making museums”, .1.

¹¹⁴Andrew Hall, Initiating a review of national heritage legislation in Webber Ndoro and Gilbert Pwiti, The South African Experience, ICOM Conservation Studies 5, Legal Frameworks for the Protection of Immovable Cultural Heritage in Africa, (ICCROM, Africa, 2009), 37.

¹¹⁵Richard Sandell, “Museums as Agents of Social Inclusion”, *Museum Management and Curatorship*, Vol 17, No. 4, (1998), 401.

¹¹⁶Address by Nelson Mandela , “Address by President Address by Nelson Mandela on Heritage Day”, Robben Island, September 24 1997, <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/19971010PRES397.htm>, accessed on 8/09/2011,2.

Technology, the “days of celebrating group interest and culture are past”.¹¹⁷ Simply put, museums had to be made relevant to the communities they claimed to serve.

With this demand for change, and for a new certainty, the Hout Bay Museum was one amongst many museums that began to re-think their exhibition process and practices. In addition they began to review their products and clients; their collections policies; mission and vision statements; community participation; how to deal with histories that they had previously marginalized; and how to develop new exhibitions in line with the government vision of transformation.¹¹⁸ In this chapter, I will specifically focus on how the Hout Bay Museum managed transformation from 1994 to 2010 through use of the additive method.

Post 1994, many museum curators were eager to “distance themselves from associations with apartheid pasts of racial exclusivity”,¹¹⁹ and took on this new challenge. However, the search for a new certainty brought many uncertainties in relation to what and how they had to proceed in transforming their museums. Still being “enmeshed in contradictions with regards to collections, staffing, conservative and timid mind-sets”,¹²⁰ limited the degree to which they would implement change relevant to a democratic South Africa. Grappling with these uncertainties, many museum curators with their Boards of Trustees struggled to rethink, redefine, and re-imagine the new museum in a democratic South Africa. How do you shake the foundations of an institution that had been established around certainty and producing narratives around a national settler past? How do you strive for a new certainty in the midst of all these debates and contestations? History, for them, was about the search for an objective truth and was verified by objects. Museums were established around collections of

¹¹⁷Coombes, *History after Apartheid*, 45.

¹¹⁸“Transformation Report: Western Cape Sub-Directorate Museum Service”, 2.

¹¹⁹Witz, “Making museums”, 1.

¹²⁰Andre Odendaal, “Museums and Change”, 1.

colonial objects, which narrated the story of European progress and advancement. It was this spectacle of performance in museums that had been challenged and asked to change. The uncertainty therefore came from the demand to produce alternative visions and practices, “prioritizing a history from below, a history of the people, as a strategy for redressing the absences and structural violence of the official national histories circulated under apartheid”.¹²¹ So just what did the Hout Bay Museum do in its quest to transform?

What the museum did immediately after the 1994 elections, was to reach out to the Harbour and Imizamo Yethu communities, thus claiming its space in the discourse on transformation. Imizamo Yethu, meaning “collective effort” was established as a township in 1991, to accommodate the rapid growing homeless people of Hout Bay. A few days after Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the President of South Africa in May 1994, the museum hosted an International Museum’s Day celebration with craft exhibitions. Unlike previous craft exhibitions or displays, all sections of the community were invited to this event. The inclusive nature of this celebration was published in an article in *The Sentinel News* under the heading, “An expression of Hout Bay people’s unity”.¹²² The article concluded by inviting people to view the “results of genuine crafting skills and the neighbourliness of the new South Africa in action”.¹²³ In a true spectacle of performance, photographs showing the representatives of both Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg were displayed in the newspaper, adding them into the performance of history of the museum. For the remainder of 1994, no other such activities were reported on in either the minutes or annual report of the museum.

It was only in 1995, through the Western Cape Arts and Cultural Task Group (WESTAG), established by M.E. Olckers, the then Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs in the

¹²¹Coombes, “History After Apartheid”, 10.

¹²²Sentinel Newspaper, May 1994, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 2.

¹²³Sentinel Newspaper, May 1994, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 2.

Western Cape, that museums asked the community to provide input and make recommendations for the establishment, management and implementation of an arts and cultural policy for the Western Cape Province. On 11 February 1995, the Hout Bay Museum responded to this call, and organized an open-day for all sections of the community. The public were informed about the event in an article written by an unknown source. This article remarked that in a democratic South Africa, museums were encouraged to “reach out to all sections of the community and to change from being mere store houses of the country’s heritage to being more active, lively and outward going and most of all catering for all sections of the community”.¹²⁴ The open-day was celebrated in the museum gardens where demonstrations on veldkos, seaweed, and baking were displayed. In attendance at this event were community representatives from Hangberg and the valley. Interesting to note is that the author emphasized that no representatives from Imizamo Yethu were present, “even though we stressed that free teas and cakes would be served”.¹²⁵ Questionnaires were handed out to visitors, inviting them to comment on their feelings towards the museum, and to make suggestions on how to improve the museum facilities. These questionnaires submitted to the department, “revealed how little the community knew about the museum and its functions”.¹²⁶ Could this be the reason why there were no representatives from Imizamo Yethu? Could it have been that they did not find the museum relevant to them and their history, given the museum’s history?

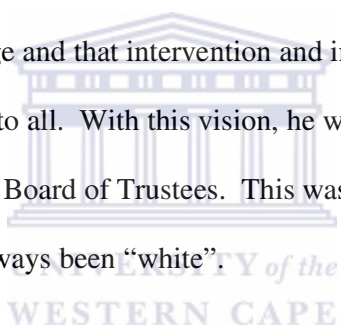
However, this event was evidence that more had to be done to involve “this section of the Hout Bay Community” in the museum programmes. This resulted in the appointment of Kenny Tokwe, a community development worker and local tourist guide from Imizamo Yethu on to the museum’s Board of Trustees in 1995. According to Kenny Tokwe, he

¹²⁴Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 2.

¹²⁵Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 2.

¹²⁶Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 2.

wanted to get involved in the museum because he loved Hout Bay and wanted to know more about the history of the area, and what made it unique.¹²⁷ His interest in the collective history of Hout Bay therefore contributed to him applying to serve on the Board of Trustees when he saw the advertisement in the local museum, calling on people to sign up as Board members. The application form asked that he state reasons for wanting to be on the Board of Trustees. He felt that the museum could be used as a vehicle to educate people on where they come from and why they were in Hout Bay but also about the diversity in the area.¹²⁸ The museum at that time only attracted visitors from people who were racially designated under apartheid as “white” and from schools which had largely “white” learners. He said that people in the Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg communities were not even aware of the museum’s existence. Tokwe felt that this had to change and that intervention and integration was needed to ensure that the museum was accessible to all. With this vision, he was then appointed as the first “African” person to serve on the Board of Trustees. This was a major shift for the museum, whose management team had always been “white”.



Although the appointment of Kenny Tokwe was just the beginning of the museum’s journey of re-thinking and re-imagining a transformed museum, it was not enough to create interest in the museum and change the visitor statistics. On its journey to transform and to create a new certainty, the museum not only celebrated the first year of democracy in 1995, but also applied for Reconstruction and Development Funding to build an Enviro Centre and to train isiXhosa and Afrikaans speaking guides. It was imagined that all these activities would contribute to the making of an inclusive museum that would be more appealing to the broader community. However, the contestation over how knowledge was produced in the museum, who had the authority to speak for whom, hierarchies of power and control in knowledge

¹²⁷Kenny Tokwe, interviewed by Lynn Abrahams, voice recording, Hout Bay, 9 April 2014.

¹²⁸Interview with Kenny Tokwe, 9 April 2014.

production, were still unchanged and remained a challenges for attracting new audiences to the museum.

What this meant was that the museum not only had to re-think the way knowledge was produced and disseminated, the silences in the collections and its exhibition narratives, but also how to attract a wider audience, especially from Imizamo Yethu. The Board, determined to bring more people from Imizamo Yethu through its doors, opted to fill in the gaps by using the add-ons method to existing display. Towards the end of 1997, the museum launched its first add-on temporary exhibition on “*The history and lifestyles of Imizamo Yethu*”.¹²⁹ The exhibition was curated by Sarah Mackie and depicted the progress and achievements at Imizamo Yethu, using interviews, photographs, and information. This exhibition was opened by Dicki Meter, who was the then Ward Councillor in Hout Bay. At the opening of the exhibition, Kenny Tokwe said, “Hout Bay belongs to all of us and that Imizamo Yethu has become integrated into the community and we can now live as one big family”.¹³⁰ Councillor Meter, in an emotional speech, said that the history of Imizamo Yethu remained “a reminder of inhumanity of apartheid and the extreme suffering it caused. It’s a story of the efforts of people who tried to reconstruct their society and regain their self-respect and dignity”.¹³¹ A reconstructed house with various objects gave visitors a glimpse of the lifestyle of people in Imizamo Yethu.¹³² Self-made, poster size boards were mounted to room divided panels. The exhibition was opened to the public from November 1997 until January 1998. These add-ons inserted the museum into a discourse on “South Africa’s public history and the heritage of all citizens”.¹³³ This was the first of many add-ons, as the museum set out to fill

¹²⁹Hout Bay Museum invitation to the opening of the Imizamo Yethu Exhibition, Special Events Album 2.

¹³⁰Article published in *The Sentinel*, November 1997, Unknown author and title heading, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 2.

¹³¹*The Sentinel*, November 1997, Special Events Album 2.

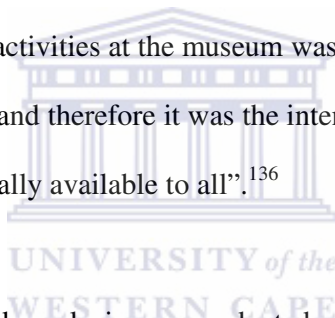
¹³²Pictures of the exhibition and opening were found in the Museum Special Events Album 2.

¹³³Leslie Witz, Ciraj Rassool and Gary Minkley, “The Catle, the Gallery and the Sanitorium”, 12.

the gaps in its exhibition narratives, its staffing component and in the general practices and processes of the museum.

In the 2000/2001 financial year, the museum committed itself to “improve the quality of their display” to make it more “accessible to a wider spectrum of the population”.¹³⁴ Requests for financial assistance were made to the Head of Department of Environmental and Cultural Affairs in the Western Cape to add explanatory text, in all the three official languages of the province, to the displays. In her application, Pam Wormser, a resident from Hout Bay Valley and the then chairperson of the Board of Trustees, acknowledged that the role of museums had extended “beyond the housing of exhibitions and the collecting of histories”.¹³⁵

According to her, the variety of activities at the museum was a “focal point of interest and involvement in the community” and therefore it was the intention of the museum to ensure that all such activities were “equally available to all”.¹³⁶



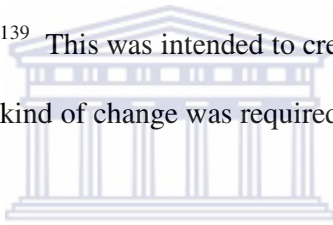
In the same financial year, a needs analysis was conducted and it was concluded that research and an oral history project with aged residents of Hout Bay were needed. This stemmed from a Board of Trustees meeting held on 25 July 2001. In this meeting, the Board interrogated the role of the museum as a multi-cultural diverse institution, its aim for the future, its vision, how to improve on the appearance of the museum, and how to market the outdoor education programme to all. The museum, uncertain how to transform its institution from a “white elephant” to one that was more inclusive and that all sectors of the community could identify with, approached the Department of Environment and Cultural Affairs and Sport - now the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS) - for direction. In March 2002, the Department organized a two-day transformation workshop to assist provincial and province

¹³⁴Pam Wormser, Hout Bay Museum Special Projects Application for funding, 2000/2001.

¹³⁵Pam Wormser, “Special Projects”, 2000/2001.

¹³⁶Pam Wormser, “Special Projects”, 2000/2001.

aided museums in understanding the concept of transformation and how to apply it in their institutions. The workshop's aim was to "pursue a transformed public service"¹³⁷ aligned to the vision of Batho Pele, which was "developed to serve as acceptable policy and legislative framework regarding service delivery in the public service".¹³⁸ Participants had to examine the concept and role of museums in a changing society, their exhibition process and practices, products and clients, their collections policies, mission and vision statements, community participation, how to deal with marginalized history, and how to develop new exhibitions that were in line with the Department's vision of transformation. The core function of museums was identified as "the preservation and promotion of our heritage/ collections for present and future generations through exhibitions, public marketing, public programmes, commemorations, and research".¹³⁹ This was intended to create a new certainty and give direction to museums as to what kind of change was required.



After the Department appointed Odette Papier, originally from Swellendam, as the museum's first "coloured" curator in January 2002, the museum set out to develop a new vision and a mission statement. A vision building committee was established and mandated to create a new vision for the museum based on the principles of Batho Pele and to develop a mission statement. The result was a new vision statement for the museum, approved and accepted by the Board of Trustees. This was to "celebrate the multi-cultural diversity and the wealth of Hout Bay's natural environment and to be a place in Hout Bay that carries the soul of its cultural and environmental heritage".¹⁴⁰ The new objectives of the museum were to focus on oral history and to broaden the language of communication in the museum to include isiXhosa and Afrikaans. In addition, emphasis would be placed on ensuring that the

¹³⁷Western Cape Sub-Directorate Museum Service, "Transformation Report", 2.

¹³⁸Independent Police Investigative Directorate, Republic of South Africa, "Batho Pele Principles", retrieved from [http://www.ipid.gov.za/about %20us/batho_pele.asp](http://www.ipid.gov.za/about%20us/batho_pele.asp) on 4 May 2014.

¹³⁹Western Cape Sub-Directorate Museum Service transformation report, 11.

¹⁴⁰Hout Bay Museum vision statement, 2002 in Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 3.

museum's education programmes would be extended to poorer schools in the area. With these changes, the Board of Trustees hoped that the museum would become more inclusive, regardless of previous unsuccessful attempts to "to include all communities".¹⁴¹

The Board of Trustees hoped that by coming up with better programmes and more interesting exhibitions they would be able to draw previously excluded communities to the museum. To become more relevant and position them as an institution, which all communities could be proud of, they had to move beyond the barriers and reach out to the communities and let them know that the museum had "something to offer".¹⁴² With Kenny Tokwe not re-applying to serve on the Board, there were only "white" representatives serving as Board members towards the end of the 2002/2003 financial year. A proposal was therefore made by the Friends of the Museum to approach Africa Moni, a tour guide from Imizamo Yethu, to serve on the Board.¹⁴³ On 24 May 2004, new applications to serve on the Board of Trustees were discussed at a Board meeting. The outgoing Board discussed their unhappiness about the applications and the Department's endorsement of people who applied to serve on the Board. The following remark was made by a Board member, "We couldn't have anyone from the streets on our board",¹⁴⁴ thus demonstrating the power, authority and manipulation by the Board in its control over the management of the museum. At the next Board meeting, Moni was invited to attend as an observer, and by December 2004, he was appointed to serve on the Board. His role on the Board was to look after the maintenance of the museum, thus indirectly excluding him from the core museum practices and processes, including the process of knowledge production.

¹⁴¹Hout Bay Museum, Board of Trustees meeting, 17 April 2002.

¹⁴²Inge Mayer, Hout Bay Museum, Financial Report, delivered at the Board of Trustees meeting, 1 October 2003.

¹⁴³Hout Bay Museum, Board of Trustees meeting, 26 November 2003.

¹⁴⁴Hout Bay Museum, Board of Trustees meeting, 24 May 2004.

Ten years into South Africa's democracy the museum was still striving to create a new certainty. In this search for certainty, the Board moved through various phases, which produced overwhelming challenges. The Board opted to set up a "Think Tank" whose purpose was to brainstorm a marketing strategy for the museum, review the exhibitions, as well as re-look at the education and outreach programmes. This exercise provided the museum with an opportunity to not only reflect on the 10 years of trying to implement change, but also to re-think and re-imagine the future of the museum. In their re-imagining of the museum, the Board of Trustees proposed a name change that would reflect the cultural history of the area. The proposed name was the "Hout Bay Cultural Museum".¹⁴⁵ However, the name change was not going to change the perceptions people from Hangeberg and Imizamo Yethu had of the museum. One thing that was required was an overhaul of exhibition narratives. Although it had intended to interrogate the exhibition processes and museum practices over the years, the museum instead continued to curate exhibitions that had little meaning to the people of Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg. Temporary exhibitions such as the *History of Hout Bay Museum* and *Chapman's Peak* continued to depict the progress and advancements of Europeans. The Chapman's Peak exhibition was to commemorate the first opening of the Chapman's Peak Drive in 1922 by Prince Albert. The exhibition's focus was to highlight the construction of roads around the peninsula "to open up the beautiful peninsula and environs to the public".¹⁴⁶ The exhibition consisted of a display of photographs, newspaper articles on the opening of the Chapman's Peak Drive, and written text. The exhibition on the *History of Hout Bay Museum* was a display of photographs, newspaper articles, documents, and maps which traced the making of the museum. Photographs in the Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1 show that the exhibition panels focused on activities the museum offered; the guided walks, the outdoor education

¹⁴⁵Hout Bay Museum, Board of Trustees meeting, 31 March 2004.

¹⁴⁶"From the Museum: Chapman's Peak Drive 1915 -1022", *The Sentinel* June 1983, Hout Bay Museum Special Events Album 1.

centre and the people who were involved in the making of the museum. Apparently, the exhibitions on the museum and Chapman's Peak were well received by the community as they "heightened a new awareness of this little jewel in our midst".¹⁴⁷ From the minutes of the meetings, annual reports, and from business plans, I can safely conclude that these exhibitions did not attract people from Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu, but mainly attracted a "white" crowd who had always been participants in the performance of the museum's history. At a transformation report back meeting, the museum manager was still making proposals, on behalf of the Hout Bay Museum, to draft criteria that would facilitate the transformation process and to appoint a transformation officer dedicated to transform the museum.¹⁴⁸

This resulted in many add-ons to the collections, displays, staffing, and Board of Trustees between 2005 and 2009. In this period, a new museum manager, Johnty Dreyer, a local Pastor from Hangberg was appointed. He was "passionate about preserving the rich history of the Hout Bay Valley."¹⁴⁹ The new manager's vision was to continue building on the successes of his predecessors and to "embark on transforming the museum",¹⁵⁰ to become an "all inclusive, well balanced and culturally warm museum"¹⁵¹ in service of the whole community. Having co-opted two representatives from Imizamo Yethu and a representative from Hangberg, the Board once again set out to change the perception people had of the museum, its collection practices and the exhibition processes. Kenny Tokwe, the Imizamo Yethu representative, said that at the time of his appointment on the Board, people in Imizamo Yethu had negative attitudes towards the museum. People felt that the museum was biased against the establishment of Imizamo Yethu and that Friends of the Museum had

¹⁴⁷Hout Bay Museum, Museum Managers report, 31 October 2003 – 31 March 2004.

¹⁴⁸Hout Bay Museum, Museum Managers report, 31 October 2003 – 31 March 2004.

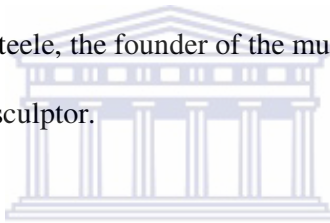
¹⁴⁹Special Correspondent, "New life for Hout Bay Museum", *The Sentinel*, 15 December 2006, page unknown

¹⁵⁰Hout Bay Museum, Museum Mangers Report, 1 April 2006 – 31 March 2007.

¹⁵¹Johnty Dreyer, Email response to interview questions from Lynn Abrahams, 23 April 2014.

called for evictions of people in Imizamo Yethu.¹⁵² This was the perception he wanted to change. According to Timothy Jacobs, his vision as a Board of Trustees member was to “transform the museum and ensure that real history is reflected”.¹⁵³

To continue striving for transformation, temporary exhibitions were added to the permanent display areas. Between 2005 and 2007, picture collages on the people of *Imizamo Yetho* (*Mandela Park*), an exhibition celebrating *10 Years of Democracy*, an exhibition on *Hiv/Aids*, and an exhibition on *Aunties of the Cape Winelands* were temporarily added to the display areas of the Hout Bay Museum. Ironically, the museum in its process of transforming, added these exhibitions temporarily to the display areas, but at the same time they had permanent exhibitions installed on Jimmy Steele, the founder of the museum, Pam Wormser, the first curator, and Jean Doyle, a local sculptor.



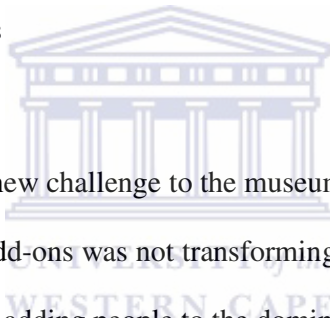
In 2007, the museum embarked on a project to research ‘forced removals’ in Hout Bay. Linked to this research project was an oral history project. In the 2009 /2010 financial year, the museum applied for funding to undertake a memory project in Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu. This resulted in two temporary exhibitions *Untold Stories of Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu* and *My Eye Photo Exhibition* being added to the display areas. These were photographic exhibitions, depicting the lifestyle of people in these communities. The Imizamo Yethu exhibition focused on land settlement patterns and resistance to evictions which would eventually lead to the establishment of Imizamo Yethu.

Through the education programmes attempts were made to reach out to learners from both Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg, but to many, the museum remained a “white elephant”.

¹⁵²Interview with Kenny Tokwe, 9 April 2014.

¹⁵³Interview with Timothy Jacobs, 8 April 2014.

The add-on method aimed at reaching a wider audience in Hout Bay was unsuccessful in attracting new and different audiences. This method of transforming museums had been criticized in the academic profession¹⁵⁴ but also locally by some community activists. According to one, this was because transforming museums should be about real change and reflect a history that all people could identify with.¹⁵⁵ Another indicated to me that the museum remained a white elephant that recorded and preserved the history of white people.¹⁵⁶ In a critique of these add-ons, Witz et al argue that museums failed “to critically examine its own history of collecting” and therefore remained trapped in their “classificatory system in which the exhibitionary and ethnographic work” remains separate from notions of history.¹⁵⁷ Dicki Meter, in his interview with me, maintained that “black people cannot be add-ons in African museums”.¹⁵⁸



This add-on approach created a new challenge to the museum. According to Timothy Jacobs, expanding exhibitions through add-ons was not transforming the museum.¹⁵⁹ Transformation required much more than simply adding people to the dominant colonial narrative. Transformation required a process whereby museums “open up the possibility of interrogating their very classificatory formations”.¹⁶⁰ What was now demanded was a transformed museum “representing all who crossed paths with history”.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁴Amongst other, academics such as Witz, et al in the “The Castle, the Gallery and the Sanitorium”, 13, Irit Rogoff, “Hit and Run”, 5,

¹⁵⁵Interview with timothy Jacobs, 8 April 2014.

¹⁵⁶Interview with Dicki Meter, 11 April 2014.

¹⁵⁷Witz, et al, “The Castle, the Gallery and the Sanitorium”, 13.

¹⁵⁸Interview with Dicki Meter, 11 April 2014.

¹⁵⁹Interview with Timothy Jacobs, 8 April 2014.

¹⁶⁰Leslie Witz “Making museums”, 13.

¹⁶¹Interview with Dicki Meter, 11 April 2014.

Chapter Three

Remaking the Hout Bay Museum

It was with this demand for real change and real histories from the Hout Bay Museum Board of Trustees that the museum entered its new phase of transformation in the 2009/2010 financial year. It was both an exciting and challenging time for the Hout Bay Museum. According to then chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Gavin Cairns, “this financial year brought many challenges in our country, and that of the world, but it is those that the Hout Bay Museum faced and conquered that will make a lasting impression”.¹⁶² By rolling out new education and public programmes, the museum aimed to reach “out to all sections of the Hout Bay/ Llandudno community”.¹⁶³ In the world of politics, the Democratic Alliance (DA) unseated the African National Congress (ANC) in the Western Cape elections held on 22 April 2009. This change would also play out in the management and transformation strategies of the museum. I will discuss this later on in the chapter. Already faced with the call for real change and real histories to be reflected in the museum, the museum again rethought its position in society and ways to make itself more relevant to all communities in a constantly changing and transforming society.

The Western Cape Museum Services, at an Annual Meeting of Heads of Museums, held on 2 June 2009, provided direction for museums in terms of the Department's strategic plan and vision, for the new financial year. At this meeting, museums were asked to review their themes, collection policies, visitors and also exhibitions to reflect the inclusive histories of the respective local communities. This period then saw the museums undergoing drastic changes in their institutional make-up, in their mission, vision, collection policies, and exhibition practices. In this chapter I will track these changes by scrutinizing the museum

¹⁶²Gavin Cairns, Chairperson's Report, Hout Bay Museum, 2010/2011 Annual Report.

¹⁶³Johnty Dreyer, Museum Manager's Report, Hout Bay Museum, 2010/2011 Annual Report.

practices and procedures, issues of power and authority in the process of producing new certainties and narratives for the museum, the methodologies used in transforming the museum, and issues of representation and inclusion. I will also look at the implications and impact of finding human remains in a box hidden in a museum storeroom in 2011. I will explore the uncertainty that this produced in a museum continuously trying to map out a new certainty.

It was also during the 2009/2010 financial year that the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport: Museum Services announced its 5 year plan to transform the museum and develop a new vision and mission statements. In the first phase of such implementation strategies, the Board of Trustees worked on changing their strategic management framework. The vision of the museum was defined as to “research, preserve and exhibit the cultural, natural and historical heritage of Hout Bay and Llandudno”,¹⁶⁴ whereas previously the vision of the museum was to “celebrate the multi-cultural diversity and the wealth of Hout Bay’s natural environment”.¹⁶⁵ The new vision, in comparison with the previous one, not only included Llandudno but placed more emphasis on the cultural and historical narratives of both Llandudno and Hout Bay. Its mission was “to collect, preserve and display the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Hout Bay and Llandudno and to promote an appreciation of and awareness for the Natural and Man-made Environments of the region”.¹⁶⁶ The previous mission was to “collect the memories of all the diverse communities in Hout Bay; to be the repository of stories and to tell these stories in such a way as to engender an awareness and appreciation of our natural history and cultural heritage; to retain these memories by preserving Hout Bay’s natural and cultural and historical heritage; and to make all the above

¹⁶⁴Hout Bay Museum, Business Plan, 2009/2010, 5.

¹⁶⁵Document on the Hout Bay Museum vision, mission and objectives, dated 25 October 2002, found in the museum archives.

¹⁶⁶Hout Bay Museum, Business Plan, 2009/2010, 5.

mentioned accessible to all the people of Hout Bay and to visitors”.¹⁶⁷ To me it seems that the previous mission was more focused on collecting oral histories of people and the newer mission was focused on the collecting, preservation and display of natural and cultural history. The new theme, in comparison with the previous theme which was more focused on fishing, was to be the “cultural and natural heritage of Hout Bay and Llandudno”.¹⁶⁸ This transformed vision and mission statement and the new theme were to ensure that the museum was set on the right path of creating a new form of knowledge certainty in a changing society. In its search for inclusiveness, the museum envisioned that it would undertake a range of projects which, amongst others, were marketing plans, presentations to schools and “joint functions with the Hangberg Library, Imizamo Yethu and the Friends of the Museum”.¹⁶⁹ This strategic vision of the museum had to be reflected in all its exhibitions, public and education programmes and collections. At the start of the 2010/2011 financial year, a new Board of Trustees was appointed to implement this strategic vision. This appointment would be until 31st March 2012. However, most of the previous Board Members were re-appointed to serve on the Board, with the exception of the new city representatives, Councilor Margaretha Haywood and Councilor Basil Lee. The politics of power and authority immediately started to play out in the first meeting of the Board. The re-appointed Board members were mostly politically affiliated to the ANC¹⁷⁰ and the newly appointed councilors were affiliated to the DA. At a meeting held on the 28th of April 2010, Councilor Haywood requested the newspaper advertisement calling for nominations to serve on the Board. The museum manager responded that he was advised by Museum Management and Support Service, that she take up the matter with the Deputy Director. In response to this, Councilor Haywood said that she would not participate in any future meetings because she did “not see

¹⁶⁷Document on the Hout Bay Museum Vision, Mission and Objectives, dated 25 October 2002.

¹⁶⁸Hout Bay Museum end of financial year 2010/2011 report.

¹⁶⁹Hout Bay Museum, Business Plan, 2009/2010, 7.

¹⁷⁰This came up in interviews with both Kenny Tokwe conducted on 9 April 2014 and Timothy Jacobs conducted on 8 April 2014.

herself working with the current Trustees”.¹⁷¹ She then resigned from the Board and walked out of the meeting. This also led to Councilor Basil Lee’s resignation in August 2010. This political struggle over power and control would eventually lead to the Board being dissolved in 2012 and no immediate appointment of a new Board. This would have negative consequences on the research process for the new exhibition and on the running of the museum.

Irrespective of the resignations, the general feeling amongst other Board members was that they formed a quorum and therefore would continue to serve as Board members. Timothy Jacobs was elected chairperson and Kenny Tokwe as vice chairperson of the Board. One of the first tasks the new board took up was to prepare the museum to display an exhibition of local soccer in preparation for the 2010 Fifa World Cup®. Timothy Jacobs informed the Board that a company, named “Sentinel Experience” agreed to sponsor a documentary on “Soccer in Hout Bay”. The Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport viewed the Fifa World Cup® as a way of contributing to social cohesion and uniting communities around the national symbols. According to the Head of Department, museums had the “power to unite the people of the Western Cape”.¹⁷² This DVD together with an exhibition on soccer in Hout Bay was displayed at the museum during the 2010 Fifa World Cup®. According to the Museum Manager, the “exhibition drew a lot of interest from the local soccer community and others”.¹⁷³ According to Tokwe, many other activities were organized to market the museum to communities previously excluded. He informed me that previously only “white people and white schools”¹⁷⁴ visited the museum and they wanted to change the negative perceptions of the museum amongst Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg residents. He said that “the museum

¹⁷¹Hout Bay Museum, Minutes of Board of Trustees meeting, 28 April 2010.

¹⁷²Brent Walters, Head of Department, Opening remarks In the draft minutes of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport: Museum Service Annual Meeting of the Heads of Museums, held at the Worcester Museum, 4 June 2010.

¹⁷³Johnty Dreyer, Agenda point under Soccer exhibition –feedback, in minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Hout Bay Museum, 24 August 2010.

¹⁷⁴Interview with Kenny Tokwe, 9 April 2014.

belongs to all”¹⁷⁵ and therefore there was a “thorough need for intervention and integration”.¹⁷⁶ With this vision, the newly elected board set out to transform the museum. However, being limited by financial resources, the museum had to wait for intervention from the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport.

In the meantime, public programmes took a new direction. Elderly political activists from Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg were invited to a tea party with Dennis Goldberg as special guest. Dennis Goldberg was one of the Rivonia trialists and after 1994 had settled in Hout Bay. Other activities ranged from starting oral history projects, to employing young people in the outdoor education programme through the Department of Public Works Extended Public Works programme and a temporary exhibition on the people of Hangberg. During this time, the people of Hangberg was embroiled with conflict, as the City of Cape Town continuously failed to provide housing to accommodate the overflow of people living in the area. This resulted in the erection of informal housing on the slope of the Sentinel, which was the property of the City and SA National Parks. According to the City this was a direct violation of the Illegal Squatting Act and therefore all structures had to be removed. The City served eviction notices on the people and this resulted in violent clashes between the police and residents on 21 September 2010.¹⁷⁷

According to Johny Dreyer, the museum was “no longer just a mere store house for Hout Bay/Llandudno heritage” but had played “an active role in uniting the community”.¹⁷⁸ I would argue here that the museum thought that by adding temporary exhibitions and extending their public programmes to include the people from Imizamo Yethu and Hangberg,

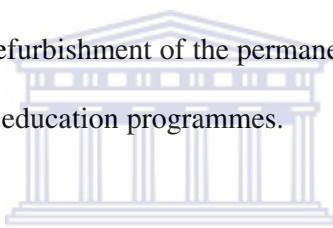
¹⁷⁵Interview with Kenny Tokwe, 9 April 2014.

¹⁷⁶Interview with Kenny Tokwe, 9 April 2014.

¹⁷⁷Hout Bay Museum exhibition Panel, “Hangberg Squatters protest over land”.

¹⁷⁸Johny Dreyer, Museum Manager’s Report, 2009-2010, no page number.

they were uniting the deeply divided community, through what they believed, constituted inclusiveness. At the museum's International Museum Day celebration on 18 May 2010, the museum manager visited the Sentinel High School. In his address to the learners, the museum manager said that the museum is "no longer a boring place where irrelevant artefacts are stored and collect dust" but the museum should instead be seen as a "dynamic space where Hout Bay/Llandudno culture is enriched and mutual understanding, co-operation, and peace among the people are developed".¹⁷⁹ As the museum ventured into the 2011/ 2012 financial year, many initiatives were planned to ensure that the museum reflected the histories of all people and to make the museum a home for all. On the plans for the new financial year was a temporary exhibition on Dennis Goldberg, a continuation of the research and oral interviews on forced removals, refurbishment of the permanent exhibitions and improvement of the school curriculum aligned education programmes.



In the 2010/2011 financial year the Head of Department made money available to develop new exhibitions and expand collections that would include those histories and voices of communities who may have been marginalized. In the 2011/2012 financial year the Hout Bay Museum was one of such museums that would benefit from this budget, and I was assigned by the Department to conduct research and write exhibition text. According to Timothy Jacobs, the Board wanted exhibitions reflecting the real history of Hout Bay and not merely add-ons;¹⁸⁰ a history all people could identify with and be proud of.¹⁸¹ They wanted a history from below. They wanted the stories of forced removals and their impact on people, the resistance to apartheid legislation, the history of migrant labour and its impact on communities. They wanted the history to be relevant and therefore wanted to see a reflection of the current challenges they were faced with, especially on the economic history of the area

¹⁷⁹Hout Bay Museum end of financial year 2010/2011 report.

¹⁸⁰Interview with Timothy Jacobs, 8 April 2014.

¹⁸¹Interview with Timothy Jacobs, 8 April 2014.

which would include fishing and tourism. They wanted to see the stories of ordinary people, for example, Dicki Meter, his involvement in the struggle for housing and against apartheid in general and his contribution to development in the area.

This development saw the museum again reviewing and adopting a new theme that would allow an integration of histories and voices. The theme for the museum changed to *The people of Hout Bay: land and settlement patterns*. Within this theme the collections, the new exhibitions and the education and outreach programmes were to reflect the contribution of all people who had settled and lived in the valley. This theme was to be reflected in the collection policies of the museum. A decision was taken that “any artefact donated or on loan to the museum, has to fall within the theme of the museum, which is the cultural and environmental history of Hout Bay and Llandudno”.¹⁸² On 11 October 2011, a meeting was convened between the Board of Trustees, the museum manager, and the Transformation Project Team from Museum Scientific and Technical Service to discuss the new exhibition. The project leaders, Douw Briers from DCAS: Museum Technical Service informed the meeting that space was a problem and this should be kept in mind when decisions were being made on the future exhibition. He suggested that “bigger instead of many smaller photographs”,¹⁸³ should be used. At this meeting, it was decided that research would be conducted over a two-year period and that both the Board members and manager’s assistance would be needed to make it a success. During the first financial year, research would be done on land settlement patterns in the Hout Bay area and during the 2012 / 2013 financial year, on the economic development of the town and people from Hout Bay in conversation.

According to the museum manager, they wanted “a balanced exhibition”.¹⁸⁴ The meeting

¹⁸²Hout Bay Museum end of financial year 2010/2011 report.

¹⁸³Hout Bay Museum, Minutes of meeting between Board of Trustees and the Museum Transformation Project Team from Museum Scientific Service, 11 October 2011.

¹⁸⁴Hout Bay Museum, Minutes of meeting, 11 October 2014.

agreed to start the introduction, which would cover the early history of Hout Bay, narrating the story of the Khoi to the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck and others who came after him. In this meeting, Dreyer proposed that the local Khoi group, the Koranas or Goringhaikona be involved in this section of the exhibition, as a process of shared inquiry. He wanted their voice to be heard in the exhibition narratives and not what was previously written about the Khoi. The Board and the museum manager emphasized that people were forcibly removed from Princess Bush, Disa River, and Kadotsloot to Imizamo Yethu. This kind of narrative they wanted to see in the exhibition on *Land Settlements Patterns in Hout Bay*. According to Timothy Jacobs, there was no memorial in the area dedicated to the people, that were forcefully removed under the Group Areas Act, and who were grouped together in a racially designated “coloured area” in a “corner” at the foot of Hangberg. This history was missing from the museum and they wanted it to be included. In addition, they felt that the issue of land restitution in Hout Bay and the current challenges should also be reflected in the exhibition. The Board agreed that the Hout Bay Museum was not a “fishing museum per se”,¹⁸⁵ but there should be a focus on “shifting from wood, farming, manganese mining, and fishing to tourism”.¹⁸⁶ They wanted the impact of apartheid legislation on the economic development of certain groups, and their contribution to the economy, to be included. It was argued by the Board that the last section of the new exhibition *People from Hout Bay in Conversation* should be a computerized display, with oral interviews with various people from Hout Bay. This was the brief given to us by the Board of Trustees and the museum manager. According to Kenny Tokwe, their vision for new exhibition was to integrate a deeply divided community. The museum, in the past could not do this and therefore they had hoped that the new exhibition would remove such obstacles and that the museum would

¹⁸⁵Hout Bay Museum, Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting, 11 October 2011.

¹⁸⁶Hout Bay Museum, Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting, 11 October 2011.

become relevant to all people in the area. This brief was to inform our research for the new exhibition.

As the research for this new exhibition was underway, the museum had to undergo structural changes to map a more flowing floor plan for the exhibition as well as general maintenance work. The museum was temporarily closed as the collections and exhibition had to be removed. As Dreyer, was cleaning the museum storeroom to make space for the collections; he discovered a box marked “Khoi remains”. These remains apparently made their way into the museum storeroom in 2003. It is interesting to note how these remains entered the museum without archeological excavation and documentation, especially in the aftermath of the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) hearings and a report released by the TRC on abductions, disappearances and missing persons. According to the then museum manager, Odette Papier, a “police officer” came to the museum and offered the remains in a bag to the museum in 2003.¹⁸⁷ Papier advised him to bring the paperwork so that it could be presented to the Board of Trustees. The man promised to return with the paperwork and the remains were placed in the storeroom. It is believed that in the same year a fire broke out in the storeroom. The Friends of the Museum came to assist with cleaning up and found the remains in a bag. This discovery immediately placed the museum in the discourse on transformation, as the remains were placed in a box and marked as “Khoi remains”, without establishing the identity. The remains remained boxed, forgotten and stored until 2011.

At the time of rediscovery of these remains, there had been widespread discourse in the country about repatriation and reburial of human remains. Human remains and body parts became part of contestation and debates over how aspects of the country’s traumatic history

¹⁸⁷Telephone conversation between myself and Odette Paper in December 2011.

should be remembered and expressed in the institutions and spaces of public culture.¹⁸⁸ This led to questioning the way “scientific research into human remains of indigenous people”¹⁸⁹ under colonial and apartheid regimes had been conducted. This kind of scientific research was based on the assumption that a person’s behaviour, language, and intelligence could be determined by race.¹⁹⁰ This concept was introduced in the 19th century by European physical anthropologists as “the field that studies human bodies and concerned itself with racial differences and evolution”.¹⁹¹ The British Association advanced this argument of the Advancement of Science (BAAS) who in 1905, held their conference in South Africa. In his Presidential address at the BASS conference, A.C. Haddon called for “an accurate account of natives of South Africa...for scientific use, and as a historical record...before the advance of civilisation began to obscure and even obliterate all true traditions, customs, and habits of the South African peoples”.¹⁹² In addition, he stressed the “importance of investigating the Bushmen and Hottentots, who represented “very primitive varieties of mankind”, and who were “rapidly diminishing” in number.¹⁹³ He then asked that the “memory of these primitive folk” to be “saved from oblivion” and called for “reliable anthropometric data”.¹⁹⁴ This resulted in the South African Museum undertaking a project to create life-casts of Khoisan people and South African museums in general started collecting human remains. However, a call was also made to South Africans who had a “docile Bushmen” and no longer in need of it, to donate it to the scientific world to be displayed alongside the mummies of Egypt.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁸Ciraj Rassool, “Human Remains, the disciplines of the dead and the South African Memorial Complex”, Paper presented at The Politics of Heritage Conference, Museum Africa, Johannesburg, 8-9 July 2011, 1.

¹⁸⁹David van Vuuren, Mischa ten Kate, Micaela Pereira, Steven Vink, Susan Legene, “Physical anthropology reconsidered: Human remains at the Tropenmuseum”, *Bulletin 375*, Tropenmuseum, no page numbers.

¹⁹⁰Alan Morris “The Politics of Old Bones”, Inaugural lecture, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town. 14 October, 2008, 2.

¹⁹¹Morris, “The politics of old bones”, 1.

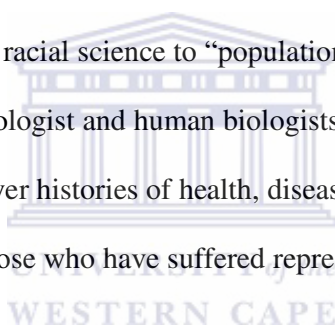
¹⁹²Ciraj Rassool and Martin Legassick, *Skeletons in the Cupboard: South African museums and the trade in human remains 1907 -1917*, (South African Museum, 2000), 3.

¹⁹³Ciraj Rassool and Martin Legassick, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 3.

¹⁹⁴Ciraj Rassool and Martin Legassick, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 3.

¹⁹⁵Ciraj Rassool and Martin Legassick, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 4.

This had far-reaching effect for the indigenous people of South Africa, in that the dignity and respect of their death was violated. Human remains began entering museums, in some instances unethically. Human remains were either acquired or collected from unknown sources or graves were robbed and bodies stolen.¹⁹⁶ Whether ethically or unethically, human remains and plaster casts entered museums and were incorporated into the ethnographic collections of museums as objects to be displayed or to conduct race science. This practice continued until the second part of the 20th century, when the United Nations published a statement in which they rejected such racial science.¹⁹⁷ This resulted in a new scientific approach, the “New Physical Anthropology”, which saw many anthropologists rejecting the “old typological racial categories and the baggage that came with it”.¹⁹⁸ With this new approach, the focus shifted from racial science to “population dynamics and the impact of culture on biology”.¹⁹⁹ Anthropologist and human biologists argued that, “research on bones and bodies enables them to recover histories of health, disease and demography”²⁰⁰ and even “restore the social histories of those who have suffered repression”.²⁰¹



However, some communities and academics that looked at the unethical side of collecting human remains in museums have heavily contested this view. Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool pointed out that “ethics of continuing to curate such remains require re-examination”.²⁰² They argued that museums have to “account for the human remains that are housed in their storage vaults”.²⁰³ Amidst these debates, museums continued to store

¹⁹⁶Judith Sealy, “Managing collections of human remains in South African Museums and universities: ethical policy-making and scientific value”, *South African journal of Science*, 99, (May/June 2003), 238.

¹⁹⁷Morris, “The politics of old bones”, 2.

¹⁹⁸Morris, “The politics of old bones”, 2.

¹⁹⁹Morris, “The politics of old bones”, 2.

²⁰⁰Judith Sealy, “Managing collections of human remains in South African Museums”, 1.

²⁰¹Alan Morris, Inaugural Lecture, “The Politics of Old Bones”, 1.

²⁰²Judith Sealy, “Managing collections of human remains in South African Museums”, 1.

²⁰³Rassool and Legassick, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 1.

collections of human remains, as their collections policies allowed for such “skeletal remains of the indigenous people, particularly that of the Khoisan”.²⁰⁴

Post 1994, human remains and body parts became part of contestation and debates over how aspects of the country’s traumatic history should be remembered and expressed in the institutions and spaces of public culture.²⁰⁵ Many communities started laying claims on human remains and demanded repatriation, restitution and reburial as a way of addressing the legacies of colonial ethnographic and racial science in representation of South African people in museums in South Africa and Europe.²⁰⁶ The call for repatriation and reburial featured prominently at South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Process following the establishment of a Missing Persons Task Team. The latter was put in place to locate the “remains of murdered or executed cadres, as an aspect of work of symbolic repatriations, national healing, and transitional justice”.²⁰⁷ The debates on repatriation and reburial saw the remains of Sarah Baartman return to South Africa in 2002²⁰⁸ and those of Klaas and Trooi Pienaar in 2012. The return of the latter led to President Jacob Zuma urging museums in South Africa to decolonize and transform. In his speech, he said, “our museums must be transformed to become centres of heritage and expertise which respect all peoples and cultures”.²⁰⁹ The call for reburial of human remains gained wide support from academics such as Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool.

The human remains at the Hout Bay Museum did not enter in the same way as those of physical anthropology. The museum, uncertain how to respond to the discovery in the midst of these debates and contestation around transformation, reclamation and reburial, decided to

²⁰⁴Rassool and Legassick, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, 1.

²⁰⁵Rassool, “Human Remains, the disciplines of the dead”, 1.

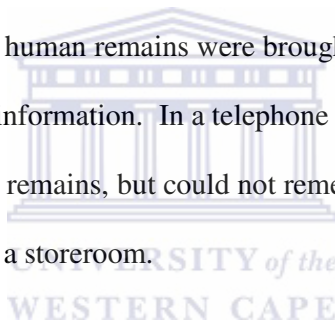
²⁰⁶Rassool, “Human Remains the discipline of the dead”, 1.

²⁰⁷Rassool, “Human Remains”, 1.

²⁰⁸Rassool, “Human Remains”, 2.

²⁰⁹Jacob Zuma, “Decolonise Museums”, *Cape Argus*, 13 August 2012.

remain silent to avoid a public outcry.²¹⁰ This decision was due to the sensitivity of the discourse on human remains, the way the remains entered the museum, the tension within the community over land, and the lack of information as to whom the remains belonged. The museum manager wanted certainty before he publicly addressed the community about the remains. The rediscovery of the human remains in the re-making of a museum, for which a new type of certainty was being demanded, created so much uncertainty. Armed with a case number 238/2002, which was attached to the box found in the storeroom, Dreyer approached the South African Police Service (SAPS), to follow up on the case. SAPS informed him that they “cannot find such case”²¹¹ and therefore could not provide him with any information. Completely puzzled by the mysterious remains, Dreyer contacted Odette Papier who was the museum manager at the time the human remains were brought to the museum, but she could not provide him with additional information. In a telephone conversation I had with Papier in December 2011, she recalled the remains, but could not remember anything further, other than the remains being placed in a storeroom.



Human remains are a story on their own, but this is also a story of how museums can change or transform. Therefore, my inquiry was not to make certain the uncertain; in other words, try to find out whose remains they are, but rather to investigate what the museum does with them. Symbolically, these remains are placed at the centre of transforming the museum in their process of searching for a new certainty. The museum manager, uncertain how to respond to the “mysterious” remains, but as a way of respecting the dignity of the death, removed the remains from the storeroom, and placed it in a wooden box in his office at the museum. However, I became so intrigued by these remains, not only for the purposes of this study, but rather my conscious telling me that it could be remains of someone who had

²¹⁰Conversation I had with Johnty Dreyer, the museum manager in 2011 after the re-discovery of the remains.

²¹¹Email communication between the Johnty Dreyer, Hout Bay Museum Manager and Tessa Davids, Collections Manager of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, 11 September 2013.

disappeared during the apartheid period. I had to know whether these remains are recent or whether they are indeed related to the Khoisan narratives. I then committed myself to assist the museum to find out more about these remains. On 9 September 2013, I contacted a cousin who is a detective in the South African Police Service (SAPS) and asked how one proceeds in such a situation where there is an incorrect case number. He referred me to the SAPS Forensic Lab, which I contacted to check whether previous forensic tests had been conducted on the remains. I then spoke to a Mr. Abdulla from the SAPS Biology Unit. I gave him the case number, but after a search, nothing came up. He then suggested that the remains be taken to SAPS station and that a sample would have to be sent for testing to determine the age of the remains. In addition, he gave me the contact details for a Captain Joubert at the Biology Unit, who deals with missing people, for further assistance and advice. This information was emailed to the museum manager to take the case further. Later that same day, I got a call from Warrant Officer Brand from SAPS Forensic Lab – Victim Identification Unit who informed me that the museum manager may not transport the remains. I referred her to the museum manager, who in turn informed the Board of Trustees. The latter discussed the issue but also felt that clarity was needed on the remains. On 16 September 2013, Warrant Officer Brand and Capt Joubert collected the remains for forensic identification.²¹² According to the police, a case would be opened and a reference number issued. On 17 September Captain Joubert, in an email communication, informed the museum manager that after they had conducted a short investigation, they found a statement to the effect that the “human bones were found at the corner of Alexander Street and Milner Street, Hout Bay”.²¹³ He further stated that after viewing the area, they realized that the “two streets do not cross”, but he suggested that it could have been the corner of “Alexander and Brighton

²¹²Johnty Dreyer, Email communication between Johnty Dreyer and the Board of Trustees, 16 September 2013.

²¹³Joubert, Email correspondence from Captain Joubert to Johnty Dreyer the museum manager, 17 September 2013.

Street”.²¹⁴ He then confirmed that the remains were found on 25 October 2002 “underground” and that no further details were available, other than the SAP13 number - 238/02 and an O/B entry number made on the day the remains were found – O/B 1151/10/2002. A lab reference number for further enquiries was also provided.

When I called the forensic lab in the beginning of 2014, I was told that the remains had been sent to Pretoria for forensic identification and no further information was available. In a conversation with the museum manager on the 10th of April 2014, I asked what the museum’s intention was once the age of the remains had been established. He said that he has no doubt that, should the remains be identified as those of a Khoisan person, they would be returned to the local Khoi group, named the Koranas, for reburial and that the museum would be involved in the process of reburial. At the time of completing this research, no further information was available about the remains. If the museum proceeds with repatriation and reburial, it would place them within the discourse on transformation, moving away from a long institutional history of museums and human remains. According to Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, the museum, with its involvement with reburial, would begin a process to “propitiate the spirits of the ancestors of those remains, and as an institutional gesture of repentance for the crimes and the errors of the past”.²¹⁵ By reburial, the museum would take a lead in showing that “people of this country have accepted responsibility for their past wrongs”.²¹⁶ I would therefore concur with Legassick and Rassool that there is an “ethical need for reburial” and that museums need to conduct a critical reflection on their “own processes of collecting, on their objects and their artifacts” and on the manner in which they have entered into the museum.²¹⁷

²¹⁴Joubert, Email correspondence from Captain Joubert to Johnty Dreyer the museum manager, 17 September 2013.

²¹⁵Rassool and Legassick, “Skeletons in the Cupboard”, 48.

²¹⁶Rassool and Legassick, “Skeletons in the Cupboard”, 48.

²¹⁷Rassool and Legassick, “Skeletons in the Cupboard”, 49.

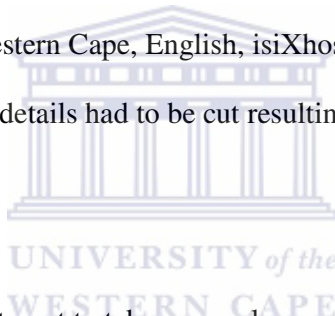
During the process of rediscovery and the uncertainty it brought, the museum also faced other challenges, that would not only question the certainty of this museum in its process to transform, but would negatively impact on the outcome of the new exhibition. Key to the research for new exhibitions was the process of community consultation. This is a process whereby communities are informed about the envisaged exhibitions and are asked to contribute to the final outcome. At the end of the 2011/2012 financial year, the Board of Trustees term came to an end. As with other museums under DCAS, the MEC for Cultural Affairs and Sport extended the Board's term. However, this was short-lived as Councilor Haywood, the Ward Councilor for Hout Bay, and therefore automatically the City of Cape Town's representative on the Board, was unhappy with this decision wrote to the MEC and asked for the appointment of a new Board, as she refused to work with the current Board members. According to Kenny Tokwe, the Councilor had never been involved with the museum and when she "visited she was not happy with the faces and threatened to withdraw from museum".²¹⁸ After this political interference, the Board of Trustees was dissolved. This political interference left the museum without a Board for the latter part of 2012. Apart from the museum's telephone, electricity and water bill being cut, staff members whose salaries were paid by the Board could not be paid. In addition, community consultation, which was central to delivering the exhibition, was not done. According to Timothy Jacobs, this was political manipulation on the part of the province, as they "decide or elect these people on the Board".²¹⁹ All the previous Board members then re-applied to serve on the Board and to implement changes, but their applications were continuously rejected. According to Jacobs, the museum under their leadership had the opportunity to change, and it took almost 20 years to bring change, but in reality no real changes were made. This caused

²¹⁸Interview with Kenny Tokwe, 9 April 2014.

²¹⁹Interview with Timothy Jacobs, 8 April 2014.

a lot of uncertainty for the outcome of the exhibition. As researchers we were anxious as the new Board could change the brief given to us and influence the final outcome.

Towards the end of 2012, the research was completed. According to the methodology followed by the department, the exhibition text had to be approved by the Board of Trustees and by the senior officials in the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sports. In a meeting between the Board of Trustees and representatives from Museum Service, held on 11 October 2011, the Board had approved the proposed research for the new exhibition, but after submission to the Department, new changes requested. The text had to be shortened to a maximum of 200 words per exhibition panel. This was, as we were told, to ensure that the three official language of the Western Cape, English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans, were included into the exhibition panel. Many details had to be cut resulting in a short summary of particular events.



In January 2013, I left the Department to take up employment at the South African Heritage Resources Agency. Because I did the research and this was my project, I wanted to see it through and therefore offered the Museum Service my time to ensure that the first phase of the exhibition was completed. I selected the photographs, which had to accompany the exhibition, but I was not involved with the design side of the exhibition. Finally, in September 2013, the Western Cape MEC for Cultural Affairs and Sport, Ivan Meyer, officially opened the exhibition. In attendance at the opening of the exhibition was the Chief Director for Cultural Affairs, the Deputy Director for Museum Service, Board of Trustee members, Friends of the Museum, members of the Peace Forum, which was established after the 2010 Hangberg clash, to on behalf of the community of Hangberg to negotiate a peace settlement with the City of Cape Town, staff from Museum Scientific and Technical Service,

and other museum managers. There was no representation from Imizamo Yethu. The only representatives from Hangberg were the current Board member, people from the Peace Forum and the Marimba band that was performing at the ceremony. I kept asking myself why there were no representatives from Imizamo Yethu. Could it be because the opening of the museum was held on a weekday? Were they not invited or were they just not interested? However, according to the MEC in his opening speech, he remarked that there were many people in attendance, which according to him, was a sign that museums are changing. Museums, he said were in the “process of facilitating transition called social inclusion”.²²⁰ According to him, this showed that people wanted to be part of the museum and the room being full, showed a “project of social inclusion”.²²¹ The MEC used this opening as a political platform to slam politicians like Julius Malema, former President of the ANC Youth League. He said that museums are spaces that allow people to “experience personal transformation”.²²² If people have any hate in their heart and visit a museum, they would leave the museum without it. He then said that if Julius Malema, an “angry man”, should visit the museum, and learn about the history of the town, its people, he would “walk out a different man”.²²³ He continued to say that museums are powerful tools that show spiritual intelligence. He then introduced a concept called “cultural warmth”.²²⁴ Referring to Hout Bay, as an area filled with both pain and joy, “pain on both sides and equal parts”, he said that it becomes the business of museums to promote “cultural warmth”. Museums, he said had to promote this and that it could only be manifested “when we take a step back to allow other cultures to enter us, to reach you, bless and inspire you”.²²⁵ He concluded by saying that museums are the new architects or foundations of “cultural warmth” and this could be seen by the inclusion of all languages in the museum.

²²⁰Ivan Meyer, in his speech at the opening of the new exhibition at the Hout Bay Museum, 18 September 2013.

²²¹Ivan Meyer, opening speech, 18 September 2013.

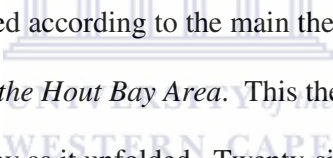
²²²Ivan Meyer, opening speech, 18 September 2013.

²²³Ivan Meyer, opening speech, 18 September 2013.

²²⁴Ivan Meyer, opening speech, 18 September 2013.

²²⁵Ivan Meyer, opening speech, 18 September 2013.

The opening ceremony was held in the museum recreation centre, followed by a walk through the exhibition space. The exhibition floor plan remained divided into three spaces. Unlike before, where two rooms were separated by an opening, this was closed up to ensure that visitors follow the clock-wise flow of the newly designed floor plan. The wall colours do not in any way complement the new exhibition panels. The greyish text panels disappear into the almost equally greyish painted walls, giving it a dull atmosphere. One would expect that wooden floors and down lights in the new exhibition space would contribute to a warm atmosphere, but the combination of grey walls and text panels immediately does the opposite. These design features were far removed from the initial discussion to create a “cosy” warm atmosphere, but instead the outcome was a cold hospital- like atmosphere.



The exhibition panels were framed according to the main theme: *The people of Hout Bay: Land and Settlement Patterns in the Hout Bay Area*. This theme was to ensure an inclusive account of the history of Hout Bay as it unfolded. Twenty-six text panels followed this theme in a clockwise position, chronologically listing the various historical moments in a history of Hout Bay. As part of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport language policy, the text was translated into the three official languages of the province. The main English text is in a bold font, whilst the Afrikaans and isiXhosa are in italics, and almost disappear against the background frame of the panels. All the exhibition panels have a background picture and the main text is framed with smaller pictures inserted into the panel, supposedly to complement the historical moment depicted.

As one enters the museum, one is immediately drawn to the introductory panel. This collage of pictures carries the theme of the museum and is situated in such a way that it forces

visitors to start moving into a clockwise direction. This first room relates the story of the Khoi, the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck, the Dutch commander of the VOC's revictualling station who landed in Cape Town on 6 April 1652 and named Hout Bay after his visit to the area in July 1653, and others who came to settle in Hout Bay over the years. An introductory panel provides a brief overview of this early performance of history. A second panel introduces the *Khoekhoen (Khoikhoi)* and emphasizes their life style and patriarchal society. This panel is framed with illustrations depicting a Khoekhoen herder with animals, a travelling Khoikhoi family with their domestic animals, and a Khoikhoi woman and child followed by a male companion, crossing a stream in an indigenous forest.²²⁶ Like with any other conventional museum, a display of objects is centrally placed to complement the history narrated. A glass cabinet filled with objects, such as a digging stick, stone, bone and metal tools, pieces of ostrich egg shells, perlemoen shells, potsherds, a picture of a Khoi pot and a model of a Khoi hut are displayed. Similarly to my previous argument, previously, the Khoi remained framed through an archaeological lens, but this time, historical narratives are added. Directly next to the Khoi exhibition, a wall is framed with a picture of the forest of Hout Bay. This to me is positioning the Khoi into the natural history of the area. The third panel as you move towards the right, just before one is channelled into the second room is a panel narrating the story of *Early European Colonists*. The interpretation of this panel was to narrate the story of European settlement to the visitor, and therefore explains the difference in opinion between settlers who came to Hout Bay and the Khoi who were indigenous to the area, in terms of land ownership. Although this is a significant change in the way the Khoi were previously displayed, it again make no reference to how the Khoi were forced off the land and incorporated into western society as labourers, but instead almost gives the impression that the land and resources were naturally transferred to the settlers. With two

²²⁶Hout Bay Museum exhibition panel, "khoekhoen (khoikhoi)".

sentences, this panel makes reference to the slaves as labourers and the abolition of the slave trade. Pictures used on this panel depict the arrival of European colonists and the ships that brought them and slaves.

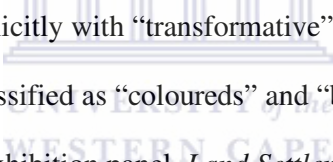
The second room of the exhibition space narrates the story of European settlement, the establishment of Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu and the conflict that came with it. The first panel in this space refers to colonial interest. This panel frames the European interest in wood, which led to them discovering the valley behind the mountain. Pictures are used to depict the progress of Europeans through the building of roads leading to Hout Bay. The second panel draws visitors' attention to the indigenous trees in Hout Bay. A picture of an old road is used as background photograph. Johan van der Poll, the Museum Services photographer, retrieved the picture from the Western Cape Archives and Record Services.²²⁷ Inserted into this panel are the various trees that are indigenous to the area, like Milkwood, Hard Pear, etc. The next panel narrates the *Impact of European Colonists*. This panel narrates the story of the woodcutter post set up in the valley, which would also lead to the development of farming. The panel is made visual using maps, a picture of a slave and his master and farm scenes with Khoi huts visible on a farm homestead. The latter is framed with a caption that reads, "By 1700 some Khoi started working as migrant labourers on a settler farm".²²⁸ Although this might come through as a contradiction to me saying earlier that no mention is made of how the Khoi was forced to become labourers, I maintain this argument for the reason that this caption, in a small font and italic, does not relate the story of forced labour. It give visitors the impression that the Khoi voluntarily started working as labourers on farms. The heading is misleading as it leaves out the process of how the Khoi

²²⁷Because the Western Cape Archives and Records Services, like the Western Cape Museum Service falls under the same provincial government, an agreement stand whereby pictures can be sourced from the archives as long as they are referenced on the panel to the Western Cape Archives and Records Service. To my knowledge, no archival reference was provided for this picture.

²²⁸Hout Bay Museum exhibition panel, *Impact of European Colonist*.

became labourers. Instead, the narratives remain those of a glorification of European performance as played out in its phases of exploration, discovery, and advancement. Although pictures and illustrations try to depict the impact of settlement on the indigenous people, it creates an impression of voluntarily labour and moves away from the negative impact settlement had on the indigenous people and their descendants. To complement such glorifications of European settlement is a text panel on *Portraits of Hout Bay Valley*. Through this panel, visitors are introduced to the modernity bestowed by the arrival and settlement of Europeans. A visual presentation allows visitors to gaze upon the advances made towards the industrial, agricultural, and technological make-up of the town. Pictures of roads, hotels, farms, the first transport system, beach picnic scenes, attest to such advances. The next panel, *Land Settlement Patterns* followed. I was responsible for researching and writing this exhibition panel. Similar to the previous panels, I need to stress that the researchers did not have a say in the final product. As explained earlier, a particular methodology is followed whereby the Chief Director, together with the Head of the Department signs off the final text. The province's Museum Scientific Service scientists initially conduct the research. In the case of the Hout Bay Museum, Pieter Schoonees and I conducted the research. The Board of Trustees, who also approves the final research, gives the direction for research. This is done through a presentation on the proposed exhibition. Upon approval, the scientists who conducted the research write exhibition text. The Assistant Director of Museum Scientific Service guides this process and after a draft text had been written, the text is peer reviewed by other scientist as well as staff from Museum Technical Service. At this stage, a designer, usually from Museum Technical Service is assigned to do the layout and design of the exhibition. The Museum Technical Service is also responsible for the design layout of the museum, exhibition cases, and the floor plan. After edited text has been finalized, the text is presented to the Board of Trustees for final approval. This was

not the case with Hout Bay, as there was no Board in place at that time to approve the exhibition text. Instead, a presentation was made to the Chief Director of Cultural Affairs, Hanneljje Du Preez, the Director of Museum Service, Andrew Hall and the Deputy Director, Mxolisi Dlamuka. At this presentation, they provide input and make recommendations on the content of the text. This process is then repeated until they are happy with the final text, which is signed off by the Head of Cultural Affairs and Sport, Brent Walters. In the case of Hout Bay, the text had been altered in so many ways that the curatorial voice of the researcher is lost. What remained was an agency of power and authority over the forces of production and dissemination of knowledge. In this case, the power and authority was with the senior management of Museum Services and of Cultural Affairs, who controlled the exhibition process and the final exhibition outcome.



The first panel dealing more explicitly with “transformative” narratives is a gaze into the lives of people who had been classified as “coloureds” and “bantu” by the Population Registration Act of 1950. The exhibition panel, *Land Settlement Patterns*, narrates the story of the descendants of the Khoi and slaves who remained in the area after European settlement, making out the biggest part of the population. In a very subtle way, the exhibition panel relates the impact of “coloured” people, being forced to move from the valley and the establishment of Hangberg, and the establishment of single men’s hostel to accommodate “African” labour. The viewer is then introduced to the establishment of Imizamo Yethu in 1991 and how the inequitable distribution of land in the valley led to a housing crisis. Visual presentations provide visitors a glimpse of life in Hangeberg and that of “African” labour used by various industries such as farming, fishing and road construction. The only visual reminder of the impact of the influx control laws was a “dompas” belonging to “Aunty Maria” and travel documents. The rest of the room is filled with exhibition panels narrating

the *Housing Crisis in Hangberg*, *Hangberg Settlement*, *Portraits of Hangberg*, *Land Protest*, *Christmas fire in Princess Bush*, *Portraits of Imizamo Yethu*, and *Protest in Hangberg over land*. Although the text refer to Hangberg being establish because of forced removals, it does not acknowledge the role of apartheid legislation such as the Group Areas Act that was responsible for such forced removals. It almost placed the blame for forced removals in Hout Bay entirely on the rezoning of farms for “residential development”.²²⁹ However, no reference is made to the fact that such residential developments was for the benefit of Europeans who had settled in the area, or to the fact that “coloured” people were restricted to a small portion of land at the foot of Hangberg. The reasons for the 2010 Hangberg crisis, is a deeply contested history, as multiple interpretations and versions of the event are available. The exhibition narrative allows the visitor to formulate his or her own opinions and interpretations about the Hangberg clash in September 2010. According to the exhibition panel, “a communication breakdown in September 2010, let to a violent clash between police and residents, as the latter were served with eviction notices”.²³⁰ In the narration of this performance of history, pictures of a man “outside a shack”, and children playing “kerim” in Hangberg flats, are used as illustrations to depict overcrowding. A scene of labourers engaged in the building of Chapman’s Peak, is captured as “labour requirements resulted in an influx of people and a resulting housing shortage”.²³¹ The rest of the people gazed upon in these photographs, depicts scenes of people in overcrowded living conditions. Pictured as being happy, content and complacent, these people are shown to continue carrying on with their daily lives, despite the challenges they are faced with. Other pictures show infrastructural developments, i.e. mosque, “spaza” shops, clinics, day care centres, etc. In my analysis of this part of the exhibition, I would argue that such depiction is misleading because it gives the impression that, despite overcrowded conditions, people were generally happy

²²⁹Hout Bay Museum Exhibition Panel, *Hangberg settlements*.

²³⁰Hout Bay Museum Exhibition Panel, *Hangberg Squatters protest over land*.

²³¹Hout Bay Museum Exhibition Panel, *Housing Crisis*.

with apartheid legacy of spatial and infrastructural development. Once again, I would argue that this part of the exhibition is open to contestation and therefore contributes further to uncertainty in the exhibition narratives.

To relate the story of Imizamo Yethu, the visitor's attention is drawn to the lifting of influx control laws resulting in many Africans coming to settle in Hout Bay; either looking for work or woman joining their husbands. This led to the establishment of informal housing "outside of their group areas".²³² In dealing with this 'problem', the "Divisional Council, who had to ensure compliance with the Group Areas Act and the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1976",²³³ served eviction notices on people living in these informal settlements. Various newspaper clippings and photographs attest to the resistance of people against evictions.

The first panel in the third room marked *Restoration and Transformation*, takes visitors to the peace agreement that was signed between members of the Hangberg community and the City of Cape Town. The signing of this peace agreement was once again a contested issue in the Hangberg community, as some residents were opposed to the signing of it. The exhibition narrative therefore allows visitors to formulate their own interpretation by stating, "the agreement may not satisfy all parties, but it provides some hope for peace and stability in the community".²³⁴ The panel also refers to the land claims that was submitted by people who were removed under the Group areas Act.

In my interpretation of this section of the exhibition space, I am of the opinion that this narration and performance of history, goes against the idea of a museum creating certainty. Instead, what it does is, is to create an uncertainty which then opens up a platform for

²³²Hout Bay Museum Exhibition Text Panel, *Land Protest*.

²³³Hout Bay Museum Exhibition text Panel, *Land Protest*.

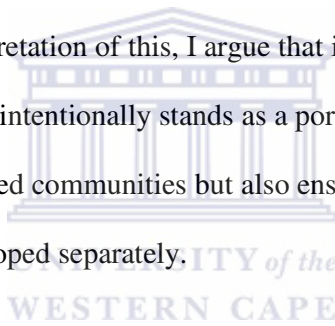
²³⁴Hout Bay Museum Exhibition Panel, *Restoration and Transformation*.

contestation and dialogue. I argue that the museum believed that it had transformed its institution to fit into the new transformative discourse of certainty, by including the stories of previously excluded people, thus making the museum inclusive and relevant to the broader community. However, from my interaction with community representatives, I conclude that this message conveyed was internalized by them as that of being inclusive, but contested, therefore rendering it uncertain. The rest of the exhibition space is dedicated to the economy of Hout Bay. This section was the second phase of research. The panels were mounted towards the end of March 2014. In my view, the message conveyed by these exhibition panels is a story of European progress and advancement of the economy, as it mainly highlights their contribution to developments in farming, fishing, tourism, etc. This broader theme is subdivided, chronologically listing the various aspects which contributed towards the economy of Hout Bay. Consisting of a linear design, the headings are as follows: *The Forest, Farming in Hout Bay: The Early Days, Farms in the Area, Water Supply, Farming and Transport, Mining, Manganese, The Fishing Industry, Lobster, South African Sea Products, and Tourism*. The latter is further subdivided into panels addressing various aspects such as: *Construction of Chapman's Peak, Tourist Attractions, The Forts, and The Leopard and the Sea*. Whilst still working for the department I conducted the research for the second phase. Two researchers were assigned the task. I was responsible for the fishing and tourism text. Although I had resigned from the Department, I decided to complete the fishing and tourism text. After drafting the text I emailed it to Meter and to a person who was involved with the museum, but wished to remain anonymous, to comment on. Their input had been worked into the text and submitted to Museum Service. The last I heard was when the Acting Assistant Director of Museum Service, Pieter Schoonees informed me that I could no longer be involved in the text or be consulted about the project by Museum Service staff.

I was shocked when I visited the museum on 8 April 2014, to see how much the text had been altered. The text I submitted was more a reflection on the ordinary people and the contribution they had made. It also reflected on how apartheid legislation limited the degree to which “coloured” and “African” fishermen could be involved in the fishing industry. The exhibition text as it now appears on the panels reflects the role and contribution of the Trautmann family who were descendants of a German immigrant, Jacob Trautmann “who settled in the valley in 1871 as a farmer, and introduced amongst other a lucrative frozen lobster export business”.²³⁵ The Dorman family settled in the valley as farmers in the late 19th century and later became involved in the fishing industry to establish Duikersklip and Chapman’s Peak Fisheries. The voice of the small-scale fisherman had been silenced. Instead, the panel focuses on the commercialization of the fishing industry, but no mention is made of the impact of commercialization on the small scale fishermen and the current challenges they are faced with. Neither does it make reference to the impact of apartheid on the livelihood of “coloured” and “African” fishermen. The introductory panel on the economy of Hout Bay introduces the visitor to the Khoi who made use of “natural resources” and the kind of fishing equipment used by the Khoi. The rest of the panels engage visitors to gaze upon the developments made by European settlement in the farming, manganese mining, and tourism industries. All the panels are mounted in a linear way, framed with old scenic or beach scenes as background pictures. Smaller pictures of hotels, transport system, farms landscapes, houses, boats, etc. are inserted into the larger panels to provide a visual experience and evidence of such progresses, advancement and modernity. One panel is specifically dedicated to the establishment of South African Sea Products and the contribution of the owners to the fishing industry as well as to providing employment to both “coloured” and “African”. The mining panels are the only two panels with a brick-type

²³⁵Hout Bay Museum Exhibition Panel, *Lobster*.

colour, giving a warmer effect. The introductory panel on tourism gives visitors a peek into the aesthetic beauty of the valley. According to the text, it was the tranquillity and the beauty of the valley that attracted more Europeans to the area. This stands in contrast to the “Africans” who were attracted to the valley because of labour requirements, but could never permanently settle in the area. The latter is not part of the exhibition. An image of the red city sightseeing bus proudly frames a panel, indicating that Hout Bay is on the tourism map. The panel indirectly invites visitors to the various tourism destinations in the area. In another panel, photographs depicting the display of “klopse” culture, arts and crafts, and a “spaza” shop are to be seen. A photograph of Mariners Wharf, established in 1984 by Stanley Dorman, as a harbour front emporium, is juxtaposed with a photograph of an informal shop in Imizamo Yethu. In my interpretation of this, I argue that it not only depicts the progress of European settlement, but also unintentionally stands as a portrayal of the legacy of apartheid legislation, which not only divided communities but also ensured that they were economically and socially developed separately.



At the time of my visit to the museum, the room I have described above had not yet been completed. In fact, the day I visited, technicians were busy mounting display cases in the area. I got the sense that upon completion, the room would look cluttered. Except for one long display case in the middle of the room, other smaller ones are mounted in front of the panel, interfering with Afrikaans and isiXhosa text from being read properly. I also thought that a person in a wheel chair might not be able to move around the exhibitions and display cases. In one corner is a display case with a diorama of a miniature harbour on loan to the Hout Bay museum from the Iziko Museum. In the corner, underneath the panel on “The Forts” is an old canon. As one exit into the first room, a large photograph of a fisherman holding a lobster in his hands greets one. To the left, a huge display case is mounted to the

wall. Old photographs of the forest, fishing, and shipwrecks are used as background pictures. Inside the display case are various objects from the museum's collection. Through the preservation and display of these objects, a story is conveyed of European performances in the production of historical narratives in Hout Bay.

In conceptualizing this chapter, I argue that the complete overhaul of the museum was largely developed on the same set of rules and methodologies which seeks certainty. This in my view, resulted in the new exhibition once again being an add-on to European narratives of settlement, progress and modernity, omitting the voices and stories of others who were either indigenous to the area or who also later settled in the area. Although the exhibition appears to show the Khoi in a different setting, it sets in place a certainty which relied very heavily on past representations of Hout Bay as a place of European settlement. Therefore the Khoi remain framed through an archaeological lens. Similarly, "coloureds" and "Africans" in the Hangberg and Imizamo Yethu exhibition seem to be added onto what appears to have remained a European narrative. Their stories of dispossession, the impact of apartheid legislation on their livelihoods, and the current challenges they are faced with have been omitted. The only avenue for openness and uncertainty remains in the panels on *Hangberg* and the *Peace Accord*. These panels create platforms for dialogues and critical thinking, thus challenging the certainty of the Hout Bay Museum. However this was clearly a direction the museum was not willing to take.

Conclusion

The 27th of April 1994 was a significant day in the history of South Africa. After decades of resistance to apartheid and oppression, it ushered in a new era of change. In South Africa's first democratic elections, the day marked the end of statutory apartheid, as Nelson Mandela was elected as President of South Africa. In the words of Jacob Zuma, in addressing the National Heritage Council Civil Society Conference in 2005, a "new society and nation was born, and out of the divisions of apartheid, we had to build a nation with a common vision, mission, and a heritage that was, although diverse, rich and representative of the greater South African society".²³⁶ In addition, Zuma called on the heritage sector to start including the histories and experience of previously excluded people into the archives and heritage architecture of the country. He stressed, "We had to reverse the legacy of apartheid which had rendered black people almost non-existent in the cultural institutions and symbols of our country. Where they were included, it was usually in negative terms, or they were presented through the eyes of others".²³⁷ So how exactly were notions of a newness and difference represented in the South African museum world after 1994?

Along with the national discourse, the call was for museums to become sites of transformation. Prior to 1994 museums, as I have argued in my introduction, largely perpetuated a history based on the achievements and progresses of one section of people. Cultural history museums in particular, were established to mirror such notions of history. Black people were mainly "located outside of history"²³⁸ and if they were included, they were largely depicted as backward or 'traditional' and frozen in time. In a speech made on

²³⁶Jacob Zuma, "Address by Jacob Zuma at the National Heritage Council Civil Society Conference", Ubuntu Kraal, Soweto, (12 March 2005), <http://www.polity.org.za/print-version/zuma-civil-society-conference-12032005-2005-03-12>, accessed on 7/05/2014, 1.

²³⁷Zuma, "Address by Jacob Zuma", 1.

²³⁸Witz, "Making museums", 20.

Heritage Day in 1997 at Robben Island Museum, Nelson Mandela analyzed such views held by museums, saying, “Museums and monuments reflected the experiences and political ideals of a minority to the exclusion of other”.²³⁹ Collections of objects reflected the progresses made, but also asserted notions of settler colonialism, which was sometimes at odd with ideas of British imperial visions. According to J.M. Gore, museums therefore became public institutions that constructed a national identity and perpetuated narrow images of the nation as white.²⁴⁰ This created a certainty from which museums operated until 1994. So post 1994 policy formulation demanded of museums to change their narrow perceptions of history and become more inclusive in the production knowledge, collections, staffing and education programmes.

Initially museums and the Hout Bay Museum in particular, were determined to produce a new set of certainties. They opted for adding people previously excluded from museums into the management team of the museum. This was followed by adding temporarily exhibitions to the permanent displays of the museum. Labels were changed and translated into the three official languages of the Western Cape. However, the museum, thinking they were on the right path of transforming their institutions, failed to attract new audiences. This caused much uncertainty for the museum, which was continuously setting out to transform. Amidst many debates around reconceptualising of museums and museum practices, the conventional ways of the museum practices and processes remained unchanged. What several members of the community wanted was more than just being add-ons to the existing exhibitions.

According to Dicki Meter, former Mayor, and Ward Councillor, they wanted the museum to start afresh and produce narratives that were inclusive of the histories of the people.²⁴¹ In

²³⁹Nelson Mandela, Address by President Nelson Mandela on Heritage Day, Robben Island, September 24 1997, <http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/1997/1010PRES397.htm> accessed 23 November 2012 under speeches and statements.

²⁴⁰Gore, “A Lack of Nation?”, 36.

²⁴¹Interview with Dicki Meter, 11 April 2014.

Meter's view, what the community wanted was "histories of the oppressed people in the community, how the community developed, its origins, culture, and interactions with other people, rather than being added on to the white history".²⁴² Timothy Jacobs echoed this sentiment. He argued that the Board during, his term of office, wanted to establish a museum that would have been inclusive and that would have produced displays and exhibitions that were representative in a process of shared engagement.²⁴³ In conceptualizing these views, I argue that those who claimed to represent the previously excluded community wanted a museum that would allow for multiple voices and interpretations in addition to identifying and filling the gaps. All of this created new challenges to the museum, who thought that they were in the process of transformation.

What the museum in the 2011/2012 financial year opted for was a complete overhaul. This process saw the museum being closed and a complete renovation being undertaken. During this stage, human remains were discovered in the museum and produced uncertainty. Immediately a discourse on "discovery and narration of truth"²⁴⁴ emerged as questions on identity and how the remains entered the museum without documentation were raised. The museum responded with a request to the police for a forensic investigation to determine the identity of the remains. At the time of concluding this thesis, no further information was available about the identity of the remains, but in a discussion with Dreyer, it emerged that he is determined to ensure that the museum opts for reburial should the remains be identified as that of a Khoi person. This, as I argue in chapter 3 of this thesis, will not only place the museum in a transformative discourse, but would also allow them to interrogate their collection policies and practices. A new exhibition was added to a newly renovated museum, which I have written about in chapter three of this work. However, this exhibition was

²⁴²Interview with Dicki Meter, 11 April 2014.

²⁴³Interview with Timothy Jacobs, 8 April 2014.

²⁴⁴Cohen, "The Uncertainty of Africa", 20.

criticised by Dicki Meter, Kenny Tokwe and Timothy Jacobs who claimed to speak on behalf of the community, as being just another add-on. Dicki Meter expressed the opinion that he did not believe in add-ons. He argued that the museum should start afresh again because they face the danger of continuously becoming add-ons. Meter critiqued add-ons by arguing that it left out important information and that in many instances the real stories of people are quoted out of context, like the exhibition on the economy of Hout Bay.²⁴⁵ He argues that that exhibition portrays a settler role of progress. The contribution of people like tailors, shoemakers, fruit sellers is not mentioned. He continued critiquing the exhibition by stating that it portrayed an image of the arrival of settlers being synonymous to the economic developments of Hout Bay. This he says, is “imposing a western economy in an African community”.²⁴⁶ Tokwe expresses this view also in his argument that the people of Imizamo Yethu were part of producing history and they want to be part of the performance of history in the museum and not just feed the “graveyard”.²⁴⁷ Similarly, to Meter, he argues that through add-ons a great deal of information is lost. Johan October, who claims to be a local Khoi leader, says that he had mixed feeling about the exhibition. He is of the opinion that, although the exhibition on the economy of Hout Bay focused on people who had come to settle in Hout Bay, like the Trautmanns and the Douwmans, it is better than the previous exhibitions. However, he argues that more in-depth information is required in the representation of the Khoi, and by so doing the museum can afford people the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the Khoi.²⁴⁸ He commented on the exhibition on the Khoi by pointing out that the name of Jan van Riebeeck is mentioned, but not that of Khoi leaders like “Harry die strandloper”. This, he says, is once again a distortion of history.

²⁴⁵Interview with Dicki Meter, 11 April 2014.

²⁴⁶Interview with Dicky Meter, 11 April 2014.

²⁴⁷Interview with Kenny Tokwe, 9 April 2014.

²⁴⁸Interview with Johan October, 8 April 2014.

So what exactly do these critiques of the new exhibition mean for a museum that was certain that what they had produced was indeed a reflection of what transformation required.

I argue that although the new exhibition included the stories of previously disadvantaged people it was still set up against a backdrop of white progress, advancement and modernity. Thus, it added previously excluded people into dominant white histories. I draw this argument from conceptualizing the previous permanent exhibition and being personally involved with the new transformative exhibition. In such analysis, I came to the conclusion that the previous theme of the museum, with all its exhibition narratives almost remained the same, except this time, “coloured” and “African” people were added to the dominant narratives. This was far from Timothy Jacobs’s vision of including narratives that would depict the “origins, culture and interactions” “coloured” and “African” people had with other people. I therefore argue that because the same methodologies and classifications were used to produce the transformative exhibition, the museum remained stuck in the old ways of producing narratives and, in filling the gaps, they added other histories to the dominant narratives in place. My view was also supported by Meter in his argument that the museum could not be transformed on the basis of the same rules that of the old museum. He says that the rules of museums should be re-written and, instead of focusing on objects, the stories of people should be collected and if available, objects should be added to such oral accounts.

To conclude, I draw on the argument presented by Leslie Witz, that the museum, instead of interrogating its classificatory formations, tried to become inclusive by simply adding more “voices, objects and explanations” to provide them with a new certainty.²⁴⁹ The former, Witz argues, “would have allowed for an examination of how localities and temporalities are made and re-made, and the existing frameworks and assumptions about representation, production

²⁴⁹Witz, “Making museums”, 13.

and circulation of knowledge”²⁵⁰ made open and subjected to critique. This would allow for critical engagement and opened up the museum as a space of dialogue and contestation. The Hout Bay Museum, in adopting an add-on approach to history, failed to address their “modes and histories of collecting and classifications”, and instead were left with what Irit Rogoff has posed as a “possibility of change without loss, without alteration, without remapping the navigational principles” which would allow historians to make “judgments about quality, appropriateness, inclusion, and revision”.²⁵¹ In my opinion, the museum, through its add-on approach, remained one which glorified the progress and advancement of people who have settled in Hout Bay. The museum therefore remained a “chameleon”, which is in “colour harmony”²⁵² with the new hegemonic view of transformation and therefore remained trapped in “presenting a dated orthodoxy, canonising the outcomes of past struggles over the interpretation of the past”.²⁵³ Because of this failure to bring about real transformation, Meter argues that perhaps the museum should not be transformed but rather be restored by inserting the rightful histories of people in the museum and adding others onto the narrative. In my understanding of Meter’s argument, I assume that he is asking for a certain museum with a dominant African narrative and with European histories added to this narrative. This in itself is a contradiction of Meter’s previous argument where he stated that he did not believe in add-ons. However, he continues to argue that if museums do not become inclusive, the museum should be “frozen” allowing it to become a site of dialogue and contestation.²⁵⁴ I therefore conclude that the museum in its transformative state, though an add-on, is rendered uncertain because of the contestation and critique it evoked from community representatives, who seem to seek a new certainty. However, the question remains that of how the museum will respond to this uncertainty. Will the Board of Trustees allow the museum to emerge

²⁵⁰Witz, “Making Museums”, 22.

²⁵¹Rogoff, “Hit and Run”, 66.

²⁵²Hamilton, “Against the Museums as Chameleon”, 189.

²⁵³Hamilton, “Against the Museums as Chameleons”, 189.

²⁵⁴Interview with Dicki Meter, 11 April 2014.

within the new form of transformation that calls on notions of dialogue, debates and critical thinking or will it again respond by adding more voices and stories to make it inclusive?



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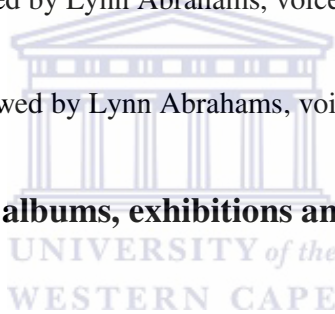
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