

**Teaching Humanity:
Placing the Cape Town Holocaust Centre
in a Post-apartheid State**



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DECLARATION

I, Tracey Petersen, declare that **'Teaching humanity: placing the Cape Town Holocaust Centre in post-apartheid South Africa'** is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.



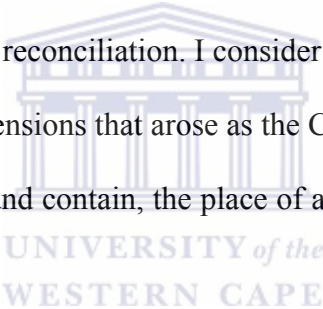
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the development of Holocaust education in South Africa, specifically in the period of political transition to democracy and the two decades after apartheid. The history of placing the Holocaust in post-apartheid South Africa shows the dynamics and tensions of identity construction by the state, communities and individuals as the country emerged from a history of violent conflict. Holocaust education was claimed by the newly democratic state as a vehicle of reconciliation. Using archival material, interviews and secondary sources, I examine how a minority community's project of building a permanent Holocaust centre, came to be considered as part of a national project of reconciliation. I consider the impact of this framing of Holocaust education and the tensions that arose as the Cape Town Holocaust Centre's founders attempted to define and contain, the place of apartheid in Holocaust memory.



Holocaust education shaped the development of post-apartheid identities. It contributed to a collective memory of apartheid by suggesting a particular collective memory of the Holocaust. The Cape Town Holocaust Centre provided the South African Jewish community with a legitimate identity in post-apartheid South Africa and a way to bypass an examination of the implications of having benefited from apartheid. I examine the tensions and contradictions within this construction of the collective memory of the Holocaust and apartheid, and consider the implications for the process of justice, memory and history in South Africa as it emerged from apartheid.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AF House	Ann Frank House
AFITW	Ann Frank in the World Exhibition
BJPA	Berman Jewish Policy Archive
CCR	Centre for Conflict Resolution
CTHC	Cape Town Holocaust Centre
CTMC	Cape Town Memorial Council
DHC	Durban Holocaust Centre
EAC	Education Advisory Committee
HERP	Holocaust Education Resource Project
HMC	Holocaust Memorial Council
IJR	Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
JHGC	Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre
NEC	National Exhibition Committee
NEdC	National Education Committee
SAHF	South African Holocaust Foundation
SAHGF	South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation
SAJBD	South African Jewish Board of Deputies
SAJM	South African Jewish Museum
SANG	South African National Gallery
SAPA	South African Press Association
SD	Stockholm Declaration on Holocaust Education, Remembrance & Research
SH	She'erith Hapletah (Holocaust survivors' Association)
WPZC	Western Province Zionist Council
WPZF	Western Province Zionist Foundation
UCT	University of Cape Town
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

INTRODUCTION

History is like a nightmare we wake up from after a struggle and blink in stupefaction at the strangeness of daylight. With awakening a great energy is freed; a new question is posed: the nightmare is over but what do we do with the day? We do not have enough psychologists of history. Everyone seems to treat history as if our reaction to it should be logical. The people have emerged from a mutual nightmare, what should they do upon awakening? What should anyone do after a long trauma? What can anyone do?¹

These questions posed by Ben Okri go to the heart of the concerns I seek to address in this dissertation. How have South Africans commemorated the “nightmare” that was the Holocaust?² What impact did the “other nightmare” of segregation and then apartheid, have on the shape Holocaust commemoration took in South Africa? Did the way people commemorated or remembered the Holocaust, affect the way they remembered their apartheid past? Why, when South Africans had “woken up” after the nightmare of apartheid, did Holocaust education come to occupy so much space in the national history curriculum? When and why did a minority community concern become part of the national nation-building project?

My interest in investigating these questions is both personal and academic. The experience of being the granddaughter of grandparents classified as “coloured” by the apartheid regime, and the daughter of their son who was classified “white”, has

¹ Ben Okri, extract from the 13th Steve Biko Memorial Lecture entitled *The Alchemy of Africa* on 13 September 2012 at the University of Cape Town, 4.

² Certain historians and institutions have chosen to use the term “Shoah” to refer to the Nazi genocide of European Jewry. Others elsewhere, including in South Africa, have chosen to use the term “Holocaust”. For the purposes of this dissertation, I will use the term “Holocaust”. See Naomi Mandel, “Rethinking ‘After Auschwitz’: Against a Rhetoric of the Unspeakable in Holocaust Writing”, *boundary 2* 28, no. 2 (2001): 203-228.

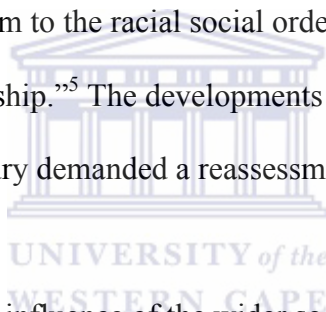
shaped my interest in the process and dynamics of individual and community identity formation during and after the construction of racial states. A further reason for my interest in exploring these questions was related to my professional life. I held senior positions within the education team of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre (CTHC) and the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation (SAHGF) from 2005 until 2014. I was an active participant in the shaping and development of the Centre and Holocaust Foundation.

However, not being Jewish meant that I remained to a certain extent, an “outsider with insider knowledge” of at least one site of construction of the South African Jewish community’s collective identity in the post-apartheid era. Throughout my research and writing of this dissertation, I remained alert to the possibility that some of my conclusions might be influenced by my position as active participant, my close relationships with key role players in the CTHC and the SAHGF and with members of the Jewish community. On the other hand, my not having grown up in the Jewish community allowed me a perspective that an “insider” to the Jewish community may have found difficult to have. I followed the guidelines for ethical active research so that my privileged position was beneficial to the research process and not exploitative.

The aim

I set out to examine how Holocaust memorialisation, commemoration and education developed in South Africa, specifically in the context of the post-1990 period and the creation of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre (CTHC). I scrutinise the processes involved, and strategies employed, in gaining wider legitimacy for the construction of a memorial space to victims of the Holocaust in post-apartheid South Africa.

I argue that the formation of the CTHC was motivated by the desire to re-narrate and re-make Jewishness as not predicated on apartheid's label of "whiteness" to which Jews had been allocated eventually after a period of ambiguity.³ The response of the Jewish community to its classification as "white" and the system of apartheid reflected the spectrum of responses from the broader "white" community, spanning Jewish anti-apartheid activists on the left who came to hold senior positions in the African National Congress, through those who accepted without dissent the privileges "whiteness" brought them, to Percy Yutar on the right.⁴ The South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) adopted a conservative position, evidenced through their public lack of support of Jewish anti-apartheid activists and, at least until 1985, their encouragement of "conformism to the racial social order, political quietism and a narrow focus on entrepreneurship."⁵ The developments in the political landscape in the latter part of the 20th century demanded a reassessment of these positions.



The dissertation considers the influence of the wider socio-political landscape on the institutional identity of the CTHC. The CTHC was originally conceived of as a permanent home for the Holocaust education outreach programme of the SAJBD and the Western Province Zionist Council (WPZC). The CTHC's founding committee adjusted the rationale for the CTHC to incorporate the "reconciliation" narrative

³ See Milton Shain's *Roots of Antisemitism* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994); *A Perfect Storm* (Johannesburg and Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2016), and Sally Peberdy's *Selecting Immigrants: National Identity and South Africa's Immigration Policy 1910-2008* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2009) for a discussion of the ways in which Jews were perceived by governments in South Africa before 1948 as an "additional racial problem" (Shain, *A Perfect Storm*, 137) and not "white like us" (Peberdy, *Selecting Immigrants*, 82).

⁴ Percy Yutar was the State Prosecutor at the Rivonia Trial, described by Minister of Justice, Jimmy Kruger as the "official with the highest sense of loyalty he had ever found in a public servant". (quoted in "Yutar and 'holy disbelief'" by Claudia Braude, *Mail and Guardian*, 27 March 1997).

⁵ Richard Mendelsohn and Milton Shain, *The Jews of South Africa: An Illustrated History* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2009) 198. See also Gideon Shimoni, *Community And Conscience: The Jews in Apartheid South Africa* (Lebanon N. H: UPNE and Brandeis University Press and Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 2003) and Shirli Gilbert, "Jews and the Racial State: Legacies of the Holocaust in Apartheid South Africa, 1945-60," *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society* n.s.16, no.3, (Spring/Summer 2010): 32-64.

dominant at the time of South Africa's political transition and after the first democratic elections. This adjustment was in response to the feedback from senior personnel from the Western Cape Education Department who had indicated that the history of the Holocaust and a permanent centre would be considered legitimate or "relevant" if linked to reconciliation.

The work of CTHC as a facilitator of reconciliation using Holocaust history as its vehicle was embraced widely across the political and social spectrum. I consider the implications of this institutional "reconciliator" identity for the staff and volunteers of the CTHC and the CTHC's approach to the teaching of Holocaust history. The CTHC expressed its founders' collective memory of the Holocaust and apartheid, and built and reinforced a new, national collective memory. This dissertation considers the CTHC as a site of "multidirectional memory" and examines the implications of this in the light of the theories of cross-or inter-generational transmission of trauma.⁶

I assess the effect the CTHC appeared to have in the process of identity construction after apartheid. The responses of visitors, volunteers and staff of the CTHC suggested that the CTHC's representation of the Holocaust and apartheid engendered a "connection-making" between the two events, but did not encourage an interrogation of the construction of identity in post-apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, the CTHC's exhibition and methodology undermined the CTHC's attempts to "un-Other" the "Jew." Instead, it reinforced the "uniqueness" of the Holocaust and the Jewish victims and survivors of that genocide, and by extension, South African Jewry. In this

⁶ See Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2009).

way, the CTHC continued in the construction of a communal identity encouraged by the communal Holocaust commemoration ceremonies begun during World War II.

Finally, I consider the way in which the construction of the world's newest Holocaust Centre in Johannesburg might contribute to or challenge the narratives established by the its creation that have kept it from moving beyond a community outreach programme. I argue that the CTHC's founding was bound within and committed to the general work of Jewish community organisations. The community provided security and a significant support base to the CTHC. The CTHC had been constructed on the roof of the communal building, atop the library and kosher restaurant within the "Jewish Campus," next to the Synagogue and opposite the South African Jewish Museum, across the road from the offices of communal Jewish organisations. This physical location illustrated in concrete terms the relationship of the CTHC to the community.⁷ It was precisely this enmeshing that served to limit the CTHC's access to a wider, secular, non-Jewish base and inhibit its non-racial work and the narratives that could be generated. The contradictions of teaching Holocaust education in South Africa with its histories of race, racism and beneficiaries, and the attempts of the CTHC to be both a Jewish community-based and post-community entity proved too great a tension.

This dissertation draws on a rich source of literature from the inter-related fields of memorial studies, Holocaust memorialisation and memory studies. It considers research that examines the commemorative actions taken by societies in transition, in particular those emerging from recent conflict, and the ways in which identities have

⁷ See Oren Baruch Stier's article, "South Africa's Jewish Complex," *Jewish Social Studies*, New Series 10, no. 3 (Spring-Summer, 2004): 123-142 in which he considers the way in which the complex of buildings in which the CTHC is located, constitutes a "performative expression of contemporary Jewish identity and self-expression" (123).

been negotiated in this process. In order to place the developments of the CTHC's education programmes within a theoretical framework, I also consider the developments within Holocaust historiography, Holocaust education and human rights education.

Ringelblum's legacy

In the heart of the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II, a remarkable history project was conducted. Led by Emanuel Ringelblum, cultural leaders, scholars, writers, teachers and community workers collected and recorded life in the ghetto. They stored their work in metal boxes and milk cans and buried them in the hope that upon liberation they would be found. Two of the three milk cans were unearthed after the war. One milk can is at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, the other is on loan from them at the United State Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington DC. The Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw has also loaned one of the 10 metal boxes to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.⁸ The story of the Ringelblum Onyeg Shabes Archive is a poignant articulation of Maurice Halbwachs' and Aby Warburg's construction of the concept of collective memory, Jan Assmann's concept of cultural memory, and James E. Young's term, collected memory.⁹ The story of the display of the archive illustrates the argument that Holocaust memory had become global.¹⁰ The containers of the archives, themselves became part of a larger global Holocaust archive with their dispersal to the US and Israel.

⁸ The Ringelblum archive was not the only attempt by victims to document what was happening to them. See for example, Andrea Löw, "Documenting as a "Passion and Obsession": Photographs from the Lodz (Litzmannstadt) Ghetto," *Central European History* 48 (2015): 387–404.

⁹ See Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed., trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); For a discussion of Aby Warburg's ideas of memory, see Alon Confino, "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method," *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 5. (Dec. 1997): 1386-1403; Jan Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," trans. John Czaplicka, *New German Critique* (1995): 125-133; James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), xi.

¹⁰ See Amos Goldberg, *Marking Evil: Holocaust Memory in a Global Age* (New York and Oxford: Berghan Books, 2015).

Pioneers in the field of memory studies, Halbwachs, Warburg and Pierre Nora argued that collective memory was not inherited but socially constructed.¹¹ Assmann considered the impact on memory of institutions of culture, such as monuments, cities, landscapes, texts, rituals.¹² Writing in 1997, Alon Confino described collective memory as a “shared identity” that “steers emotions and motivates people to act,” and is thus a “socio-cultural mode of action.”¹³ Amos Goldberg, in 2015, described the conventional understanding of the term, “collective memory,” as a “common identity formed through imagined common past that shapes their present and facilitates a horizon of an imagined hope for the future.”¹⁴

Craps and Rothberg examine the role of the development of “mass cultural technology” in the “dissemination of memory” and in making it possible for more people “to take on memories of events not ‘their own,’ to which they have no familial, ethnic, or national tie.”¹⁵ These developments, they argue, have moved the discussion of global memory to the fore of scholarship on memory, and beyond the idea of “collective memory production ... being contained within social, regional and temporal frames.”¹⁶

¹¹ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*; Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History”; Pierre Nora, ed. *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, vol. 1, *Conflicts and Divisions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); See also Michael Rothberg, “Introduction: Between Memory and Memory: From Lieux de Mémoire to Noeuds de Mémoire,” *Yale French Studies* no. 118/119, (2010): 3-12; Jay Winter, review of *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past* ed. Pierre Nora, vol. 1, *Conflicts and Divisions, H-France*, (October 1997), accessed 5 September 2012, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41337077> .

¹² Assmann, “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity,” 125-133.

¹³ Confino, “Collective Memory and Cultural History,” 1390.

¹⁴ Goldberg, *Marking Evil*, 5.

¹⁵ Stef Craps and Michael Rothberg, “Introduction: Transcultural Negotiations of Holocaust Memory,” *Criticism* 53, no. 4, Article 1 (2011): 517.

¹⁶ Debarati Sanyal, *Memory and Complicity: Migrations of Holocaust Remembrance* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015) 4.

The globalisation of Holocaust memory

The vast field of literature related to the Holocaust suggests that the impetus behind Ringelblum's archive, to provide evidence so that the people murdered would not be forgotten, remains potent in the twenty-first century.¹⁷ Scholars argue that the Holocaust has moved beyond the academy and a single discipline, and has become a "transnational symbol,"¹⁸ a "foundational past" that is a "measure of things human."¹⁹ Confino sees as a positive consequence of the globalisation of the Holocaust, and the passage of time, that new ways of "historically imagining" the Holocaust will emerge.²⁰

Levy and Sznajder posit that the Holocaust has become a "a cosmopolitanised memory – one that does not replace national memories but exists at their horizons." The Holocaust, Levy and Sznajder argue, has come to serve as a "moral touchstone" and the basis for an emergent universal human-rights regime.²¹

However, not all theorists share Levy and Sznajder's optimistic interpretation.

One group of scholars critical of Levy and Sznajder, argue that the globalisation of Holocaust memory is a political strategy, "a construct essential to the strengthening of the ... weak all-European identity."²² The research suggests that despite moments of dissent, Holocaust education as

¹⁷ Ringelblum wrote in 1944, "If none of us survives, at least let that remain." Quoted by Samuel D. Kassow in *Who Will Write Our History? Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oyneg Shabes Archive* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007) 2.

¹⁸ Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, trans. Assenka Oksiloff, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 195. See also Jeffrey C. Alexander, "On the Social Construction of Moral Universals: The 'Holocaust' from War Crime to Trauma Drama," in *Remembering the Holocaust: A Debate*, by Jeffrey C. Alexander et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3–102.

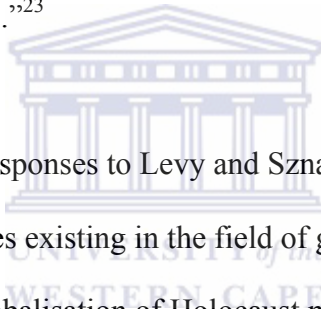
¹⁹ Alon Confino, *Foundational Pasts: The Holocaust as Historical Understanding* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 6.

²⁰ Confino, *Foundational Pasts*, 10.

²¹ Levy and Sznajder, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, 13; 6.

²² Goldberg, *Marking Evil*, 7.

organised by the CTHC remains located within an identity as a Community Outreach organisation. This has limited its ability to develop a presentation of the complexity of the Holocaust and those caught up in it. It has also limited the CTHC's potential of challenging assumptions and stereotyping shaped by the apartheid past. By not integrating its activities with the Yom Hashoah ceremony, for example, the CTHC continues the tradition established in the 1950s, of the commemoration of the Holocaust finally being a community concern. The 27th January is the day of shared recollection with the "outside", but the real place of mourning remains the cemetery, where the Holocaust becomes the "connective" memory, "stabilizing a common identity and a point of view that spans generations."²³



Amos Goldberg argues that responses to Levy and Sznajder's interpretation articulate the two discourses he perceives existing in the field of global Holocaust memory. The first discourse presents the globalisation of Holocaust memory as a "political project," a development from an "acknowledgement of the faults of European history and politics." The second discourse describes global Holocaust memory as a "global mirror," providing assurances to some that they "belong" and in so doing, defining and excluding the "other."²⁴

Goldberg considers why it would appear that Holocaust memory has indeed become globalised. He describes the institutions that have become "global shrines of memory" of the Holocaust, to which "pilgrims from anywhere" pay their respects. These "shrines" not only generate knowledge about the Holocaust, serve as "centres of

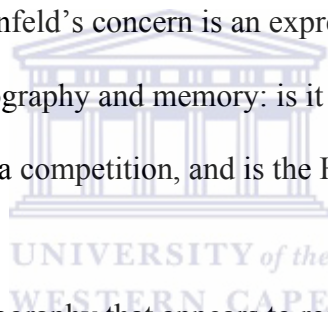
²³ See Jan Assmann and Rodney Livingstone, *Religion and Cultural Memory* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006), 11.

²⁴ Goldberg, *Marking Evil*, 9.

testimony” and “role models for other centres”, but also “dictate new ethics.”

However, Goldberg points out that the “generation of knowledge” is not globally located, and the distribution of the academics generating this knowledge “delineates the current boundaries of the area of intensive presence of Holocaust memory” namely, Israel, North America, Western and Eastern Europe.”²⁵

Another group of scholars see the process of globalisation leading to the history of the Holocaust being “trivialised and vulgarized.”²⁶ Alvin Rosenfeld argues that “the very success of the Holocaust’s wide dissemination in the public sphere can work to undermine its gravity. ... [I]ncreasingly familiar through repetition, it [the history] becomes normalised.”²⁷ Rosenfeld’s concern is an expression of two tensions within the field of Holocaust historiography and memory: is it possible to consider two histories without engaging in a competition, and is the Holocaust unique?



A debate in Holocaust historiography that appears to resist resolution centres on the question of the uniqueness of the Holocaust. Allied to the claim of uniqueness, is the argument that the Holocaust defies representation in any form or historical analysis. Those arguing that the Holocaust is exceptional include historians such as Lucy Davidowicz, Deborah Lipstadt, Yehuda Bauer, and public personalities such as Elie Wiesel.²⁸ Wiesel voices the extreme end of the continuum of opinion when he says that, “the Holocaust transcends history ... the Holocaust [is] the ultimate event, the

²⁵ Goldberg, *Marking Evil*, 5. Avishai Margalit flagged the “danger of biased salience” in “constructing a shared moral memory for mankind.” Margalit explains that “because they are likely to be better remembered, the atrocities of Europe will come to be perceived as morally more significant than atrocities elsewhere.” *The Ethics of Memory*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 80.

²⁶ Alvin Rosenfeld, *The End of the Holocaust* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011), 11.

²⁷ Rosenfeld, *The End of the Holocaust*, 11.

²⁸ Lucy Davidowicz, *What is the Use of Jewish History?* (New York: Schocken, 1994); Deborah Lipstadt, “Not Facing History,” *New Republic*, 6 no.29 (March 1995): 26-27; Yehuda Bauer, “Whose Holocaust?” *Midstream* 26 (November 1980): 45; Elie Wiesel, “Trivializing the Holocaust: Semi-fact and Semi-fiction,” *New York Times*, 16 April 1978.

ultimate mystery, never to be comprehended or transmitted. Only those who were there know what it was; the others will never know.”²⁹

Historians such as Novick, LaCapra, Craps and Rothberg have challenged the claim for uniqueness.³⁰ For Novick, “to single out those aspects of the Holocaust that were distinctive and to ignore those aspects that it shares with other atrocities is intellectual sleight of hand ... [and] is deeply offensive.”³¹

Novick suggests that it is possibly the rhetorical power generated by claims that the Holocaust was exceptional or not that might explain the longevity of the debate.

Novick argues that whereas Germany’s insistence on uniqueness was a response to a perceived attempt to “evade confrontation with a painful national past,” the United States’s insistence served “to promote an evasion of moral and historical responsibility.”³² Andreas Huyssen warns of the possibility of a study of the Holocaust becoming a “screen memory” insofar as it serves to “block insight into specific local histories.”³³ This dissertation considers the implications of the “uniqueness” debate, for the representation of the Holocaust in post-apartheid South Africa.

²⁹ Wiesel, “Trivializing the Holocaust.”

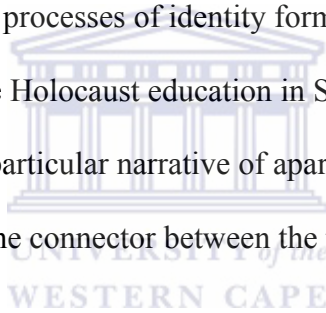
³⁰ Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999); Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2001); Craps and Rothberg, “Introduction: Transcultural Negotiations of Holocaust Memory,” 517-521. See also Dan Stone, “The Historiography of Genocide: Beyond ‘Uniqueness’ and Ethnic Competition,” *Rethinking History* 8, no. 1 (2004): 127-42; A. Dirk Moses, “Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the ‘Racial Century’: Genocides of Indigenous Peoples and the Holocaust,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 36, no. 4 (2002): 7-36; Daniel Blatman, “Holocaust Scholarship: Towards a Post-uniqueness Era,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 17, no. 1 (2015): 21-43.

³¹ Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, 9.

³² Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*, 14-15. Novick’s concern about the appropriation of the Holocaust as unique and ‘worse than...’ by individuals or states removed from the site of the Holocaust in order to deflect responsibility for their own culpability in an unjust system, is voiced by others. See for example, see Robert Meister, *After Evil – a Politics of Human Rights* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), x.

³³ Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 14.

A major site of contestation in the development of the exhibition of the CTHC revolved around the question of the relationship between the history of the Holocaust and apartheid. A concern raised was that including references to apartheid in the exhibition would encourage a simplistic equation of the two histories. The dissertation tracks the development of a narrative in the exhibition and the education programmes of the relationship of the two histories from one that framed the Holocaust as “worse than” apartheid, to a narrative that framed the histories as both historically and geographically distinct events. Yet it also tracks how they were related insofar as they provided examples of the process of construction of “racial states”, the human rights abuses entailed in the construction and maintenance of the state, and the responses of individuals and institutions to processes of identity formation in these states. The dissertation examines how the Holocaust education in South Africa’s narrative of the Holocaust came to include a particular narrative of apartheid, and an overarching narrative of human rights as the connector between the two histories.



Rothberg and Silverman suggest an alternative conception of memory that evades the dead-end discourse of competitive suffering. Both Rothberg’s concept of “multidirectional memory” and Silverman’s “palimpsestic memory” provide a helpful way to consider what happened inside the CTHC where the visitors’ memories of apartheid and the Holocaust met the representation of both traumas.³⁴

Silverman uses the concept of memory as a palimpsest in his study of colonialism and Holocaust memory in France. Memory as a palimpsest, he argues, presents the “relationship between past and present as a superimposition and interaction ... a

³⁴ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*; Max Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory: The Holocaust and Colonialism in French and Francophone Fiction and Film* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013).

composite structure [where] one layer of traces can be seen through, and is transformed by, another.”³⁵

Rothberg’s concept of multidirectional memory shares aspects of Silverman’s palimpsest analogy. Rothberg describes multidirectional memory as memory that is able to “migrate across sites of trauma”³⁶ without “relativizing or negating historical specificity.”³⁷ He argues that multidirectional memory enables, for example, “dialogues between Holocaust memory and other histories of trauma.”³⁸

Unearthing the milk cans: knowing the Holocaust

In examining acts of memorialisation, scholars have interrogated the politics of display, considering the selection of objects to be displayed, who acted as gatekeepers, how the display signaled to the visitors “acceptable” responses, and how the engagement of the visitors affected the display. The literature reflects the contention that museums and memorials are not simply the holders of artefacts. Nor are artefacts simple conduits of the past. Both memorial and artefact represent some aspect of the past, but are not “the past.” Saul Friedlander voiced concern about the limits of representing the Holocaust.³⁹ The politics of display includes the power vested in curators to decide whether or not to make obvious to the visitor that the exhibition is a *representation* of the past and to show that history, like the memorial or exhibition, is a process of construction.⁴⁰ Scholars have examined how design

³⁵ Max Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory*, 3.

³⁶ Debarati Sanyal, *Memory and Complicity: Migrations of Holocaust Remembrance* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015), 6.

³⁷ Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 211.

³⁸ Sanyal, *Memory and Complicity*, 7.

³⁹ Saul Friedländer ed., *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the "Final Solution"* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1992).

⁴⁰ See Leslie Witz’s paper, “Museums, Histories and the Dilemmas of Change in Post-Apartheid South Africa” presented at University of Michigan Museum Studies Program’s “Issues in Museum Studies” lecture series, March 11, 2009, UM Working Papers in Museum Studies, Number 3 (2010): 1, accessed

choices made in memorials and museums, such as which photographs are chosen or discarded and how the space is used, inform or impede the conceptual understanding of the historical event being commemorated, and shape the manner in which the past is remembered.⁴¹ These representations can function to confirm, negate or question existing expressions of individual, communal, national, and global authority and identity.⁴²

There is a relatively small body of literature examining the history of the South African Jewish community.⁴³ The terrain is dominated by an examination of the construction of the collective identity. Within this frame, scholars consider the community's responses as a minority community to segregation and apartheid, how this was mediated by the community's relationship to Zionism, expressions of

5 February 2015, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/77459> . Witz discusses a number of strategies, some unintended by the museums, that have encouraged the visitors to consider the “politics of exhibiting”.

⁴¹ See for example, Brandon Hamber, “Conflict Museums, Nostalgia, and Dreaming of Never Again,” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 18, no. 3 (2012): 268-281; Jean March Dreyfus and Danial Langton eds., *Writing the Holocaust* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2011); Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: the Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); James E. Young, “Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin: The Uncanny Arts of Memorial Architecture”, *Jewish Social Studies* 6, no. 2 (2000): 1-23; James E. Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); Tim Cole, *Selling the Holocaust: From Auschwitz to Schindler: How History is Bought, Packaged, and Sold* (London: Routledge, 2000); Annie E. Coombes, *History after Apartheid* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2004); Goldberg, *Marking Evil*; Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*.

⁴² Patricia Davison's work examines the role state museums played in South Africa in supporting the construction of the state's racial categories of identity and a collective memory. Patricia Davison, “Museums and the Re-shaping of Memory,” in *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An Introductory Reader* ed. Gerard Corsane (London: Routledge, 2004) 202-214.

⁴³ Patrick Furlong, *Between Crown And Swastika: The Impact Of The Radical Right On The Afrikaner Nationalist Movement In The Fascist Era* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1997); Shimoni, *Community And Conscience*; Saul Dubow, *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 1995); Gilbert, “Jews and the Racial State”; Deborah Posel, “What's In A Name? Racial Categorisations Under Apartheid And Their Afterlife,” *Transformation* 47, (2001): 50-74; Milton Shain, review of *Community and Conscience: The Jews in Apartheid South Africa* by Gideon Shimoni, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 98, no.1 (Winter 2008): 147-150; Jocelyn Hellig, “South African Jews and Apartheid: Self-preservation at the Cost of Moral Righteousness”, review of *Community and Conscience: The Jews in Apartheid South Africa*, Gideon Shimoni, *H-SAfrica, H-Net Reviews*, (March, 2005), accessed 10 August 2012, <http://www.h-net.org/review/showrev.php?id=10367> ; Claudia Batsheba Braude, “Commissioning, Community and Conscience,” *Safundi* 10, no. 1 (2009): 77-90; Shula Marks, “Apartheid and the Jewish Question,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 30, no. 4, (Dec. 2004): 889-900; Adam D. Mendelsohn, “Two Far South: the Responses of South African and Southern Jews to Apartheid and Segregation in the 1950s and 1960s”(Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Cape Town, 2003).

antisemitism and Nazism within the country, and the relationship between the community, Israel and different South African governments. Shimoni and Mendelsohn's comparative analysis of the responses of South African Jewry and the Jewry of the American South underlie the role that "signaling whiteness" played in shaping the community's responses to a racist society.⁴⁴

Photographs, many of which are life-size, dominate the CTHC exhibition. The examinations by Patricia Hayes and Annie E. Coombes of the visual representation of the past and the relationship of this representation to the construction of identity and the maintenance of systems of oppression, exclusion and marginalisation, have relevance for the field of Holocaust memorialisation.⁴⁵ Like Barbie Zelizer, they explore not only the photograph as a visual "text," but also its provenance in understanding how the past it shows is being represented.⁴⁶ The ambiguous title of Marianne Hirsch's article, "Surviving images: Holocaust photographs and the work of postmemory" captures these concerns about the impact of photographs, in particular on the construction of meaning and memory.⁴⁷ For Hirsch, as for Zelizer and Susan Sontag, photographs have the potential of undermining the intellectual project of contributing to a knowledge of the Holocaust by either "transfixing" the viewer, inducing a paralysis, or encouraging a rejection or denial of the contents of the photograph and its implications.⁴⁸ The dissertation examines the criteria used for the

⁴⁴ Shimoni, *Community And Conscience*; Mendelsohn, "Two Far South".

⁴⁵ Wolfram Hartmann, Jeremy Silvester and Patricia Hayes, eds. *The Colonising Camera: Photographs in the Making of Namibian History* (Windhoek: UCT Press, 1998); Coombes, *History after Apartheid*.

⁴⁶ Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁴⁷ Marianne Hirsch, "Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 14, no.1, (2001): 5-37.

⁴⁸ Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Anchor Books, 1977); Inge Clendinnen, *Reading the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 7.

selection and display of the photographs in the exhibition and considers whether a pedagogical consideration shaped any of the decisions.⁴⁹

Ringleblum's Warsaw Ghetto archive contained evidence of the voices of the perpetrators and bystanders, the former audible in the constrictions and abuses it brought to bear on the ghetto inhabitants, the latter in the silence. However, the dominant voice in Ringelblum's archive is that of the victims. It is they who compiled and selected the contents of the milk cans. It is they who framed the voices of the perpetrators. The act of archiving was an act of great defiance, as much as it was of great hope.⁵⁰

The Holocaust history archive is immense and complex and contains texts of all types constructed by perpetrator, bystander and victim.⁵¹ From the 1960s onwards, in both the public realm and the academy, the "voice" of the victim arguably has come to be as loud, if not louder, than the "voice" of the perpetrator and bystander. Scholars have examined what this means for the history of the Holocaust and other histories of trauma? Are all victims equal? How are victims represented and which victims are represented by the memorial space? This dissertation examines whose "voice" was chosen for the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, and analyses whether and how, the memorial reflects a multiplicity of memory, or even, whether such a multiplicity exists.

⁴⁹ See Roger I. Simon, *A Pedagogy of Witnessing: Curatorial Practice and the Pursuit of Social Justice* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), accessed 31 October 2105, <https://muse.jhu.edu/books/9781438452715>

⁵⁰ See Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?* 2.

⁵¹ The use of these terms is a matter of expediency. The dissertation recognizes the shortcomings of using these terms insofar as the terms 'victim', 'bystander' and 'perpetrator' do not capture the complexity of human behaviour and the range of responses. The use of the terms is not meant to suggest individual identity that is fixed. The dissertation recognises that any one person can display any, and a range of behaviours.

Within the broader field of museum studies, there is a collection of scholarly work that examines relationships between community and museum.⁵² The Cape Town Holocaust Centre was embedded in the local Jewish community. The members of the organising committee, the senior staff and trustees were prominent figures from the community. Most of the staff and volunteers were Jewish and prominent in the community. Despite very little consultation with the community, the inclusion of community members as guides, the inclusion of artefacts donated by the community, and the prominence of the management committee in the Jewish community meant that the Jewish community perceived the Centre to be *their* space. Neither the design of the exhibition, nor the representation of the Holocaust challenged the narrative of the history with which the community would have been familiar.

Holocaust education

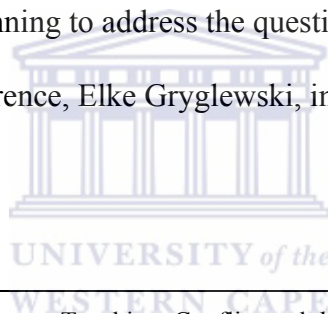
The field of literature examining Holocaust education is dominated by writing from the North about the North, nonetheless, many of the concerns would apply to Holocaust education in South Africa, despite the regional skew. Not surprisingly, a key issue for the literature covering Holocaust education is the question of methodology and best practice. What is revealed in this literature however, supports Bromley and Garnett Russell's contention that there is a lack of consensus as to what it is that Holocaust education is meant to be teaching. Closely related to this debate is the question of where to locate Holocaust education in the curriculum.⁵³ There is also

⁵² See for example, Ciraj Rassool, "Community Museums, Memory Politics, and Social Transformation in South Africa: Histories, Possibilities and Limits," in *Museum Frictions: Global Transformations/ Public Cultures* eds. Ivan Karp et al., (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 286-321; Elizabeth Crooke's chapter, "Museums and Community," in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon MacDonald (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 170-185.

⁵³ Patricia Bromley and Susan Garnett Russell, "The Holocaust As History And Human Rights: A Cross-National Analysis For Holocaust Education In Social Science Textbooks, 1970-2008," *Prospects* 40, no. 1 (2010): 153-173. See also, Henry Maitles, "'Why are we Learning This?': Does Studying the Holocaust Encourage Better Citizenship Values?" *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 3, no. 3 (Winter

a question of whether a separate methodology needs to be developed for teaching the Holocaust, or whether there are general matters that pertain to the teaching of any traumatic history.⁵⁴ Some scholars point to the dominance and shortcomings of what Andy Pearce refers to as a “lesson-centric” approach, where the Holocaust is the vehicle used to teach moral lessons.⁵⁵

Of particular use to this dissertation is the literature that examines education in societies recently emerging from conflict.⁵⁶ Since Holocaust education in South Africa is part of the high school history curriculum, I also considered scholarship that looks at the relationship between history teaching in societies with troubled pasts.⁵⁷ Some of the literature is beginning to address the question raised by Director of the House of the Wannsee Conference, Elke Gryglewski, in her article, “Teaching about



2008): 341-352; Alan McCully, "History Teaching, Conflict and the Legacy of the Past," *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* 7, no. 2 (2012): 145-159.

⁵⁴ See Bromley and Garnett Russell, "The Holocaust as History and Human Rights."

⁵⁵ Andy Pearce, "The Development of Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain, 1979–2001," *Holocaust Studies* 14, no. 2 (2008): 71-94; See also Annegret Ehmann, "Learning from History: Seminars on the Nazi Era and the Holocaust for Professionals," *Remembering for the Future the Holocaust in an Age of Genocide* 3 (2001): 606-616; Alice Pettigrew, "Limited Lessons from the Holocaust? Critically Considering the “anti-racist” and Citizenship Potential," *Teaching History*, 141 (2010): 51; Novick argues that the lessons of the Holocaust “seem to be not so much lessons drawn from the Holocaust as brought to it...reflect[ing] values and concerns that originated elsewhere but that seem to be confirmed by contemplating the Holocaust...” *The Holocaust in American Life*, 242.

⁵⁶ See for example, Roger I. Simon, Sharon Rosenberg and Claudia Eppert eds. *Between Hope and Despair* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000).

⁵⁷ See for example, Edna Shoham, Neomi Shiloah and Raya Kalisman, “Arab Teachers and Holocaust Education: Arab Teachers Study Holocaust Education in Israel,” *Teaching and Teacher Education* 19, no.6 (August 2003): 609–625; Marian Hodgkin, “Reconciliation in Rwanda: Education, History and the State,” *Journal of International Affairs* 60, no. 1 (2006): 199–211; Sarah Warshauer Freedman, Harvey M. Weinstein, Karen Murphy and Timothy Longman, “Teaching History after Identity-Based Conflicts: The Rwanda Experience,” *Comparative Education Review* 52, no. 4 (2008): 660-69; Harvey M Weinstein, Sarah Warshauer Freedman and Holly Hughson, “School Voices: Challenges Facing Education Systems after Identity-Based Conflicts,” *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice* 2, no. 1 (2007): 41–71; Wolfgang Hoepken, “War, Memory, and Education in a Fragmented Society: The Case of Yugoslavia,” *East European Politics and Societies* 13, no.1 (1999): 190–227; Elizabeth A. Cole, ed. *Teaching the Violent Past: History Education and Reconciliation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007); Elizabeth A. Cole and Judy Barsalou, “Unite or Divide? The Challenges of Teaching History in Societies Emerging from Violent Conflict,” United States Institute of Peace Special Report 163 (June 2006), accessed 18 April 2012, <http://www.usip.org/publications/unite-or-divide-challenges-teaching-history-societies-emerging-violent-conflict> .

the Holocaust in multicultural societies: appreciating the learner.”⁵⁸ Gryglewski asks whether the approach to teaching about the Holocaust for children whose family were directly affected by the Holocaust should differ from those children (and adults) who were removed from the theatre of war, and if so, in what way?

The CTHC framed Holocaust education as a gateway to learn lessons that would “help us become more human.”⁵⁹ It is not the only institution to do so.⁶⁰ This dissertation examines when the connection of Holocaust education to human rights education developed in South Africa. There is a small but growing body of literature that examines the relationship between Holocaust history and human rights education, and asks whether framing the Holocaust as a means to teach about human rights, or civic education, privileges or trivializes the history of the Holocaust.⁶¹

Holocaust trauma and the next generation

The question of how histories of conflict, violence and degradation are memorialized is interlinked with the question of *why* such a past would be memorialized, particularly if the country in which the memorialisation is to occur, has itself emerged

⁵⁸ Elke Gryglewski, “Teaching about the Holocaust in Multicultural Societies: Appreciating the Learner,” *Intercultural Education* 21: Supplement 1 (2010): 41-49.

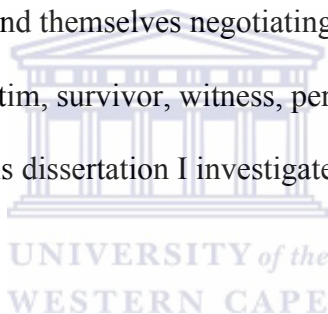
⁵⁹ Desmond M. Tutu, address for the Opening of the CTHC, (Cape Town: 1999). CTHC Collection.

⁶⁰ Organisations such as the Anne Frank House (Netherlands); Facing History and Ourselves (US) and their international arms; The Holocaust Education Trust (UK); the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF); and the Holocaust education programmes of UNESCO and the United Nations construct the function of Holocaust education in this way.

⁶¹ See for example, Yehuda Bauer, “Reflections about Text and Context,” paper presented at the *Seventh International Conference on Holocaust Education*, Yad Vashem, 2010; Falk Pingel, “The Holocaust in Textbooks: from a European to a Global Event,” in *Holocaust Education in a Global Context*, ed. Karel Fracapane and Matthias Hass (Paris: UNESCO, 2014), 77-87; Monique Eckmann, “Exploring the Relevance of Holocaust Education for Human Rights Education,” *Prospects* 40, no. 2 (2010): 7-16. In a development of the debate about what gets taught and how, Richard Boffey is critical of organisations such as the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (now known as the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) for having produced an “Anglo-American ‘Holocaust Education’ that “reduces National Socialist racial policy to its anti-Semitic dimensions”. See Richard Boffey, review of *Memorializing the Holocaust: Gender, Genocide and Collective Memory* by Janet Liebman Jacobs, H-Memory, H-Net Reviews, November 2011, accessed 9 May 2102, <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=34573> .

from conflict.⁶² This has led to an interesting and at times, contested, relationship between the fields of history and trauma studies.⁶³ This dissertation further draws on the work of Young, LaCapra, Coombes, Hirsch, Novick, amongst others, in considering these questions.⁶⁴

Hirsch, Landsberg, Feldman and Laub, contribute to the field of study that considers the impact of witnessing trauma, be it directly or through seeing or hearing or reading the experiences of those victimized.⁶⁵ This field of study is of particular relevance for the dissertation and to which the dissertation could contribute, as it examines the responses to the two histories of violence presented in the CTHC. CTHC staff, and visitors to the CTHC, likely find themselves negotiating the dual representations through multiple lenses of victim, survivor, witness, perpetrator, beneficiary gazed through simultaneously. In this dissertation I investigate these strategies of negotiation.



⁶² See for example, Annie E. Coombs, Lotte Hughs and Karega-Munene, *Managing Heritage, Making Peace: History, Identity and Memory in Contemporary Kenya* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014) and the review of their work by Marshall S. Clough in *African Studies Review* 58, no. 1 (April 2015): 251-252.

⁶³ One of the main critiques voiced was the emphasis placed on the individual, and not a consideration of the impact of institutionalized violence. See for example the response to Cathy Caruth's book, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996) by Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1998) and Saul Friedländer, "Trauma, Transference and 'Working Through' in Writing the History of the 'Shoah'," *History and Memory* 4 no.1 (Spring - Summer, 1992): 39-59.

⁶⁴ James E. Young, *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History* (New York: Jewish Museum with Prestel-Verlag, 1994); *At Memory's Edge; The Texture of Memory*; Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Theory, Trauma* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1994); *Writing History, Writing Trauma; History and Memory after Auschwitz*; Coombes, *History after Apartheid*; Hirsch, "Surviving images".

⁶⁵ Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory*, (Cambridge, MA: 1997); Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). Hirsch introduced the concept of "postmemory" to consider what effect the trauma experienced by Holocaust survivors might have on their children. Hirsch's concerns are reflected in a body of literature that examines the impact of trauma over time, and on memory. See for example the work of LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, Eva Hoffman, *After Such Knowledge: Memory, History and the Legacy of the Holocaust* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004); Helen Epstein, *Children of the Holocaust: Conversations with Sons and Daughters of Survivors* (New York: Putnam, 1979); Gabriele Schwab, *Haunting Legacies: Violent Histories and Transgenerational Trauma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Ernst van Alphen, "Second-Generation Testimony, Transmission of Trauma, and Postmemory," *Poetics Today* 27, no. 2 (Summer 2006): 474-488.

Research

As a senior member of the education team of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre (CTHC) and the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation (SAHGF) from 2005 to 2014, I was an active participant in the development of the education programmes and the institutional identities of the CTHC and SAHGF. This positioning afforded me access to a variety of sources and knowledge of the institutional culture not necessarily evident to other researchers. Throughout the research process, I remained alert to evidence of this privileged positioning as active participant influencing my interpretation and conclusions drawn, and attempted to address these by referring to archival and other sources.

During the course of my research I worked with a combination of primary archival material, secondary sources, first-person interviews, and drew on my experience of working at the CTHC as its senior education officer, and later Director of Education. While most of the material examined related to events and personalities from Cape Town, I also drew on work conducted further afield, in Johannesburg, Amsterdam, London, Salzburg and Jerusalem. These areas reflect the connections between the CTHC and other centres of Holocaust education. I consulted a combination of archival material housed in the Cape Town Holocaust Centre such as original proposals, minutes of meetings, press clippings, brochures. I also accessed archival material from the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the Jewish Studies Library at the University of Cape Town's Special Collections and Archives, and the Rochlin Archives in Johannesburg.⁶⁶ I conducted oral interviews with individuals involved in the development of Holocaust education and commemoration in South Africa and the

⁶⁶ The CTHC archive is unsorted.

development of the CTHC, as well as with teachers and students who had participated in the education programmes of the CTHC.

I made use of the written evaluation forms completed by teachers and students immediately after they participated in a programme. The possibility of teachers and students wishing to please the interviewer must be considered when drawing conclusions from the evaluations. One strategy to militate against this was to give students and teachers the choice to complete their forms anonymously. I conducted 25 focus group interviews, and developed and administered a survey to over 300 high school students who had visited the CTHC at least six months before the interviews. All ethical considerations were followed and students assured of their anonymity. I was also able to consider what I had found in the written and visual archive in relation to interviews with the writers, producers and consumers of the material stored in the archive. This combination enabled me to fill in gaps, and to contextualise lines of single type from the minutes of a meeting.

My years of working in the CTHC's education department allowed me access to the archives and to draw countless conversations with the corps of volunteers, members of the Jewish community and the Holocaust survivors who have assisted the CTHC's programmes. I am acutely aware of the privileged access I enjoyed. Being "in the heart" of the organisation I was studying meant that at times, I was engaged in "action research." Action research is the dream of many a teacher who wishes to consider their work within a theoretical framework. It is a dream rarely realised due to the pressures of teaching. However, I was able to see the working conditions of teachers who attended the CTHC teacher workshops, and in my decade working at the CTHC

gained great respect for the unflagging enthusiasm of some of the teachers despite the many obstacles to teaching they faced everyday.

Structure of the dissertation

Chapter One tracks the development of Holocaust memory in South Africa, and the moments of connection and disconnection between the memory of the Holocaust and apartheid. The chapter examines moments that illustrated the process of constructing a collective memory of the Holocaust in South Africa and how Jewish community organisations structured the process of remembering the trauma of the Holocaust.

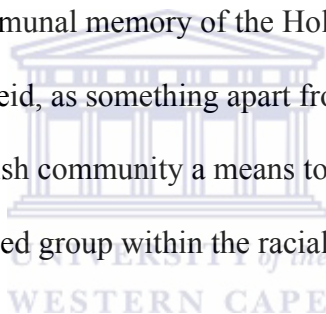
In investigating the development in public discourse of an understanding of the meaning of the Holocaust and looking at the forms and practices of Holocaust commemoration in South Africa until 2013, this chapter asks whether the communal memory of the Holocaust shaped the communal memory of apartheid. The Holocaust occupied a place in the general South African consciousness and profoundly influenced South African Jewish identity long before the establishment of a Holocaust Centre in Cape Town in 1999.⁶⁷ The attitude towards Nazism and the Holocaust changed over time within different constituencies of South Africans.⁶⁸ Responses to the rise of Nazism in the 1930s ranged from concern for the safety of Jewish refugees, to expressions of virulent antisemitism and Afrikaner nationalism. For a short period immediately after World War II both the leaders of the Jewish community and campaigners against segregation and apartheid interpreted the Holocaust as an imperative for solidarity in the call for justice and democracy in South Africa, and for

⁶⁷ Opinions about what it meant to be Jewish in apartheid South Africa differed greatly, but very little dissent was voiced about the place of the Holocaust within that identity. A great number of references in Jewish communal newspapers and scholarly works attest to the impact of the Holocaust on South African Jewry's concept of themselves and their community. Consider Shain, "South Africa," in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*; Tzippi Hoffman and Alan Fischer, *The Jews of South Africa: what Future?*; Suttner, *Cutting through the Mountain*.

⁶⁸ See for example, Shain's *A Perfect Storm*, which examines the responses to the rise of Nazism.

all citizens to be treated with dignity.⁶⁹ Anti-apartheid activists, including those from within the Jewish community, continued to reference the Holocaust and Nazism in their condemnation of apartheid up until, and beyond 1994.⁷⁰

After the 1948 election of the National Party into government, the mainstream Jewish response moved to support the position held by the community leadership that the Holocaust was a “Jewish Only Affair”, holding meaning for the Jewish community only. Holocaust commemoration encouraged the view that the Holocaust was the result of the absence of the State of Israel. Support for the State of Israel was an essential aspect of Holocaust commemoration. Holocaust commemoration also created and maintained a communal memory of the Holocaust that simultaneously offered a “memory” of apartheid, as something apart from the Jewish community. This memory offered the Jewish community a means to manage the contradictions inherent in living as a privileged group within the racial state.



The National Party government depicted the Holocaust as disconnected from contemporary South Africa and disavowed its earlier expressions of Nazi sympathies.⁷¹ Any attempt to consider the parallels between the Holocaust and apartheid was deeply challenging to both the National Party and its supporters, and the Jewish community. For in making the analogy of the Holocaust with apartheid, all beneficiaries stood accused. The question of the relationship between the history of the Holocaust and apartheid was thus a contentious one, decades before the CTHC

⁶⁹ Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*; Gilbert, "Jews and the Racial State."

⁷⁰ Gilbert, "Jews and the Racial State," 32-64; Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*; Shain, "South Africa," in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*. Tzippi Hoffman and Alan Fischer, *The Jews of South Africa: What Future?*; Immanuel Suttner ed. *Cutting through the Mountain: Interviews with South African Jewish Activists* (London: Penguin Books, 1997).

⁷¹ Dubow, *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*. Dubow points out that the post-war period, bringing with it the revelations of the horrors of the Nazi's genocidal action against those classified as Jewish coincided with a public muting of the overtly biological nature of National Party racist rhetoric, and an assertion of difference between the system of apartheid and Nazism.

was established. This contention found expression in the expectations voiced by different constituencies of how the CTHC should reflect the relationship of the history of the Holocaust to apartheid, if at all.

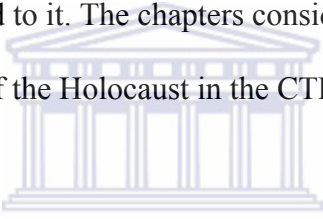
The chapter examines the main concerns raised by the literature in the context of the formation of Holocaust memory in South Africa and examines the space and placement of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre within the context of Holocaust memory in countries removed from the theatre of the genocide.⁷²

Chapters Two, Three and Four explore the developments that led to the construction of the CTHC in 1999. Using the CTHC's archive and interviews with the team involved in the conception and inception of the CTHC, the chapter tracks the construction of the CTHC. It further explores the impetus for the CTHC and the context in which the CTHC was conceived. The chapter examines the factors that influenced the conception of the CTHC and what function the founders of the CTHC wanted it to "perform," and identifies the narratives that drove the construction of the CTHC. The dissertation examines whether the CTHC was conceived of as a preserver or a container of memory, and how the founders of the CTHC envisaged its relationship to issues of individual and communal identity in post-apartheid South Africa. The chapters describe the process of negotiating the CTHC's design, including that of the exhibition and examines whose voices and memories were privileged in the design of the space, and how the design of the CTHC supported the conceptualisation of the function it should serve.

⁷² Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* and Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, for example, provide critical explorations of the so-called "lessons" to which Holocaust educators refer.

Chapter Five examines the period following the opening of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre in 1999 until 2006, and the questions that arose subsequently. Using archival material from the CTHC's, the Anne Frank House, the Rochlin and University of Cape Town's Special Collections section, I examine to what extent the founding vision of the role of the CTHC survived the opening to the general public, and to what extent the founding vision was re-visioned. The chapters explore the challenges and opportunities that arose in the first few years after opening, and how the responses to these shaped the CTHC's institutional identity.

The chapters unpack how visitors to the CTHC responded to the exhibition and the educational programmes allied to it. The chapters consider the framing of apartheid alongside the representation of the Holocaust in the CTHC's exhibition in the light of Apfelbaum's argument that



[p]ublic recognition of the facts legitimizes the social existence of victims; it provides the historical framework within which they feel entitled to speak up and to make their stories heard.⁷³

The CTHC provided a space of "public recognition" for two histories, not just one.

The chapters consider the implications of this for visitors to the CTHC. The chapters explore the impact of the exhibition on survivors of apartheid and those who benefited from the system.

The chapters analyse the relationship of the exhibition to the question of identity in post-apartheid South Africa. They explore whether the representation of apartheid in the exhibition appeared to have informed the creation of the identity of a "new" South African, not only for those whom the apartheid system victimized, but also for apartheid's beneficiaries. Among other questions, the chapters consider whether the

⁷³ Erika Apfelbaum, "Halbwachs and the Social Properties of Memory," in *Memory: Histories, Theories and Debates*, eds. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwartz (New York: Fordham University Press 2010), 90.

exhibition encouraged a sense of shared victimhood, not just between victims of apartheid and the Holocaust, but also among perpetrators and beneficiaries of the apartheid system. The chapter examines whether the inclusion of the brief mention of segregation and apartheid in the exhibition allowed visitors to consider the iniquities of both apartheid and Nazism, or whether the exhibition encouraged a misplaced catharsis where the tears shed for the victims of the Holocaust become for some, an act of redemption for culpability during apartheid.

Chapter Six tracks the development of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre's education programmes, and examines how these programmes have mediated the experience of the CTHC's exhibition. Chapter Six considers the methodology used in the education programmes, and the assumptions about history and learning that have shaped the programmes. The CTHC's approach to the relationship between Holocaust education, human rights education and apartheid history education is examined,. Whether the Holocaust education programme has assisted in the teaching of human rights or whether it has cluttered or obfuscated the educational process, is considered.

Chapter Six examines the impact of the education programmes on the attitudes of participants towards human rights and apartheid history. Although the Cape Town Holocaust Centre possesses written evaluations completed by all high school students and teachers immediately after they have participated in the programme, there is no research available about the duration of the impact of the programme on students' and teachers' attitudes. This chapter draws on the findings of a series of focus group discussions, interviews, surveys and archival material to gauge the perceptions of high school students and teachers of the impact of Holocaust education on them.

Chapter Seven examines the developments leading to the establishment of the South African Holocaust Foundation (SAHGF) in 2007 and the relationship between the Holocaust centres in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg to the Foundation. The chapter examines the implications of the renaming of the Foundation as the South African Holocaust and *Genocide* Foundation (SAHGF) for the identity of the CTHC and its Holocaust education programmes.

The chapter tracks how the SAHGF has positioned itself on the international stage as well as within South African and southern Africa. It looks at the development of relationships with international agencies such as the United Nations Information Centre and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

Chapter Seven examines the responses of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre to the crises of xenophobia and other areas of concern in South Africa, as well as to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and Israel. The chapter examines how the CTHC's relationship with the Jewish community and broader community has been defined in the third decade of the CTHC's existence, and the impact this has had on the institutional identity and memory of itself.

Relevance and contribution of the research

This study of Holocaust memory in the South, and the consideration of strategies taken to teach about a totalitarian past in a society recently emerging from an authoritarian past, offers a contribution to the body of literature described by Goldberg as being dominated by the North.⁷⁴ My dissertation also expands the scope of work that examines the processes of negotiating communal and individual

⁷⁴ Goldberg, *Marking Evil*, 5.

identities after apartheid. My research offers a contribution to the field of memory studies and memorialisation, Holocaust education and human rights education, as well as the field of research into societies emerging from violent pasts. This dissertation adds to the study of post-apartheid schooling and education, and, in particular, the field of history teaching, its practice and curriculum.

The dissertation contributes to the fields of study that have developed around the question of the representation of the Holocaust, and the nexus of trauma history and identity. My study contributes to the work that considers the relationship between the memory of the trauma of those who experienced it directly, and those whose experience of the trauma is a “memory of a memory.” My examination of whether the survivors of apartheid’s trauma learn something about their trauma from a position of witness to the history of the Holocaust is of relevance to the wider field. My research considers the implications of placing a representation of the apartheid system in a space dedicated to the representation of the memory of the Holocaust, for the development of a collective memory. Finally, in its examination of the international Holocaust memorial sites and educational institutions such as the Anne Frank House in the Netherlands, and Beth Shalom in England, the study considers the influence of the globalisation of Holocaust memory on the conceptualisation of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.

CHAPTER ONE

CONSTRUCTING HOLOCAUST MEMORY IN SOUTH AFRICA

The Holocaust is etched into the consciousness of all Jewish people, even those who were not yet born when it happened.¹

William Faulkner wrote, “The past is never dead. It's not even past.”² It is an intriguing perspective on the process of making meaning of past events, particularly when the past events were traumatic. In this chapter I examine the responses of South Africans, in particular “Jewish South Africa,” to the Holocaust. I consider how the Holocaust was commemorated under apartheid before the construction of a permanent Holocaust Centre. The chapter argues that the way in which the Holocaust was commemorated discouraged an appreciation of the “other” trauma namely that of living within the apartheid state.

The chapter is not an exhaustive survey of commemorative activities across the country. Instead it explores key moments that illustrate the process of constructing a collective memory of the Holocaust, and considers the factors that shaped this process of creating and maintaining a memory.³ I examine how the changing socio-political South African landscape impacted the shape of Holocaust commemoration. I further explore the interplay between the Jewish community’s construction of Holocaust

¹ Frans Auerbach, “Links with South Africa Today,” 2 May 1996, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

² William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*, Act 1, sc 3 (New York: Vintage Books, 1950), 73.

³ Rusu describes “cultural memory” as consisting of “the representations of the past transposed into a cultural support” or “externalised” in various material object such as memorials. Mihai Stelian Rusu, “History and Collective Memory: The Succeeding Incarnations of an Evolving Relationship,” *Philobiblon* 18, no. 2 (2013), 260-282.

memory in South Africa and the construction of a Jewish identity while being citizens of the apartheid state.⁴

I understand the term “commemoration” to include public acts of recognition of the Holocaust. These acts have encompassed memorial-building, publications, curriculum development, archiving the memories of survivors and their families, painting and sculpture, music, song, dance and drama, poetry and prose.⁵ Communal commemoration among South African Jewry took the form of national days of mourning and remembrance that were observed annually from 1942 onwards. In his seminal book, *The Texture of Memory*, Young argues that the day of remembrance with its agreed upon ritual and place, time and date, generates meaning and memory.⁶ Furthermore, days of remembrance have a specific significance for Jewish communities, maintains Young, as

of all ways to commemorate the destruction of European Jewry, perhaps none save narrative - is more endemic to Jewish tradition than the day of remembrance. [Nothing] is anchored as firmly in the tradition as commemorative fast days, ... the most ancient of all traditional Jewish responses to national and communal catastrophe.⁷

This chapter tracks the Jewish communal days of mourning and remembrance over more than five decades in South Africa and the “meaning and memory” the community leaders hoped the days would generate.

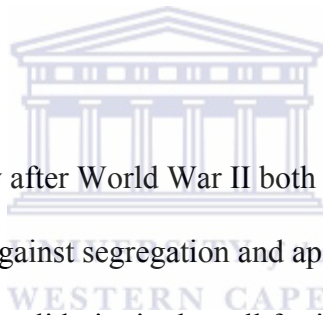
⁴ Apart from correspondence with the community leaders in the “country districts,” the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) communicated its position and understanding of the meaning that the Holocaust should hold, through columns in the *South African Jewish Times*, and the SAJBD’s biannual reports.

⁵ See Erika Doss’s discussion of the meanings ascribed to the terms ‘memorial’ and ‘monument’ in her book, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, July 2010), 37-52.

⁶ Young, *Texture of Memory*.

⁷ Young, *Texture of Memory*, 263.

Gideon Shimoni, Shirli Gilbert, Richard Mendelson and Milton Shain, and Robert G. Weisbord, examine the relationship that developed between the leadership of the South African Jewish community and the apartheid state.⁸ I argue that Holocaust commemoration provided an opportunity to demonstrate an identifiable, coherent community and to indicate to the state that the South African Jewish community was a loyal minority. As the years between the events of the Holocaust and the reality of late apartheid grew, so the commemorative events of the Holocaust encouraged the apartheid state and the members of the Jewish community to view the Jewish community as both vulnerable, as the victims of the Holocaust had been, and thus no threat, but also righteous and plucky, like the biblical David in his fight against Goliath.



For a short period immediately after World War II both the leaders of the Jewish community and campaigners against segregation and apartheid interpreted the Holocaust as an imperative for solidarity in the call for justice and democracy in South Africa, and for all citizens to be treated with dignity.⁹ Anti-apartheid activists, including those from within the Jewish community, continued to reference the Holocaust in their condemnation of apartheid. However, after 1948 the mainstream Jewish response moved to support the position held by the community leadership, namely that the Holocaust, was a “Jewish Only Affair”, and could be commemorated and remembered as something completely divorced from the South African context of that time.

⁸ Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*; Shimoni, “South African Jews and the Apartheid Crisis,” *The American Jewish Year Book* 88 (1988): 3-58. Gilbert, “Jews and the Racial State”; Richard Mendelsohn and Milton Shain, *The Jews in South Africa: An Illustrated History* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 2008); Robert G. Weisbord, “The Dilemma of South African Jewry,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 5, no. 2 (September 1967): 233-241.

⁹ Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*; Gilbert, “Jews and the Racial State.”

After 1948, the newly elected National Party was also engaged in constructing a communal memory related to the Holocaust, through a recasting of its response to the Nazis.¹⁰ This version depicted the Holocaust as disconnected from contemporary South Africa and gave credence to the state's disavowal of its Nazi sympathies. South African Jewry could be the proxy of the Holocaust victims as long as the National Party was not cast as the proxy of the Nazis. This arrangement made any attempt to consider the parallels between the Holocaust and apartheid deeply challenging to both parties.¹¹

Holocaust commemoration in South Africa during World War II

In South Africa, commemoration of the Holocaust began even while the event was unfolding, even as the definition of the historical event, a genocide, was being entered into official discourse.¹² Unlike the Nazi concentration camps that were an important part of the state's terror campaign and were thus very public, the Nazi state sought to hide the work of the Einsatzgruppen and the death camps. However word had spread.¹³

The international press carried news of atrocities against Jews in Nazi-occupied

¹⁰ Dubow, *Illicit Union: Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*. Dubow points out that the post-war period, bringing with it the revelations of the horrors of the Nazi's genocidal action against those classified as Jewish coincided with a public muting of the overtly biological nature of National Party racist rhetoric, and an assertion of difference between the system of apartheid and Nazism.

¹¹ The challenge was not only to the National Party and its supporters, but also to the Jewish community. For in the analogy of the Holocaust with apartheid, all beneficiaries stood accused.

¹² The term, "genocide" did not exist until 1944, and was only accepted as a legal term and international law after the United Nations' approval of the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide on 9 December 1948.

¹³ See for example, Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret: An Investigation into the Suppression of Information about Hitler's "Final Solution"* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980); Karl A. Schleunes, review of *The Terrible Secret: An Investigation into the Suppression of Information about Hitler's "Final Solution,"* by Walter Laqueur, in *The American Historical Review* 86, no. 5 (1981): 1111-1112; Taylor Telford, "Why the World Did Not Listen," *New York Times*, 1 February 1981, accessed 11 October, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/1981/02/01/books/why-the-world-did-not-listen.html?pagewanted=> ; Thomas E. Wood and Stanislaw M. Jankowski, *Karski: How One Man Tried to Stop the Holocaust* (New York: J Wiley & Sons, 1994).

Europe¹⁴ and on 24 August 1941, in a BBC radio broadcast, British Prime Minister

Winston Churchill described how

whole districts are being exterminated. ... there has never been methodical, merciless butchery on such a scale or approaching such a scale. ... We are in the presence of a crime without a name.¹⁵

South African Prime Minister Jan Smuts also referred to the ongoing persecution and suffering of European Jewry. In a speech on the anniversary of the 1917 Balfour

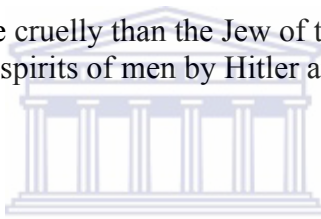
Declaration, Smuts said:

Beginning in Nazi Germany, a new horror of persecution started ... The calamities ... reached their climax in an anti-Semitic movement (sic) surpassing in dimensions and intensity anything known in history.¹⁶

And 10 days later on 14 November 1941, Churchill said in a message to the London-

based *Jewish Chronicle*:

None has suffered more cruelly than the Jew of the unspeakable evils wrought on bodies and spirits of men by Hitler and his vile regime.¹⁷



¹⁴ Both James Carroll, "Shoah in the News: Patters and meanings of News Coverage of the Holocaust", Discussion Paper D-27 (Cambridge MA: The Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, September 1997) and Deborah Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: the American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933-1945* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993), examine why the West did so little, despite having information. Leff argues that the *New York Times* obscured the gravity of the atrocities being meted out against Europe's Jewry. Laurel Leff, *Buried by the Times: The Holocaust and America's Most Important Newspaper* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). In South Africa, the Nationalist newspapers minimized the reports of atrocities. See Milton Shain, "Ambivalence, Antipathy and Accommodation," in *Christianity in South Africa: a Political, Social and Cultural History*, eds. Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport (Claremont: David Phillips Press, 1997): 282-283; Milton Shain, "South Africa," in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*, eds. David S. Wyman and Charles H. Rosenzweig (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1996): 677.

¹⁵ Winston Churchill, "Prime Minister Winston Churchill's Broadcast to the World About the Meeting with President Roosevelt," 24 August 1941, transcript, British Library of Information, accessed 17 May 2013, <http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1941/410824a.html> .

¹⁶ "British Press Ignores Smuts' Address on Balfour Day," *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 4 November 1941, accessed 10 October 2015, <http://www.jta.org/1941/11/04/archive/british-press-ignores-smuts-address-on-balfour-day> ; "Gen. Smuts Appeals to America to Help Jews Establish Palestine as National Home" *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 3 December 1941, accessed 10 October 2015, <http://www.jta.org/1941/12/03/archive/gen-smuts-appeals-to-america-to-help-jews-establish-palestine-as-national-home> .

¹⁷ "Jews Will Not Be Forgotten in Day of Victory, Churchill Assures in Special Message," *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 14 November 1941, accessed 17 May 2013, <http://www.jta.org/1941/11/14/archive/jews-will-not-be-forgotten-in-day-of-victory-churchill-assures-in-special-message#ixzz2UPjZDBII> ; Winston Churchill, Tribute in "Centenary Issue," *Jewish Chronicle*, 11 November 1941, accessed 17 May 2013, <http://archive.thejc.com/search/pagedetail.jsp?origin=16&gofrom=null&goto=null&issue=NOVEMBER%2014%201941&refno=/archive/output/1941/1941-1-%20-%200581.gif&pgn=24/-> ; David Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 169.

In June 1942, the World Jewish Congress held an international press conference where they raised the “appalling plight of European Jewry.”¹⁸ Two months later in August, the Executive Council of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) presented its report to the 14th National Congress of the SAJBD. The Council described the period from 1940-1942 as a

period of the gravest import for the whole world, and of profound effect upon the destiny of the entire Jewish people ... a tragedy perhaps without parallel in the long martyrdom of Israel.¹⁹

Citing the 1942 report of the World Jewish Congress, the SAJBD Executive Council said that despite “the misery and suffering beyond words,” it was “not all a tale of passive endurance,” as the underground movement gave “ample proof that the Jews of Europe have not lost the will to survive.” The analysis of the Council that there was still hope despite the “suffering beyond words,” foreshadowed a tension that subsequent acts of commemoration would seek to address: should the victims be portrayed as passive or active.²⁰

In November 1942, the editor of the *Zionist Record* wrote that the Nazis were carrying out "a policy of extermination more relentless and inhuman than anything the world has ever seen." He concluded that there "were no tears to mourn this dire catastrophe; its magnitude is beyond all weeping."²¹ Less than a month later, in the British House

¹⁸ The World Jewish Congress (WJC) was established in Geneva, Switzerland in August 1936. WJC Secretary General Gerhart Riegner relayed to the leaders of the US and Britain, the news of the Nazi's plan of genocide against European Jewry, and urged action. The WJC established a relief committee to help Jewish war refugees, worked with the International Committee of the Red Cross to help Jews in German-occupied countries and lobbied Allied governments to grant visas to Jewish refugees. Accessed 16 May 2013, <http://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about?tab=history> .

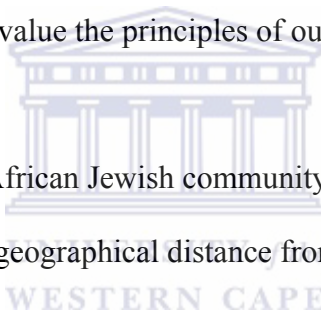
¹⁹ SAJBD Executive Council, “Report covering the period June 1, 1940- July 31, 1942 to the 14th National Congress of the SAJBD,” 2-4 August 1942. Berman Jewish Policy Archive.

²⁰ SAJBD Executive Council, “Report covering the period June 1, 1940- July 31, 1942 to the 14th National Congress of the SAJBD,” 2-4 August 1942. Berman Jewish Policy Archive.

²¹ Editor, *Zionist Record*, 27 November 1942, SA Rochlin Archives.

of Commons on December 17, Sir Anthony Eden echoed the *Zionist Record's* description of Hitler's genocidal intent.²²

The response to the call from the SAJBD for a National Day of Mourning on December 29 was resounding. In addition to synagogue services throughout the country, Jewish community leaders and Christian clergy jointly addressed mass meetings in South Africa's major cities.²³ In Cape Town, pamphlets called on people to "express sympathy with the millions of victims of Nazi brutality" at a "Citizens' Mass Meeting ... a Jewish Day of Mourning and Intercession" at the City Hall on 29 December 1942.²⁴ In a message to the SAJBD, Smuts said that the tragedy "calls for a world-wide protest by all who value the principles of our common civilization."²⁵



The response from the South African Jewish community to the news of mass murder in Eastern Europe belied their geographical distance from the killing fields. The reaction was due in no small measure to the familial and cultural ties Jewish South Africans had to the region, in particular, Lithuania. Most Jewish South Africans who had immigrated to South Africa at the turn of the twentieth century had come from the *shtetls*, towns and cities that were within the theatre of war. They had left behind family and friends and held a nostalgic connection to those communities, a connection made all the more poignant with the news of their destruction.

²² Parliamentary Debates, Commons, 385, # 17 cols 2082-4, accessed 13 May 2014, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1942/dec/17/united-nations-declaration>.

²³ Shain, *Christianity in South Africa*, 283; SAJBD, "Report of the Executive Council for the period August, 1942 to May, 1945, to be submitted to the Fourteenth Congress at Johannesburg, May 24th to 27th, 1945", Johannesburg, 6. Berman Jewish Policy Archive.

²⁴ "Citizens Mass Meeting to Express Sympathy with the Millions of Victims of Nazi Brutality to be held on a Jewish Day of Mourning and Intercession in the City Hall on 29 December 1942." Poster designed by JH Amshewitz. SAJBD (Cape Council) Archive, Cape Town.

²⁵ "South African Jewry Observes Day of Mourning for Jews Murdered by Nazis," *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 30 December 1942, accessed 12 October 2015, <http://www.jta.org/1942/12/30/archive/south-african-jewry-observes-day-of-mourning-for-jews-murdered-by-nazis>.

The SAJBD and the SAZF established organisations to raise funds for the relief of refugees. The “Jewish War Appeal” established on 30 March 1942 worked alongside the American Joint Distribution Committee and the South African Red Cross.²⁶ The SAJBD urged the Government to loosen the immigration restrictions on Jewish refugees.²⁷ The SAJBD was also at pains to show the “ramifications of Nazi anti-Semitic (sic) propaganda” for South Africa and planned a systematic “campaign of enlightenment” of the broader public.²⁸ To realise this plan, the SAJBD established a Special Committee on the Tragedy of European Jewry in 1943.²⁹

Mainstream newspapers, some political figures, Christian clergy and community leaders, some Jewish, some not, joined the local Jewish community press in responding to the news from Europe. Speaking at the Day of Mourning and Protest Meeting held at Wanderers Cricket Club on 29 December 1942, Minister of Labour Walter Madeley observed that “the conscience of South Africa has been stirred.”³⁰ In February 1943, MP Morris Kentridge told the South African Parliament that “two million Jews [had been] treacherously murdered in the slaughterhouse of Poland” and

²⁶ Theodore H. Gaster, “South Africa and Australia,” *American Jewish Report*, 44 (1942-1943): 176, accessed 5 August 2013, www.ajarchives.org/main.php?GroupingId=10077; SAJBD Executive Committee, “Report Covering the Period 1953-1955 to the Twentieth National Congress of the SAJBD, Johannesburg: September 2-5 1955,” 7, accessed 13 September 2015, <http://www.bjpa.org/publications/downloadFile.cfm?FileID=16740>.

²⁷ The Quota Act of 1930 prohibited the immigration of Eastern European Jews. In 1937, the Anti-Aliens Act of 1937 prohibited Jews from Western Europe. Although Prime Minister Smuts had expressed publicly his concern about the growing persecution of Europe’s Jews by the Nazis, he did not agree to the request of the SAJBOD that South Africa’s immigration restrictions be eased. Smuts argued that renewed Jewish immigration to South Africa would exacerbate antisemitism, as the immigration would put pressure on food supplies and Allied shipping. See Shain, “South Africa,” in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*.

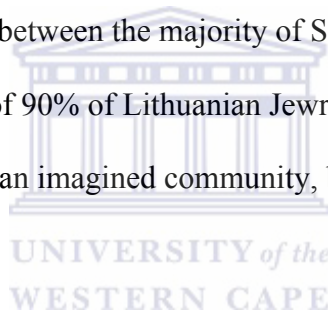
²⁸ SAJBD, Report of the Executive Council June 1940-July 1942, accessed 11 October 2015, <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=17050>. BJPA.

²⁹ The Committee comprised representatives of the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF), the Rabbinate and Polish Jewish groups. “South African Jews Vote to Collaborate with American Jewish Conference,” *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 24 September 1943. Accessed 13 October 2015, <http://www.jta.org/1943/09/24/archive/south-african-jews-vote-to-collaborate-with-american-jewish-conference>; David Sacks, “The SAJBD and the South African War Effort” *Jewish Affairs*, 70:2 (Rosh Hashanah 2015): 28-32.

³⁰ *South African Jewish Times*, 1 January 1943. SA Rochlin Archives.

a further ‘five million more were in hourly peril of the same fate.’³¹ A nationwide Day of Protest was held on 10 December 1943 to “pray for salvation and demand action.”³² Jewish and “non-Jewish” South Africans, including Minister of Justice Colyn Stein and Bishop of Johannesburg H.C. Clayton, attended the mass rally at Wanderer’s Cricket Stadium in Johannesburg.³³ In 1944, the Anglican Synod passed a unanimous motion condemning the great suffering inflicted by the Nazis on the Jews of Europe.³⁴

South African Jewry responded readily to the worldwide call to observe a day of mourning on March 14 1945, two months before the surrender of Germany and the end of the war in Europe. A day of fasting was proclaimed and mass Kaddish said at all synagogues. The close ties between the majority of South African Jewry and Lithuania made the genocide of 90% of Lithuanian Jewry “intensely personal.”³⁵ Kaddish was said not only for an imagined community, but for the cousins, parents, friends who had not escaped.



³¹ Quoted in Richard Mendelsohn, “Bechol dor Vador: The Holocaust in South African Jewish Consciousness,” transcript of speech delivered at the Yom Hashoah Vehagevurah – Holocaust and Heroism Day – Thursday 1 May 2008, *Cape Jewish Chronicle*, June 2008, insert.

³² Letter to Rabbi J.L. Zlotnik from SAJBD, 2 December 1943. SA Rochlin Archives; “South African Jews Proclaim Day of Mourning for European Jewry,” *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, accessed 17 October 2015, <http://www.jta.org/1943/11/30/archive/south-african-jews-proclaim-day-of-mourning-for-european-jewry>; SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period August, 1942 to May, 1945, to be submitted to the Fourteenth Congress at Johannesburg, May 24th to 27th, 1945”, Johannesburg, 6. BJPA. The SAJBD report gives December 7 as the date for the Day of Mourning. The *Jewish Telegraph Agency* records the day as December 10.

³³ “South Africa Marks Day of Protest and Prayer for Jews of Europe,” *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 12 December 1943, accessed 5 October 2013, <http://www.jta.org/1943/12/12/archive/south-africa-marks-day-of-protest-and-prayer-for-jews-of-europe>.

³⁴ *Zionist Record*, 11 August 1944. SA Rochlin Archives.

³⁵ Mendelsohn, “Bechol dor Vador”.

Holocaust commemoration 1945–1960

At the SAJBD's fourteenth Congress in 1945, the SAJBD Executive Council reflected that although Nazi Germany had been defeated,

it was not found possible to take any practical steps to save more than a mere handful of the victims of the Nazis.... This news struck every Jewish heart with a chill of horror. Since then, the eye-witness accounts of the horrors of the murder camps have confirmed our worst fears. Too late, the world has now incontrovertible proof that 4,000,000 Jews or more have been done to death.³⁶

The devastating implications of the genocide were expressed in the Report's conclusion that, "while in the past we relied a great deal upon cultural and spiritual sustenance from abroad we shall now have to rely much more upon our own resources...."³⁷

After the war, the leaders of the Jewish community kept the Holocaust memory alive in a number of ways. A weekly, poignant reminder of the Holocaust was found on the back pages of the Jewish community newspapers that carried weekly lists of names of Holocaust survivors looking for relatives in South Africa and South Africans hoping to find relatives missing in Europe.³⁸ The SAJBD established aid programmes to help refugees and set up a restitution office in 1946 to assist "former Jewish residents of the Nazi-occupied territories of the Europe who have claims against the West German Government for restitution, compensation or damages as a result of Nazi depredations."³⁹ Another reminder of the Holocaust was embodied in the number of

³⁶ SAJBD, "Report of the Executive Council for the period August, 1942 to May, 1945, to be submitted to the Fourteenth Congress at Johannesburg, May 24th to 27th, 1945", Johannesburg, 6. Berman Jewish Policy Archive (BJPA), accessed 20 July 2015, <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=17043>

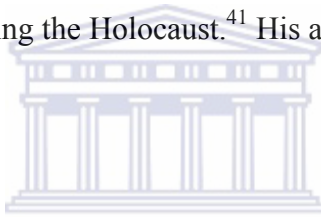
³⁷ SAJBD, "Report of the Executive Council for the period August, 1942 to May, 1945, to be submitted to the Fourteenth Congress at Johannesburg, May 24th to 27th, 1945," Johannesburg, 20. BJPA, accessed 20 July 2015, <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=17043> .

³⁸ These lists continued to be printed well into the 1950s.

³⁹ By 1958, the office had assisted 1800 claimants and processed 5 000 claims. SAJBD, "Report of the Executive Council for the period September, 1955 to March, 1958, submitted to the Twenty-first Congress at Johannesburg, 13th to 16th March, 1958," Johannesburg, 27, accessed 20 July 2015, <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=17053> . The SAJBD was represented on the Board of Directors of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany. SAJBD, "Report

Holocaust survivors who came to work as Cantors or Rabbis in South Africa after the war.⁴⁰

Occasionally European visitors would also bring a reminder of the Holocaust, illustrating the close connection between South Africa's Jewish community and those in Europe. In 1947, for example, Lithuanian Rabbi Ephraim Oshry came to Johannesburg, the first Lithuanian Rabbi to have survived the Holocaust to visit South Africa. Following his liberation in 1944, Rabbi Oshry had spent three years gathering information about the impact of the Holocaust on the Jewish communities in Lithuania. The *South African Jewish Times* and the *Zionist Record* published his account of his experiences during the Holocaust.⁴¹ His articles had a profound impact on the readers.⁴²



However, it was the annual day of mourning that remained the main form of communal commemoration after 1945. The national day of mourning and remembrance was coordinated by the SAJBD and observed by many in the Jewish

of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955," Johannesburg, 27, accessed 20 July 2015.

<http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=17040> . BJPA.

⁴⁰ Edgar Bernstein, "Union of South Africa" in *American Jewish Year Book*, Vol.50. (5709) 1948-1949, Philadelphia: Press of the Jewish Publication Society, 308-309, accessed 16 October 2015,

<http://www.ajcarchives.org/main.php?GroupingId=10083>. One such person was Cantor Lichterman.

Before the war, Cantor Lichterman had been cantor of the prestigious Nożyk Synagogue in Warsaw.

The Nazis murdered his family, but he had managed to survive. Lichterman married another survivor, Miriam Teitelbaum, who as a schoolgirl before the war, had listened to Lichterman sing at the Nożyk Synagogue. The Hebrew Congregation of Benoni offered Lichterman the position as their chazzan. The Lichtermans moved from there to Johannesburg, after which they moved to Cape Town. In an interview with the author, Lichterman remembered how the congregation became the extended family for her sons. Survivors like the Lichtermans may have taken a long time, if ever, to share their experiences of the Holocaust, but having the survivors in the community in a prominent position would have meant that the community did not forget that the Holocaust had everything to do with them.

⁴¹ *South African Jewish Times*, 22 August 1947 – 28 November 1947, Rochlin Archives; *Zionist Record*, 22 August 1947, SA Rochlin Archives; Bernstein, "Union of South Africa," 310.

⁴² Oshry stayed with his brother, Max, who lived in Troyeville, Johannesburg. This fact would have reminded the Jewish readers of how close the tie was to the Holocaust. Mendelsohn, "Bechol dor Vador."

community.⁴³ Both the speeches given at the days of mourning and remembrance as well as Jewish newspaper coverage framed the Holocaust as an example of the dangers of fascism; of the need for community unity; and as evidence of the need for a Jewish state as a safeguard against antisemitism. While a handful of dignitaries who were not Jewish were invited as guests, the broad ecumenical public involvement seen at the commemorations in 1942 and 1943 did not continue.

Holocaust survivors were highly visible at the annual day of mourning and contributed to some part of the commemoration ceremony, lighting memorial candles, reading poetry or speaking. Speeches or readings were delivered in English, Yiddish, Ladino and Hebrew. The ceremonies across the country included the same components, occasionally in a slightly different order. Kaddish was always said. Usually six memorial candles were lit, either by survivors or children of survivors, or members of youth groups. Churban literature was read and the Haskara was always included. A prominent person in the community would give an address. The ceremony provided a moment to reflect the community as united in their grief, and for individuals in the community to experience unity through grief.

When the National Party government won the 1948 elections, the SAJBD became concerned.⁴⁴ However, it soon became evident that the new government was not going

⁴³ SAJBD, "Report of the Executive Council for the period March, 1958-August, 1960. To be submitted to the Twenty-second Congress, Johannesburg, September 1st to 5th, 1960," Johannesburg, 1960, 33-34, accessed 9 October 2015, <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=17037>.

⁴⁴ The 1938 and 1943 election campaigns of the National Party, based not only on racist lines but also antisemitic sentiments, were still fresh in the public memory. The National Party had provided a home for the members of the Ossewa-Brandwag, an organization that had supported the National Socialism ideals of the Nazis. Members of the Ossewa-Brandwag who had been interned by Smuts during the war, were given prominent posts in the National Party cabinet.

to act on the pre-1948 antisemitic threats of the National Party.⁴⁵ Furthermore, despite concern about the introduction of “Christian-based” education and antisemitic propaganda that continued to surface in South Africa, the SAJBD stated in 1955, “the public life of South African (sic) has been substantially free of any “Jewish issues.”⁴⁶ The “improved atmosphere” allowed for “good relations between the Jewish community and all other sections”.⁴⁷ However, the SAJBD added that it was

necessary to maintain a continuous education programme aimed at enlightening the public on the problems of prejudice, at fostering good will and at promoting a better understanding of things in the Jewish community.⁴⁸

On Monday, 30 January 1950, South African Jewry observed the international day of mourning for the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Services were held in synagogues across the country and a mass meeting gathered at the Coronation Hall in Johannesburg. The *Jewish Times* of 6 January 1950 summarized the outcome of the meeting in a subheading, “Nation’s pledge: “It shall not happen again.” The “nation” referred to Jewish people and was a reference to the newly established state of Israel, a nation for Jewish people. The Zionist narrative of the Holocaust was clear in the speeches made at the mass meeting. Chief Rabbi Dr L.I. Rabinowitz concluded that “[f]rom this greatest tragedy had nevertheless come the greatest glory – the birth of the

⁴⁵ See Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*; Shain, “South Africa,” in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*.”

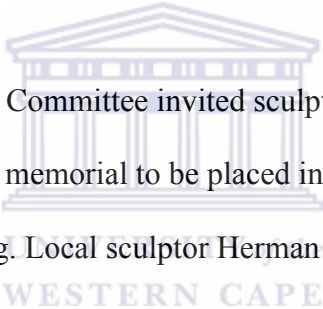
⁴⁶ SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955,” Johannesburg, 30. BJPA.

⁴⁷ SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955.” BJPA. The Report also reflected on the implications of Prime Minister D.F. Malan’s visit to Israel in 1953. Malan found the visit very moving. The Board reported that Malan said the Jews have a “specific contribution to make toward national unity in South Africa.” Malan identified the “tenacity they have shown in maintaining their group identity” but at the same time, “...the Jew can, and does often, become, a good national as well as a good Jew ... a good South African as well as a true son of Israel.” 12, 13.

⁴⁸ SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955,” Johannesburg, 30. BJPA.

State of Israel,” and that the “new age” would be the “greatest memorial to the tragedy we have had to face.”⁴⁹

As much as community members may have agreed with Rabinowitz that the birth of the State of Israel was the “greatest memorial” to the Holocaust, there was also a desire for concrete memorials in South Africa. Motivating this desire was the need to find meaning in the events of the Holocaust. Jay Winter in his poignant account of World War I memorials described those memorials as providing “visible evidence of the search for the ‘meaning’ of the trauma.”⁵⁰ His observation is true of the memorials constructed in South Africa as well.



In 1955, the Jewish Monument Committee invited sculptors from around the world to submit designs for a Holocaust memorial to be placed in the Jewish section at West Park Cemetery in Johannesburg. Local sculptor Herman Wald won the contract. Wald’s monument attracted attention from the local and Jewish press.⁵¹ The monument comprised six giant hands rising out of a black granite base, each holding a shofar. In the centre of the monument was an eternal flame. The bronzed flames spiraled upwards and formed the Hebrew words of the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill.”

⁴⁹ “Johannesburg Mass Meeting Mourns Martyred Jewry,” *South African Jewish Times*, 6 January 1950. SA Rochlin Archives.

⁵⁰ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European cultural history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 78.

⁵¹ *The Star* newspaper ran two photographs of the monument under construction on its front page of the 21 April 1959 edition under the heading, “Jewish War Memorial” and described the monument as “a memorial to 6,000,000 Jews who died in Europe during the Second World War.”

The Chief Rabbi Rabinowitz consecrated the foundation stones, and with Isaac Levinson of the SA Jewish Monument Committee, laid them on 31 August 1958.⁵² Representatives of the SAJBD, SAZF, South African Jewish Appeal and Chevra Kadisha⁵³ read the four inscriptions on the base of the memorial: one inscribed in English, one in Afrikaans, one in Hebrew and one in Yiddish. The inscription read,

In everlasting memory of the six million Jews
Victims of man's inhumanity to man
Who perished in the death camps of Europe 1939-1945
Thou shalt not forget

Six giant hands emerged from the base of the monument. Each hand clasped a shofar, as if sounding a call to the Jewish community of South Africa to respond to the Holocaust. The inscription at the base of the monument pointed to the desired response, which was to remember, to commemorate and make eternal what the Nazis had attempted to obliterate. The commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," spelled out in the metal eternal flames, suggested that the act of forgetting was akin to killing. The shofars sounded both the pain of loss and the triumph over that pain achieved through the act of remembering. Thus the memorial promised victory through collective memory.

Katherine Verdery's description of statues as "dead people cast in bronze..." that are both symbols of the person but "in a sense also *being* the body of the person" offers an intriguing way to consider the six giant hands holding the shofars. Each hand represented one million of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Verdery argues that a "statue alters the temporality associated with the person, bringing him into the realm of

⁵² "Monument to Jewish Martyrs in Europe," *The Zionist Record*, August 29, 1958.

⁵³ The literal translation is "holy society" – it is the name given to the Jewish burial society, an organisation that has existed for centuries in Jewish communities.

the timeless of the sacred, like an icon.”⁵⁴ When something is sacred, it exists beyond the realm of interrogation. The Holocaust commemorations extended the timeless quality of the statues of the hands to the survivors.

The monument was unveiled the following year on 10 May 1959, in an event that was covered by the local and international press. What did the reaction to the unveiling of the monument suggest about the way in which the 4000 people who attended the unveiling perceived the Holocaust? What memory, and whose memory, did the monument mark? Did the monument seek to create a community-memory?

The vast majority who attended the unveiling were Jewish South Africans.⁵⁵ Representatives of the Israeli government attended, as well as office bearers of the Jewish community organisations of South Africa, including members of the Zionist Habonim Youth Movement and the Johannesburg Mayor, Ian Maltz. Among the South Africans were also survivors of the Holocaust. *The Star* of 11 May 1959 reported how “survivors of concentration camps formed a guard of honour as an eternal flame in the centre of the monument was kindled.” According to *The New York Times* the eternal flame was lit by Reuben Zeigelbaum, a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto.⁵⁶

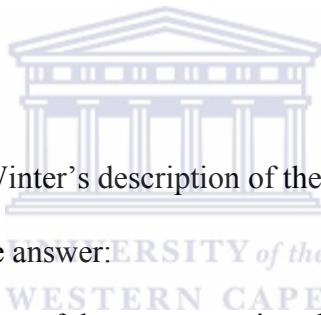
What was the reaction of those present at the ceremony? The *Rand Daily Mail*'s article of the 11 May 1959 began rather dramatically: “Hundreds wept when more than 4,000

⁵⁴ Katherine Verdery, *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 5.

⁵⁵ “Jewish Community Remembers,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 11 May 1959; “Jewish Memorial Unveiled,” *The Star*, 11 May 1959; Milton Bracker, “Victims of Hitler Honored in Africa,” *The New York Times*, 11 May 1959. The local newspapers, *Rand Daily Mail* and *The Star* referred to the crowd as being larger than 4 000. The *New York Times* reported “over 2,500” people. Either way, it was a substantial crowd.

⁵⁶ Bracker, “Victims of Hitler Honored in Africa.”

Jews from all over the Reef attended the consecration.”⁵⁷ Melodrama aside, the article revealed that the unveiling ceremony was a moment of mass mourning, with all Jewish Sunday sport cancelled, an indication of the significance of the event for the Jewish community. The reaction suggested that the Holocaust was perceived as a tragedy not only for the loss of European Jewry, but also for the Jewish community of South Africa. The ceremony united the Holocaust survivor with Jewish South Africans of all ages, regardless of the nature of their ties to Europe. By having Holocaust survivors play a significant part in the public proceedings, the organisers encouraged the turning of the private grief of the Holocaust survivor into the public grief of the community. In this way, the monument became a marker, not of individual memory, but of a community’s memory of grief.



And what was this memory? Winter’s description of the commemorative ceremonies after World War I suggests one answer:

two essential components of these ceremonies: the public recognition, and mediation through ritual, of bereavement; and the appeal to the living to remember the dead by dedicating themselves to good works among their fellow men and women. Grief and indebtedness, sadness and personal commitment are the pillars of local commemoration.⁵⁸

While the inclusion of survivors emphasised the community’s links to Europe before and during the Holocaust, the inclusion of representatives from the Israeli government encouraged an addition to the post-Holocaust memory, namely, the establishment of the State of Israel, and subsequent developments in the Middle East.⁵⁹ What the

⁵⁷ “Jewish Community Remembers,” *Rand Daily Mail*, 11 May 1959.

⁵⁸ Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning*, 97.

⁵⁹ One of Israel’s representatives was Rabbi Dr Mordechai Nurock a member of the Israeli parliament, the Knesset, and an ardent Zionist. Nurock consecrated the monument. He had a very personal connection to the Holocaust. In 1940 the Soviet Union had invaded his homeland, Latvia. They exiled Nurock because of his Zionist activities. The Nazis murdered his wife and two children. Nurock

collective memory did not include however, was a memory of the South African context in which the monument was placed and where the mourners had assembled. The local newspaper coverage reinforced the idea that the Holocaust had meaning for the Jewish community only, and was not connected to the South African context. The *New York Times*, however, was more insightful:

The theme, “Thou shalt not forget”, is inscribed on the base of the memorial in Hebrew, Yiddish, Afrikaans and English.⁶⁰ Mr Horwitz [President of the SAJBD] dwelt on this theme in a speech that had a wholly unintended but nevertheless ironic application to the surrounding climate of South African race relations.⁶¹

Needless to say, few South Africans would have read the article.

On sacred ground, in sacred memory

Both the foundation stones and the monument in Johannesburg were consecrated. Subsequent commemorations in Johannesburg and elsewhere began to assume the quasi-religious quality of the consecration. In their report to the SAJBD Executive Council in 1960, the Free State community wrote that they were of the opinion that the ceremony should be religious.⁶² Young, in his analysis of Yom Hashoah in Israel, explained that “[i]n its conception, Yom Hashoah was intended as neither a fast nor a holy day. It was pulled out of the religious continuum precisely to be observed as a

survived exile and settled in Palestine in 1947. For him, the State of Israel and the Holocaust were intimately linked.

⁶⁰ When considering why the monument had four languages on its base, it is useful to remember that Afrikaans was an official language. Placing it on the monument added to the status of the monument. Furthermore, Afrikaans was widely spoken in rural areas, and in the 1950s there were vibrant Jewish communities in these areas. It was entirely possible that some people visiting the monument, especially if they were out of town, would be more comfortable reading the Afrikaans than the English. The placing of Yiddish was in recognition of the number of Yiddish speaking survivors and victims of the Holocaust, and the large numbers of Yiddish speaking immigrants who came to South Africa at the turn of the century. The Hebrew was an indication not only of the marking of the memorial as a sacred object, but also an indication of the strength of the Zionist movement. Sherman discusses the way in which Hebrew eroded the place of Yiddish in South Africa, and the connection between Yiddish and Zionism. See, Joseph Sherman, “Between Ideology and indifference: the Destruction of Yiddish in South Africa” in *Memories, Realities and Dreams: Aspects of the South African Jewish Experience*, eds. Milton Shain and Richard Mendelsohn (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers: 2000), 28-49.

⁶¹ Bracker, “Victims of Hitler Honored in Africa,” *The New York Times*, 11 May 1959.

⁶² SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period March, 1958 - August, 1960, to be submitted to the Twenty-second Congress, Johannesburg, September 1st to 5th, 1960,” 81, BJPA.

national day of remembrance.”⁶³ This “pull[ing] out of the religious continuum” did not take place in South Africa. Jewish community leader Mervyn Smith and former National Chairperson of the SAJBD said, “Yom Hashoah is not a religious holiday ... Somehow the Orthodox community here ... made it their ... right to dictate matters.”⁶⁴

The orthodox rabbinate played a significant role in the planning of the commemorations.⁶⁵ Aspects of the presentation of the Yom Hashoah ceremony marked it as sacred.⁶⁶ Novick voiced his concern about the “sacralisation” of the Holocaust. He saw this process as the result of the development of a “collective memory” that “simplifies; sees events from a single, committed perspective; is impatient with ambiguities of any kind; reduces events to mythic archetypes.”⁶⁷

In South Africa, the memory of the Holocaust was being linked to more than a reflection on the dead, but also to the future, to rebirth. The Jewish youth movements and Israel embodied the future and a rebirth. Remembering the Holocaust continued and maintained the connection between the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel. The collective memory being encouraged incorporated an interpretation of the tragedy of the Holocaust as the result of the absence of a national homeland.

Israel was the salvation after the trial of the Holocaust. The two themes, namely

⁶³ Young, *Texture of Memory*, 263.

⁶⁴ Mervyn Smith, interview by author, 12 March 2014. Smith was also the chairperson of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre and the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation. He died in 2014.

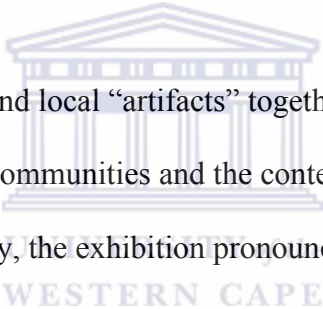
⁶⁵ In 2000, 10 of the 13 Orthodox Rabbis did not attend the Yom Hashoah ceremony in Cape Town because a reform rabbi was to deliver an address. In accordance with Halachic law, women are barred from singing at the Yom Hashoah ceremonies in Cape Town and Johannesburg. Apart from a small protest in 2012, there was no evident resistance evident to this ruling. “South Africa,” *American Jewish Year Book* 2001, 470; *SA Jewish Report*, 8 June 2000, SA Rochlin Archives. Yated Ne’eman, “Reform-Orthodox Row Rocks Jewish Cape Town,” *Dei’ah ve dibur Information and Insight*, <http://www.chareidi.org/archives5760/bhlscha/BHSasthafrc.htm> ; Beverley May, “The Streisand Effect,” and Matthew Liebenberg, “A Holy People,” *Cape Jewish Chronicle* 32, no. 5 (June 2015), 6.

⁶⁶ Kaddish was sung, as was the Haskara and Ani Ma’amin. The programme for the Yom Hashoah commemorative ceremony remained unchanged for decades and became a form of liturgy.

⁶⁷ Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999), 4.

destruction and rebirth, characterized all subsequent Memorial Day events and other Holocaust commemoration.

While the construction and opening of the Wald monument loomed large over the decade, other forms of Holocaust “marking” also took place. In 1954, an “Exhibition of Jewish Religious Art” opened in Johannesburg.⁶⁸ It included ceremonial silver that had belonged to synagogues destroyed during the Holocaust, objects loaned by local synagogues and private owners, and artifacts from the Bezalel Museum in Jerusalem.⁶⁹ The exhibition was significant for a number of reasons. It was “visited by thousands of people, both Jews and non-Jews” and given wide publicity.⁷⁰



By placing Holocaust-related and local “artifacts” together, the exhibition suggested continuity between destroyed communities and the contemporary South African and Israeli communities. In this way, the exhibition pronounced the same message that the days of mourning and remembrance had conveyed namely, that there was a direct line from the victims of the Holocaust to the South African Jewish community. The contemporary community was the proxy for destroyed European communities. The message suggested that the contemporary South African Jewish community was homogenous, as was the community destroyed by the Nazis. Finally, the Jewish

⁶⁸ SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955,” 36-38, 73, 83, 87, 89, 90. BJPA.

⁶⁹ The silver was brought to South Africa by the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc. The Jewish Cultural Reconstruction, Inc. distributed religious objects, looted by the Nazis from synagogues and private homes in Europe, that the Allied forces had salvaged. SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955,” 30, BJPA. The exhibition travelled across the country. A series of lectures delivered by SAJBD Executive Council member Dr Harry Abt were held in conjunction with the exhibition. The report concluded that “educational value and cultural value of this exhibition was felt ... in the Jewish [and] ... the general community.” The general community, the Board noted, “showed much interest in it.” 30.

⁷⁰ SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955,” 30, BJPA.

community was framed by the exhibition as the holders of the memory of those killed during the Holocaust. This framing was a theme that was woven into the annual day of mourning and remembrance.

The annual days of mourning served to remind the community of the Holocaust, and to unify the community. The SAJBD was concerned not only that a commemorative day be observed but it also attempted to prescribe what was being commemorated.⁷¹ A booklet sent to South Africa by the Organization Department of the World Jewish Congress (WJC) in 1956 indicated what communities were supposed to remember when they commemorated the Holocaust and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

The booklet encouraged a communal memory that saw the global Jewish community united in their history of resistance to antisemitism. The booklet explained that the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising was “not an isolated Jewish epic,” but a continuation of “Jewish history” of continuous resistance to antisemitism that had taken place “in the last 1 800 years.” A communal memory of the Holocaust was to include the story of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising because it was “part of the glorious record of Jewish deeds of valor which adorn the pages of our long history.”⁷² In providing a template, the aim of the booklet was “to serve first and foremost our youth.” It hoped to

⁷¹ SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955,” 33, BJPA; Robert Serebrenik, “The Warsaw Ghetto revolt: climax of Jewish Heroism and Resistance in the last 1800 years,” (New York: World Jewish Congress, 1956), SA Rochlin Archives; K. Alexander, Memorandum to the members of the communal relations committee, 28 March 1957. SA Rochlin Archives; SAJBD, “Report September, 1960 to August, 1962, submitted to the Twenty-third Congress, Johannesburg, August 30th - September 3rd, 1962,” Johannesburg, 23. BJPA.

⁷² Robert Serebrenik, “The Warsaw Ghetto Revolt: Climax of Jewish Heroism and Resistance in the last 1800 years” (New York: World Jewish Congress, 1956), SA Rochlin Archives.

“strengthen the ties” between the youth and “the spirit of Modin, Jerusalem, Masada, Bethar and Warsaw.”⁷³

In April 1951 the Israeli Knesset declared the 27 Nissan, Yom HaZikaron laShoah ve-laG'vurah: Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and Heroism.⁷⁴ In 1957, after consultation with the World Jewish Congress and the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Israel, the SAJBD decided to use the name “Jewish Memorial Day” in place of “Jewish Day of Mourning.” The SAJBD indicated that the memorial day was to commemorate the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto and the “six million martyred Jews.” By the mid-1980s, the memorial day had become known by its colloquial name, Yom Hashoah, and was very seldom referenced as a day of remembering the “martyred.”⁷⁵

By the end of the 1950s, despite the clear signs that the National Party government was not going to realise its antisemitic views expressed in the 1930s, a lingering anxiety persisted within the Jewish community. This was reflected in the Biannual Board Reports, which showed that the SAJBD over the next two decades was at pains to indicate that the Jewish community was loyal to South Africa, and should not be judged collectively for the actions of individual Jewish anti-apartheid activists.⁷⁶

⁷³ SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955,” 33. BJPA; Robert Serebrenik, “The Warsaw Ghetto revolt; K. Alexander, memorandum to the members of the communal relations committee; SAJBD, “Report September, 1960 to August, 1962, submitted to the Twenty-third Congress, Johannesburg, August 30th - September 3rd, 1962,” 23. BJPA.

⁷⁴ See Young, *Texture of Memory*, Chapter 10 for a detailed examination of the genesis of the day of commemoration in Israel, and Deborah Lipstadt’s book, *The Eichmann Trial*, (New York: Schocken Books, 2011), 190. The 27 Nissan was seen as a compromise to the competing calls for it to be on 19 April – to commemorate the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising or for it to be enfolded into Tisha B’av, the traditional day of mourning to mark the destruction of the Temple. Furthermore, Pesach would never fall on the 27 Nissan.

⁷⁵ The full name of the day is Yom HaZikaron laShoah ve-laG'vurah. The SAJBD Report of 1972-1974 is an exception, as unlike previous days, the commemorative day is called the “Day of remembrance for martyred European Jewry.”

⁷⁶ SAJBD, “Report of the Executive Council for the period June, 1953 to August, 1955, to be submitted to the Twentieth Congress, Johannesburg, September 2nd to 5th, 1955,” Johannesburg, SA Rochlin

I would argue that another way in which the SAJBD had signaled to the government that the Jewish community as a whole was not a threat and was loyal to the state, was through the form the Holocaust commemorations took. The SAJBD's programmes of Holocaust commemoration and memorialisation became increasingly disconnected from the political realities of South Africa. This was in keeping with the position articulated by the Board.⁷⁷ Scant mention was made of the growing repression by the apartheid state and nothing was said of the implications of being made part of the beneficiaries of such a state.⁷⁸

Instead, the speeches at the Yom Hashoah commemoration instructed the listeners to achieve three goals. The first was to remember the catastrophe. The speeches and the ceremony extended the first goal. South African Jewry was to identify with the

Archives; SAJBD, "Report of the Executive Council for the period September, 1955 to March, 1958, to be submitted to the Twenty-First Congress, Johannesburg, March 13th to 16th, 1958," Johannesburg, SA Rochlin Archives. See also Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*; Joel B. Pollack, *The Kasrils Affair – Jews and Minority Politics in Post-apartheid South Africa* (Cape Town: Juta & Company Ltd., 2009).

⁷⁷ The SAJBD report of the period 1960-1962, quoted from the editorial of the *Jewish Affairs* in response to South Africa becoming a Republic: "To the Jew, loyalty to the state is a precept enjoined upon him by his Judaism, and every Jew is directed to pray for the welfare of the state in pursuance of that affirmation..." SAJBD, "Report to South African Jewry, 1960-1962," Johannesburg, 1962, 2. In its report of 1974, the SAJBD expressed its position as follows: "...we conceive that the proper role of the Board is to address itself to the members of our own community rather than to the world at large," SAJBD, "Report to South African Jewry, 1972-1974," Johannesburg, 1974, 5; Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 29, views the position taken by the SAJBD in the mid '70s as a shift away from the position it held in 1948 of "steer[ing] away so far as it could from any engagement whatsoever with the political struggle against the government's apartheid program (sic)". Shimoni argues that in the mid-70s, the Board started to move towards eventually adopting a mission statement in the 1990s. This reflected the altered ethos of the SAJBD, described in 1995 by chairman Mervyn Smith as follows: "The Board's ethos has undoubtedly become one of participation in the wider community whilst not neglecting its traditional responsibilities as the guardian of the civil liberties of the Jewish community." SAJBD, 38th National Congress, 20-22 August 1995. See also, Gideon Shimoni, "The Jewish Response to Apartheid: The Record and its Consequences," in *Jews and the State: Dangerous Alliance and the Perils of Privilege* ed. Ezra Mendelsohn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17-49.

⁷⁸ Dr T Schneider's speech at the Yom Hashoah ceremony on 21 April 1963, makes a reference to "the claims of others, irrespective of religion, colour or race (sic)" but frames those "claims" as being equal to the demands of the Jewish community to "respect and justice for ourselves as Jews." T Schneider, Address, 21 April 1963. The wider press's coverage of Yom Hashoah said equally little about the South African context in which the commemoration took place. An arresting example is the editorial in the *Cape Times* in 1990, reporting on the unveiling of the small monument at Pinelands Cemetery #2 on Yom Hashoah. The editorial, entitled "Lessons for humanity," considered the implications of the Holocaust and concluded that "it is well to be alert for the early warning signs" of a "totalitarian nightmare" similar to the Nazis. No connection was made to South Africa, despite every "sign" having been highly visible in the country for decades. "Lessons for humanity," *Cape Times*, 24 April 1990, 6.

survivors and their pain and trauma: to remember as if they were the victim/survivor. The third goal was to honour the survivors and the victims by remembering, bearing witness and protecting Israel. The speeches constructed a strong link between the destruction that the Holocaust brought about and the rebirth to be found in the state of Israel, and the act of remembrance of worldwide Jewry. The commemoration encouraged the idea that the trauma of the Holocaust was a deeply personal one for all Jewish people. But simultaneously, this trauma was “the valorized or intensely cathected basis of identity for an individual or a group rather than events that pose the problematic question of identity,” the “foundational myth.”⁷⁹

Continuity, community and memory after 1994

There are two speeches that show how little the concerns changed in the ensuing 70 years of Holocaust commemoration and how little changed in the rhetoric at play. One speech was given by a well-known historian in Cape Town in 2008,⁸⁰ and the other was by the General Secretary of the SAJBD in Johannesburg in 1980.⁸¹ Both speakers began by referencing the scriptures and both referenced the Passover. While this was understandable considering that Yom Hashoah fell so close to Passover on the calendar, nonetheless the Passover message that both speeches conveyed was that one must remember as if one were there.⁸² LaCapra cautioned against the practice of “obscuring the difference between victims of traumatic historical events and others not directly experiencing them.”⁸³ He suggested that some people found it difficult to trust

⁷⁹ Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 23.

⁸⁰ Mendolsohn, “Bechol dor vador: The Holocaust in South African Jewish Consciousness.” Transcript of speech delivered at the Yom Hashoah ceremony in Cape Town, 2008. Insert, *Cape Jewish Chronicle*, June 2008.

⁸¹ Aleck Goldberg, “Day of Remembrance,” transcript of speech delivered at the Yom Hashoah ceremony, West Park Cemetery, Johannesburg 1980, *Jewish Affairs*, April 1980, 23 – 25.

⁸² The place given to Yom Hashoah on the calendar.

⁸³ LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, ix.

that they would remember the victims of the Holocaust unless they felt “as if they, themselves were there.” If they could not feel this way, then they believed they would forget and thus betray those who died.⁸⁴ Furthermore, by linking the imperative to remember to a sacred text, the penalty for forgetting moves into the spiritual realm.⁸⁵ It is less likely that the person, who has been encouraged to consider their relationship to the history as that of being the living proxy of the dead, will be able to approach the history differently.

The annual memorial service positioned all who attended as having an intimate, familial bond with the dead victims of the Holocaust. An intimate bond with some of the victims of the Holocaust was indeed the reality for some survivors, but what happened when those who had no familial bond to the dead were encouraged to perceive the dead as their own? If the imperative to remember as if you had been “there” were ordained, akin to a commandment from God, then “remembering” the history differently would mean betraying God, one’s people and oneself. A situation with such high stakes, LaCapra points out, “may create a more or less unconscious desire to remain within trauma.”⁸⁶ The problem with “remaining within trauma,” however, is that it complicated any attempt to develop “critical processes of inquiry, judgment and practice.”⁸⁷ Ultimately, “remaining within trauma” complicated the development of empathy.

⁸⁴ LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 22.

⁸⁵ See Peter Novick’s caution against the “sacralisation” of the Holocaust in *The Holocaust in American Life*.

⁸⁶ LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 22.

⁸⁷ LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 23.

LaCapra explains that empathy “marks the point at which the other is indeed recognized and respected as other.”⁸⁸ I would argue, using LaCapra’s framing, that the annual days of remembrance were not about mourning, or about empathy but rather about encouraging an “acting out” of trauma, whereby the past was “performatively regenerated or relived as if it were fully present rather than represented in memory and inscription.”⁸⁹ Within the cemetery this acting out supported the disconnect between participating in the somber commemoration of the genocide victims as a vicarious victim, and engaging with the reality of the apartheid society that lay outside the cemetery walls, not as a victim but as a beneficiary of that unjust system. Using LaCapra’s interpretation of mourning, I would argue that the annual days were not about mourning, for mourning required a

different inflection of performativity: a relation to the past which involves recognizing its difference from the present – simultaneously remembering and forgetting it, thereby allowing for critical judgment and a reinvestment in life, notably social and civic life with its demands, responsibilities, and norms requiring respectful recognition and consideration for others.⁹⁰

The days of mourning served as a closed-circuit of memory-making, creating the “myth of a common past.”⁹¹ A common past suggests a homogeneity that was not the case for the victims of the Nazis other than in death. Furthermore, a myth of a common past created a homogenous identity for any Jewish person anywhere. What was the common identity suggested by the myth? The “common identity” was connected to the survivors. As the number of survivors dwindled, so the notion of what it meant to be “Jewish” shifted closer to reflecting the dominant cultural expression of Judaism in South Africa. Young, shares LaCapra’s concern about responding to the past “as if [it]

⁸⁸ LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 27.

⁸⁹ LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 68.

⁹⁰ LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 68.

⁹¹ Young, *Texture of Memory*, 263.

were one's own past."⁹² Young argues that the consequence of such a conflation is to respond to the current world "in the light of this vicariously gained legacy."⁹³ The "vicariously gained legacy" complicated the process of acknowledging that one held a place of privilege in a racially structured society.

The building of a collective memory by the individuals, who participated, in varying capacities, in the Yom Hashoah ceremonies, encouraged an inward looking orientation to develop an identity of victim/survivor/rescuer within one's "own" group. However, at the same time as the Jewish community was building this identity, so an identity for the collective called "the Jewish community" was being developed on the other side of the cemetery wall. In 1988, Hoffman and Fischer conducted an illuminating survey of the perceptions held by various South Africans of Jewish South Africans and their identity. The response of one interviewee revealed a different construct of the meaning of the Holocaust for South African Jewry:

Perhaps the most tragic experience in all of history befell the Jewish people under Hitlerite Nazism. One then wants to conclude that the Jewish people, having gone through that experience, would be in a better position to appreciate the similarities between Nazism and apartheid. We expect them to be in a better position to empathize with the South African people who have to daily endure the tragedy that apartheid visits upon them. It is perhaps the Jewish community of South Africa that one would have expected more than any other community to be most militantly involved in the struggle.⁹⁴

This comment illustrates Rothberg's theory of "*multidirectional*" memory. Rothberg argued that the process of building or developing a communal memory was less competitive than it was a process of "ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and

⁹² Young, *Texture of Memory*, 281.

⁹³ Young, *Texture of Memory*, 281.

⁹⁴ Neo Mnumzama, in *The Jews of South Africa: what Future?* Tzippi Hoffman and Alan Fischer, (Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers, 1988), 685.

borrowing,” an “interaction of different historical memories.”⁹⁵ The interviewee, Neo Mnumzama, accepted the construction of the identity of South African Jewry as Holocaust victims: “having gone through that experience.” Mnumzama didn’t diminish the Holocaust, instead he “negotiated” what the Holocaust might mean, that it should give the “victims” greater insight into the injustice of apartheid, and make them more likely to oppose apartheid. His suggested communal memory for the Holocaust that allows for a positive “memory” of apartheid could be summed up as: “past victims helping present victims.” The SAJBD leadership and the founders of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre later embraced this construction as a means of gaining legitimacy for a permanent Holocaust centre in Cape Town.

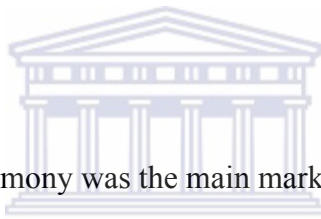
Commemoration is active and the commemorative performance can take place anywhere, or, as Young suggests, at any time.⁹⁶ In Johannesburg and Cape Town, the country’s two main Jewish centres, the Yom Hashoah commemoration took place in the Jewish section of the public cemetery. In her speech at the 2008 Yom Hashoah ceremony in Cape Town, Holocaust survivor Ella Blumenthal pointed to the significance of the commemoration being held in the cemetery: “Every Jew has a Matzeva, a tombstone, a grave to go to. We have none. To us survivors this was denied.”⁹⁷ The cemetery in Pinelands No.2, together with the ceremony, became the proxy tombstone for Blumenthal’s family murdered in the Holocaust, and for all murdered families. Cemeteries are about the present and the future. Jackson’s

⁹⁵ Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 3.

⁹⁶ Young observes that the when one considers the “ways in which memory and its meanings are generated on this day ... Yom Hashoah turns time itself into memorial space.” Young, *Texture of Memory*, 265.

⁹⁷ Ella Blumenthal, transcript of speech delivered at the Yom Hashoah Vehagevurah – Holocaust and Heroism Day, Pinelands Cemetery No.2, Cape Town, Thursday 1 May 2008, *Cape Jewish Chronicle*, (June 2008) insert.

observations about monuments, applies to tombstones and cemeteries: they are a “guide to the future [that] confer a kind of immortality on the dead, ... determine our actions in the years to come... remind us of our obligations, religious or political, and ... keep us on the beaten path, loyal to tradition.”⁹⁸ The cemetery, the memorial and commemoration serve as “devices of communication,”⁹⁹ contributing to the construction of the memorial space.¹⁰⁰ Young observed, “it is the unity of the shared ceremony, which creates the sense of a shared past.”¹⁰¹ The physical separateness of the Jewish cemetery from the general cemetery, the tangible reminders of community members past and present, contributed to the making of a collective memory of commemorating the Holocaust an act of ensuring communal continuity, remembrance, and intimacy.



The annual Yom Hashoah ceremony was the main marker of the genocide for the Jewish community. Holocaust commemorations created and maintained a communal memory of the Holocaust that simultaneously offered a “memory” of apartheid, as something apart from the Jewish community. This memory enabled the Jewish community to manage the contradictions inherent in living as a privileged group within the racial state. The commemorative day offered a sense of the individual’s place in their community, their place in South Africa, and their place in Israel.

⁹⁸ John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *The Necessity for Ruins, and other Topics* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), 93.

⁹⁹ Brian S. Osborne, “Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in Its Place,” draft paper commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage for the Ethnocultural, Racial, Religious, and Linguistic Diversity and Identity Seminar Halifax, Nova Scotia November 1-2, 2001: 20.

¹⁰⁰ See Osborne “Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in Its Place”; Kirk Savage, “The Politics of Memory: Black Emancipation and the Civil War,” in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 130-131 and Paul Connerton *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) for a discussion of the act of commemoration as a performance in the “theatre of memory.”

¹⁰¹ Young, *Texture of Memory*, 280.

Keeping the flame alive

Yom Hashoah played a vital role in keeping the Holocaust alive in the Jewish community's consciousness. However, there were a number of other factors that served a similar function. Two of these factors were the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and the development of Jewish Day Schools in South Africa after World War II. Holocaust education was included in the teaching of Jewish studies in the Jewish day schools.¹⁰² The involvement of youth groups in the Yom Hashoah commemoration and the SAJBD's support of initiatives such as the Student Holocaust Interviewing Project (SHIP) sustained the place of the Holocaust in the consciousness of the Jewish community.¹⁰³

In Johannesburg, the South African National Yad Vashem Memorial Foundation (SA Nat. Yad Vashem Mem. Foundation)¹⁰⁴ organised adult education programmes on the Holocaust, based at the Etz Chayim Synagogue and Community Centre, which housed the modest Yad Vashem memorial.¹⁰⁵ The SA Nat. Yad Vashem Mem. Foundation collaborated with the SAJBD (Johannesburg) in organizing the Yom Hashoah ceremony. The Tolerance Foundation incorporated Holocaust education into their

¹⁰² Ronnie Mink, interviews with author, 13 May 2013, Cape Town and 3-4 July 2013, Johannesburg. Ronnie Mink pioneered the development of Holocaust education within the Jewish days schools in Johannesburg. He viewed his attendance at the first Symposium for Teaching about the Holocaust organised by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem in 1980 as seminal in shaping his approach to the development of a curriculum for Holocaust education.

¹⁰³ SAJBD, "Report of the Executive Council for the period September, 1960 - August, 1962, to be submitted to the Twenty-third Congress, Johannesburg, August 30th to September 3rd 1962," Johannesburg, 31, SA Rochlin Archives. A special youth memorial evening to commemorate the Jewish Day of Remembrance was organised in Johannesburg in April 1962, under the joint auspices of the Youth Department of the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies and the S.A. Zionist Youth Council. It was attended by about 1 500 people.

¹⁰⁴ The South African National Yad Vashem Memorial Foundation opened on 10 August 1970. Among those attending the opening was the provincial administrator, Sybrandt Van Niekerk, and Mayor of Johannesburg Sam Moss. Representatives of the army and diplomatic corps attended as did church leaders and leaders of Johannesburg Jewish community. "South African Yad Vashem Memorial Opened; Pledge Never to Allow Repetition of Holocaust," *Jewish Telegraph Agency*, 11 August 1970, accessed 20 August 2014, <http://www.jta.org/1970/08/11/archive/south-african-yad-vashem-memorial-opened-pledge-never-to-allow-repetition-of-holocaust>; *Jewish Year Book*, (1970-1971), 197. BJPA.

¹⁰⁵ This comprised a series of wood panels designed by South African Jewish artist Ernst Ullmann, a former refugee from Nazi Germany.

programmes with school students. Some of the members of the survivor support group, She'erith Hapletah, were active in the SA Nat. Yad Vashem Mem. Foundation and the HMC.

In Cape Town, the Holocaust Memorial Council (HMC) and the Gitlin Library organised Holocaust education and awareness programmes that included visiting exhibitions and lecturers, as well as screenings of Holocaust-related documentaries.¹⁰⁶ They also developed programmes for the weeks preceding and following Yom Hashoah. The HMC, in partnership with the Union of Orthodox Synagogues, coordinated the Yom Hashoah ceremony. In the first venture of its sort, the HMC assisted in publishing a collection of the stories of the survivors living in Cape Town.

By the 1990s, a number of factors had ensured that the Holocaust was part of the wider South African consciousness, despite the absence of the Holocaust in the school curriculum. A combination of international influences, such as the Eichmann Trial and films such as *Schindler's List*,¹⁰⁷ together with local incidents such as the controversy over the screening of the episode on the Holocaust in the "World at War" series helped raise public awareness.¹⁰⁸ Prime Minister BJ Vorster's visit to Israel in 1976, which

¹⁰⁶ The HMC was a joint venture of the SAJBD Cape Committee and the Western Province Zionist Council. The Gitlin Library was under the auspices of the WPZC.

¹⁰⁷ The SAJBD's Executive Council reported to the twenty-third Congress that there could be "no doubt" that the Eichmann Trial did "much to enlighten the moderate sections of the populace on the real implications of Nazism." SAJBD, "Report of the Executive Council for the period September, 1960-August, 1962, to be submitted to the Twenty-third Congress, Johannesburg, August 30th to September 3rd 1962," Johannesburg, 15-17, SA Rochlin Archives.

¹⁰⁸ Unlike the US and Western Europe, the TV series, *Holocaust* was not shown by the South African Broadcasting Corporation. What had more of an impact was the screening of the episode, "Genocide" of the "World at War" TV series. Shain, "South Africa," in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*, 683. American Jewish Year Book, 503; Brian Barrow, "Ban Strains TV Integrity," *Cape Times*, 17 May 1976, 3; Video of opening of 'Memories of Muizenberg' exhibition at London Jewish Cultural Centre (LJCC), 21 May 2013; 2 July 2013, accessed 2 April 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2o5WUNiEss>.

included a visit to Yad Vashem, also made an impact.¹⁰⁹ Neo-Nazis had paradoxically played a part in keeping the Holocaust in the public domain through their use of Nazi symbols and rhetoric (despite denying the Holocaust).¹¹⁰ The anti-apartheid movement had also referenced the Holocaust from the late 1940s.¹¹¹

The Holocaust and the various ways in which it was commemorated, profoundly influenced South African Jewish identity and occupied a place in the general South African consciousness long before the establishment of a Holocaust Centre in Cape Town.¹¹² “The Holocaust” may well have meant different things to different South Africans, but the landscape onto which the Cape Town Holocaust Centre was constructed, was not in this sense, empty.



¹⁰⁹ See Sasha Polakow-Suransky's description of the response to Vorster's visit in South Africa and Israel. *The Unspoken Alliance: Israel's Secret Relationship with Apartheid South Africa* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 90-92. See also Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 186.

¹¹⁰ The attempted blowing up of the Wald memorial in June 1962, and the regalia and rhetoric of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) in the 1980s are two examples. SAJBD, "Report September, 1960 to August, 1962, submitted to the Twenty-third Congress, Johannesburg, August 30th - September 3rd, 1962," Johannesburg, 16. SA Rochlin Archives. *American Jewish Year Book* (1980), 276.

¹¹¹ Gilbert, "Jews and the Racial State," 32-64; Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*; Shain, "South Africa," in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*. Tzippi Hoffman and Alan Fischer, *The Jews of South Africa: What Future?*; Immanuel Suttner ed. *Cutting through the Mountain: Interviews with South African Jewish Activists* (London: Penguin Books, 1997).

¹¹² Opinions about what it meant to be Jewish in apartheid South Africa differed greatly, but very little dissent was voiced about the place of the Holocaust within that identity. A great number of references in Jewish communal newspapers and scholarly works attest to the impact of the Holocaust on South African Jewry's concept of themselves and their community. Consider Shain, "South Africa," in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*; Tzippi Hoffman and Alan Fischer, *The Jews of South Africa: what Future?*; Suttner, *Cutting through the Mountain*.

CHAPTER TWO

STEPS TOWARDS a PERMANENT CENTRE

The Cape Town Holocaust Centre opened on 10 August 1999. The Centre was the first Holocaust Centre in South Africa and in Africa. Not surprisingly, the guest list for the opening included Holocaust survivors and their families, as well as prominent members of the Jewish community and Jewish community organisations, such as the President of the South African Jewish Board of Directors, Mervyn Smith; the chair of the South African Zionist Federation (Cape Council), Adv. Jonathan Silke, journalists from the *Cape Town Jewish Chronicle* and the national community newspaper *The Jewish Review*, as well as the Chief Rabbi of South Africa, Cyril Harris. What was less predictable was the inclusion in the list of invited VIPS, prominent leaders of the struggle against apartheid such as Professor Kader Asmal, Archbishop Emeritus, the Reverend Desmond Tutu and the Reverend Beyers Naudé.¹

This chapter examines why South Africans, who had no personal connection to the events that had taken place in Europe over 70 years before, agreed to attend the opening and why, in the case of Professor Asmal, Archbishop Tutu and Reverend Beyers Naudé, they lent their names to the Centre as patrons. The chapter explores why and how a Holocaust Centre came to be built in South Africa, a country where the vast majority of citizens had no direct connection to the Holocaust. The chapter considers how the Centre came to gain legitimacy with a public wider than the small Jewish community of South Africa.

¹ Some, like former President Nelson Rohlhlala Mandela, and Thabo Mbeki had tendered their apologies. Former President Mandela sent a letter, which was read out at the proceedings. Reverend Beyers Naudé was unable to attend due to ill health. CTHC Collection.

An exhibition in 1985 held at the height of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, and another exhibition, 10 years later, on the eve of South Africa's becoming a democracy, were significant in shaping an understanding of the role and place of Holocaust education in South Africa. While the exhibition in 1985 was seen by the founding director of the CTHC, Myra Osrin, as the forerunner to an acceptance of Holocaust education in the mainstream South African education landscape, it was the exhibition of Anne Frank in the World, that ran from 1994 to 1995, visiting major centres in South Africa, and Windhoek in neighbouring Namibia, that was significant. This exhibition brought Holocaust education into national focus. The exhibition was a product of its time. Without the political changes in South Africa, the exhibition would not have come to South Africa. The exhibition provided a vehicle for a number of institutions to indicate their legitimate place in the nascent democracy. The framing of Holocaust education as connected, albeit at arm's length to apartheid history was a critical step towards an acceptance by a wider South African community, of a permanent Holocaust centre in South Africa.

First steps: the Holocaust at the South African Cultural History Museum

There is seldom a straightforward answer to a question concerning the beginning of an idea, but in the case of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, one name keeps recurring: Myra Osrin.² Osrin was a prominent member of the Cape Town Jewish Community, past chair of the Western Province Zionist Council (WPZC) and chair of its education committee, founder and member of the editorial board of the *Cape Jewish Chronicle*, and honorary life president of the Bnoth Zion Association.

² This view is undisputed and evident in the numerous articles, interviews, correspondence and official document of recognition issued by the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD), for Osrin's work.

In my interviews with Myra Osrin, she identified three key events that had inspired her: the “1985 exhibition,” the “Anne Frank in the World” (‘AFITW’) exhibition tour of 1994-1995, and meeting Stephen Smith, Director of Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre, in 1996.³ She described the process of constructing the Centre as a “journey,” the start of which she identified as the development of an exhibition in 1985 marking the 40th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and the response it generated. In 1984, the WPZC formed a Committee for Public Events for the Jewish Community to put together the 40th anniversary exhibition, with Osrin as its president.⁴ The Committee for Public Events comprised members of the WPZC, the Gitlin Library,⁵ the SAJBD (Cape Council), the Jewish Museum, She’erith Hapletah (the Jewish Survivors’ Association in South Africa) and the Students Holocaust Interview Project (SHIP).



The Committee for Public Events had wished to make the commemoration of the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz a larger and more public affair. They chose the South African Cultural History Museum (SACHM) in the centre of Cape Town, not only because it was “accessible to all,”⁶ but also because the SACHM already had an association with the Gitlin Library.⁷ The choice of venue was a significant development for Holocaust education. Whereas previous exhibitions were developed with the Jewish community in mind and placed within Jewish-community venues, housing the exhibition in a national museum gave the 1985 exhibition the status of

³ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

⁴ So as not to drown in a sea of acronyms, I refer to the Committee for Public Events for the Jewish Community as “the Committee for Public Events”.

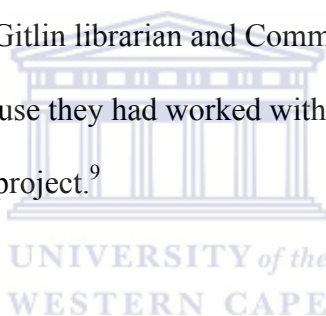
⁵ In 1959, the Western Province Zionist Council (WPZC) established the Jacob Gitlin Library to house a collection of books, journals, archived material, brochures and other material either considered of interest and concern to the Jewish community. The Library is commonly known as the Gitlin Library. Western Province Zionist Council (WPZC), Minutes of the Meeting of the WPZC Committee, 20 May 1985, University of Cape Town Special Collections: WPZC: Box BC 850, A WPZC Folder A5.

⁶ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

⁷ Yvonne Verblun, interview by author, 13 January 2014, Cape Town. Verblun was the librarian of the Gitlin Library from 1980-1994.

being of wider interest.⁸ Presenting the history of the Holocaust in the SACHM suggested that the Holocaust was not only part of the history of the Jewish community, but also part of South African and world history. The venue chosen for the exhibition reinforced a particular position for the Jewish community in the wider South African landscape shaped by apartheid policy to reflect apartheid's dependence of strong ethnic divisions.

In her capacity as president of the Committee for Public Events, Osrin was tasked with approaching the director of the SACHM, Jannie Roux, to discuss hosting a small exhibition telling the story of the liberation of Auschwitz and the history of the Holocaust. Yvonne Verblun, Gitlin librarian and Committee member explained that the SACHM was chosen because they had worked with the Gitlin Library on a previous occasion on a small project.⁹



According to Osrin, SACHM Director, Roux told her that in keeping with the SACHM's policies, the exhibition would have to include some South African connection, and asked her whether there were any Auschwitz survivors who were now South Africans, around whom the exhibition could be based.¹⁰ Osrin took up Roux's request and decided to approach Holocaust survivors who had come to settle in Cape Town.

The Jewish Survivors' Association in South Africa (Western Cape), known as She'erith Hapletah (SH), had been formed in Cape Town in 1948. SH provided a safe space for survivors to speak to one another. Apart from the annual Yom Hashoah

⁸ Some of the programmes developed for previous exhibitions had included "outreach" activities for audiences who were not Jewish. The "outreach" was secondary to the exhibition, however.

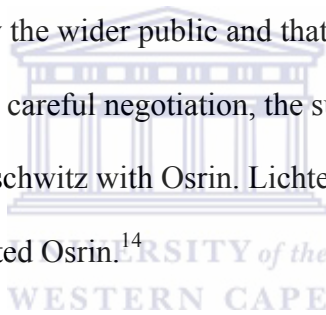
⁹ Yvonne Verblun, interview by author, 12 July 2014, Cape Town.

¹⁰ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

Commemoration, survivors did not share their stories publicly. According to Osrin, “[the survivors] didn’t talk about it. Even members of the community didn’t ask them. Their children didn’t ask.”¹¹

Osrin made contact with SH secretary, Xavier Piat-ka, and through him, obtained permission to interview the survivors. Osrin recalled that the SH members were “very wary” of too personal a focus and of being victimised. The survivors asked Osrin that their identities be protected and that only their first names and the letter of their surnames be used. Osrin’s assurance did little to quell their anxiety initially.¹²

Holocaust survivor Miriam Lichterman explained that the survivors were anxious that they would not be believed by the wider public and that they would be ridiculed or interrogated.¹³ However, after careful negotiation, the survivors finally agreed to share their experiences of Auschwitz with Osrin. Lichterman explain that they had agreed only because they trusted Osrin.¹⁴



The survivors’ decision to trust Osrin marked a critical development in Holocaust education, representation and commemoration in South Africa. It was the first time that a locally developed exhibition used as its core, the testimonies of Holocaust survivors who had come to live in South Africa.¹⁵ It was the first time that survivor testimony was so central to a commemoration placed on a broader platform.

¹¹ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town. Osrin’s description of the relationship between survivors and their children is a generalisation, and not strictly accurate as there were few survivors did share their experiences with their children. Nonetheless, her observation that the sharing of memory was a private affair that happened between survivors and within their homes, is borne out by the adult children of survivors who volunteered at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre with whom I had personal communication in my capacity as Education officer and Director from 2005-2014.

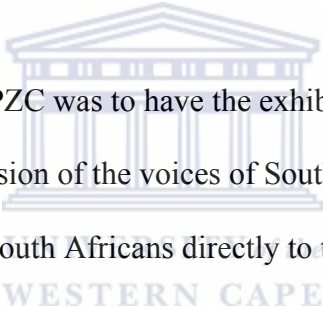
¹² Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

¹³ Miriam Lichterman, personal communication with author, 26 August 2013, Cape Town.

¹⁴ Miriam Lichterman, personal communication with author, 26 August 2013, Cape Town.

¹⁵ I follow the convention of using the term, “testimony” to refer to the oral histories of Holocaust survivors.

Through its choice of venue for the exhibition and the use of the testimonies of survivors of the Holocaust who had come to live in Cape Town, the Committee for Public Events brought the history of the Holocaust out of the Jewish community and into a wider world. The cover-page of the exhibition brochure included the word *yiskor*, “Lest we forget”.¹⁶ The 1985 exhibition appeared to open up the “we” beyond the Jewish community. However all the ambiguities that marked the presentation of the history of the Holocaust in South Africa namely, who comprised the “we,” what and whose history was not to be forgotten, and how the history was to be remembered, were evident in the content of the exhibition and the venue chosen for its display.



The foremost desire of the WPZC was to have the exhibition in a public space viewed by a broader public. The inclusion of the voices of South African survivors of the Holocaust connected Jewish South Africans directly to the history of the Holocaust. However, the SACHM was a museum of apartheid in the 1980s, a time of intense, brutal repression and superficial reform. Placing the exhibition in the SACHM disconnected the exhibition from its own context.

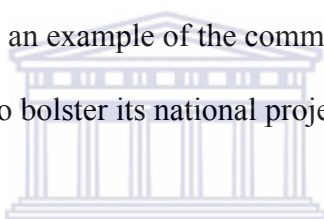
The building chosen for the exhibition had been part of state exercise of individual and group identity and collective memory in Cape Town and the wider South Africa, since its original function as the Dutch East India Company’s Slave Lodge from the 17th-19th centuries.¹⁷ The building had served as a concrete boundary separating free burgher (citizen) from slave, defining who the “public” was and who was not. In

¹⁶ *Brochure for Holocaust Exhibition Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps, SA Cultural Museum, Adderley Street, Cape Town, 17 April-15 May 1985*, compiled by Yvonne Verblun (c. April 1985), CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁷ In post-apartheid South Africa, the building’s origins are acknowledged in its current name, the Slave Lodge.

1807, the British colonial government converted the slave lodge into government offices.¹⁸ The building subsequently served as a post office, a library, the Supreme Court, and at one stage, held the upper house of the South African Parliament before the Houses of Parliament building was opened in 1885.¹⁹

In 1966 the former slave lodge was renamed the South African Cultural History Museum (SACHM). Building on a previous era of segregation, the apartheid state sought to develop South Africa as a society where identities were defined, measured and fixed through a phalanx of laws that would enable social engineering on a grand scale. The former Company Slave Lodge's incarnation in 1966 as the South African Cultural History Museum was an example of the commandeering by the apartheid state of spaces and buildings to bolster its national project.



The creation of the SACHM also marked the state's division between "cultural" and "ethnographic" collections. This division merged "whiteness", "culture" and European-ness into one category. The SACHM was the chosen location to display this collection. Everything "else" was retained together with the fauna and flora: the "natural" landscape and its "creatures". The SACHM portrayed the "cultural" history of "white" South Africans, and reinforced the apartheid myth of fixed identities and the superiority of the so-called "white" group because of its European heritage. The SAHCM showed what it meant to be "white".²⁰

¹⁸ In 1807 there were 283 slaves in the Lodge. Some of the slaves were sold, and the remaining slaves were moved the western wing of the Lodge. They were later moved to a rented building in 1811, and nine years later to a new Slave Lodge. They were finally set free in 1828.

(<http://www.iziko.org.za/static/page/slave-lodge> accessed 10 November 2014;

<http://media1.mweb.co.za/iziko/sh/resources/slavery/slavelodge.html> accessed 5 November 2014.

¹⁹ South Africa's Houses of Parliament are still housed in the 1884 building, which has been extended since then. The building is within 100m of the Slave Lodge.

²⁰ See Patricia Davison, "Rethinking the Practice of Ethnography and Cultural History in South African museums," *African Studies* 49, no. 1 (1990): 149-167.

It was no small accident that the SACHM was opened on 6 April 1966, a public holiday in South Africa named after Jan van Riebeeck, the leader of the Dutch colonial settlers. The holiday had been instituted four years after the National Party had come to power in 1948 and was called Van Riebeeck's Day until 1980, when it was renamed Founder's Day. Both names indicated a version of South Africa's history that suggested that South Africa "began" with the arrival of European settlers. The state intended that the SACHM support the construction of "white South African identity" as essentially European. To show "white" South Africa's ties to Europe, the SACHM housed artefacts from Europe. In 1986, the SACHM's annual newsletter, *Bulletin of the South African Cultural History Museum*, stated that, "the significance of the local is to be accurately established only by reference to the international."²¹ The term, "European" was used both as a geographic identifier and a "racial" category in South Africa. In the apartheid lexicon, "European" was a synonym for "white."²² The "cultural history" referred to in the South African Cultural History Museum's name, included cultural artefacts from Europe. Through its displays of this exclusive definition of "cultural history," the SACHM connected South Africans classified by the state as "white" to matters "European."

In accordance with the dispensation brought in by the 1983 constitution following the establishment of the Tricameral Parliament, museums were divided into "own affairs" and "general affairs." The SACHM was classified as a "white" "own affairs"

²¹ *Bulletin of the South African Cultural History Museum* 7 (Cape Town: South African Cultural History Museum, 1986).

²² As was the case in other parts of the "new world", not all Europeans were considered "white" enough. The criteria for "whiteness" included a certain class and religion and language. The immigration laws of many countries expressed these criteria. South Africa was no exception. However, in 1905 the South African government recognized Yiddish as a European language, and in so doing, allowed entrance to Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe whose mother tongue was Yiddish. This ruling bestowed on the immigrants "white" status, despite their religion and class.

institution.²³ By 1985, the SACHM stood at the beginning of a “museum mile” within easy walking distance of the South African Museum, a museum of anthropology and natural history, and the South African National Gallery. Through its collections, each museum served to indicate how South Africa’s stratified public was to understand its place in the hierarchy of a racial state as well as what its particular “heritage” was.²⁴ Although South Africa’s entry into World War II was not without contention, by 1985 South African textbooks presented the War as both a “European” history and one in which South Africa had played a part. No mention was made of those South Africans not seen as “white” who had served during the war. Nor was any mention made of the racial policies of the Nazis, nor of their genocidal actions. Osrin’s request for the exhibition to be displayed at the SACHM was not dismissed, because it was about a history that was European, just like most of the furniture and artefacts displayed in the SACHM. Roux’s request that the exhibition be connected further to South Africa through the inclusion of survivor testimony was entirely consistent with the role the SACHM played in making the connections between “white” South Africa and Europe. The exhibition, like the SACHM, encouraged visitors to turn their gaze northwards to Europe, and to view the history of Europe as part of the “cultural” history of so-called “white” South Africans.

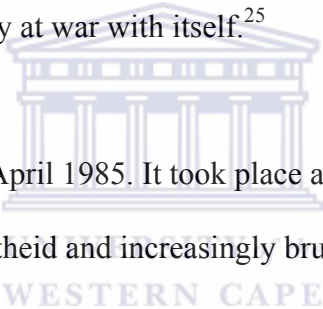
The exhibition, which sought to move Holocaust commemoration and education out of the Jewish community into broader Cape Town, served instead to place it in a heritage of European-ness and “white-ness.” It did not challenge the construction of

²³ Davison, “Museums and the Re-shaping of Memory”.

²⁴ A number of scholars have written about the manner whereby State museums, in particular the South African Museum, supported the state’s construction of “racial” identities. See for example, Gerard Corsane, editor of *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: an Introductory Reader*, and Davison, “Museums and Re-shaping of Memory”; Kwezi ka Mpumlwana, Gerard Corsane, Juanita Pastor-Makhurane, and Ciraj Rassool, “Inclusion and the Power of Representation: South African Museums and the Cultural Politics of Social Transformation,” in *Museums, Society, Inequality*, ed. Richard Sandell (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), 244-261.

the identity of “white” South Africans as being connected to Europe and its past. There is no indication from the minutes or the interviews I conducted that this had ever been the contention of the WPZC. What was achieved through the exhibition however was the unambiguous inclusion of Jewish South Africans into the “white” minority as it linked South African Jewry to European Jewry.

Furthermore, the exhibition did not challenge viewers to consider the contemporary reality in which all of South Africa was embroiled in the mid-1980s. The exhibition, presented in a space dedicated to showing what constituted “white” culture, did not require visitors to consider the relationship of the past the exhibition depicted with the repressive realities of a country at war with itself.²⁵



The exhibition opened on 16 April 1985. It took place against a backdrop of intensifying resistance to apartheid and increasingly brutal state repression, leading to the declaration of a State of Emergency on 21 July 1985. The State of Emergency granted the apartheid state extraordinary powers.²⁶ The State of Emergency lasted five years, diligently renewed each year through a parliamentary process. It had “devastating consequences for the lives of millions of South Africans, particularly those living in townships subjected to occupation by security forces, curfews,

²⁵ In 1984, the South African Defence Force troops were sent into the townships. See Jacklyn Cock and Laurie Nathan, eds. *War and Society: the Militarisation of South Africa* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 1989).

²⁶ The Emergency regulations allowed for inter alia: the army to take over the function of the police; detention without trial; imposition of curfews; immunity from prosecution of security and police forces; prohibition of the presence of journalists at unrest or security actions; prohibition of dissemination of audio-visual material, prohibition of 'subversive' statements, including information on security action, restricted gatherings, strikes, boycotts, detention conditions, political campaigns and blank spaces in newspapers; prohibition of photographs of unrest or security actions. The Educational Institutions' Emergency Regulations included measures to control access to schools through limiting access to school premises only of registered students, during school hours and only for specified activities. The Regulations also attempted to control what was taught by prohibiting any deviation from the approved curriculum. Any disruption of school activities was prohibited.

restrictions of every imaginable kind and deaths of men, women and children as an almost daily occurrence.”²⁷

One could argue that in the light of the apartheid state’s growing repression, the absence of any reference in the 1985 exhibition to parallels between the Nazis’ racial ideology and atrocities and the policy and practice of apartheid in South African was a defensive minority-community response, consistent with the accommodationist approach taken by the SAJBD since the early 1950s.²⁸ What also needs to be taken into consideration, however, is the influence of the dominant exclusivist Holocaust narrative at the time, as voiced by historians such as Yehuda Bauer, Steven Katz and Lucy Davidowicz, of the uniqueness and extremity of the Holocaust.²⁹

The introductory note to the exhibition booklet written by Yvonne Verblun and in the official messages by Mayor of Cape Town, Alderman Sol Kreiner and the Israeli Ambassador, Eliyahu Lankin reflected the narrative of the Holocaust as the “darkest years of human history”. There was no suggestion in the official messages in the booklet accompanying the exhibition of a connection between the history of the Holocaust and the social conditions in which the exhibition was displayed. According to Lankin, the exhibition would “show us just a few of the details of the horrors of the

²⁷ Max Coleman, *A Crime Against Humanity: Analysing the Repression of the Apartheid State* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1998), 42.

²⁸Historians have outlined the responses of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies to apartheid. See for example, Shirli Gilbert, “Anne Frank in South Africa: Remembering the Holocaust during and after Apartheid,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 26, no. 3 (Winter 2012): 366-393, and Gilbert, “Jews and the Racial State”; Gideon Shimoni, “The Jewish Response to Apartheid: the Record and its Consequences,” in *Jews and the State: Dangerous Alliance and the Perils of Privilege*, ed. Ezra Mendelsohn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17-49, as well as Sally Frankenthal and Milton Shain, “Accommodation, Apathy and Activism,” *Jewish Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1993), 5-12.

²⁹ See for example, Yehuda Bauer, *The Holocaust in Historical Perspective*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978); Lucy S. Dawidowicz, *The Holocaust and the Historians* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1981); Steven Katz, *The Holocaust in Historical Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) and “The ‘Unique’ Intentionality of the Holocaust,” *Modern Judaism* (1981): 161-183.

Holocaust experienced by people now living in South Africa”(sic).³⁰ The sentence was unintentionally ambiguous and imprecise about whether the exhibition was meant to encourage an awareness of the horrors of the Holocaust survivors who happened to be “living in South Africa,” or solidarity with those who were suffering *because* of the apartheid state. This ambiguity was removed by his concluding sentence:

“Visiting this exhibition expresses solidarity with those who suffered and those who perished.”³¹

In their messages in the exhibition booklet, Lankin and Kreiner identified the exhibition’s role: it was to be a memorial to “perpetuate the sacred memory of the six million who perished [and] for those... who found the spiritual strength to revolt against and resist their Nazi oppressors.”³² The exhibition was an injunction to the visitor to know, abhor and remember the deed, to sanctify the dead and admire the good. There was no need, beyond the act of visiting the exhibition, and certainly no requirement for the visitor to respond to the oppressive conditions of South African society.

The survivors were afforded the role of being the living reminders to everyone else that “never again shall the world witness such barbarism.”³³ Ironically, whilst the voices of the survivors formed the core of the exhibition and enabled the exhibition to reach a wider audience through it being housed in the SACHM, Kreiner’s description

³⁰ *Brochure for the Holocaust Exhibition Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps, SA Cultural Museum, Adderley Street, Cape Town, 17 April-15 May 1985*, compiled by Yvonne Verblun (Cape Town: c. April 1985), CTHC Collection.

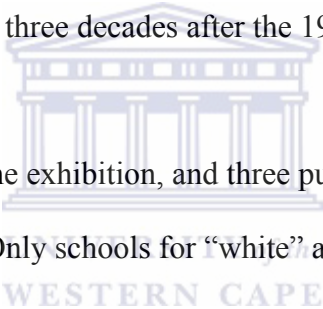
³¹ Eliyahu Lankin, Letter from the Embassy of Israel, included in the *Brochure for the Holocaust Exhibition Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps*, CTHC Collection.

³² Sol Kreiner, Message from His Worship the Mayor, Alderman Sol Kreiner, *Brochure for the Holocaust Exhibition Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps*, CTHC Collection.

³³ Kreiner, Message from His Worship the Mayor, Alderman Sol Kreiner, CTHC Collection.

of the survivors as “living reminders,” suggested that the survivors had no agency beyond being sacred containers and objects of history. They were a moving exhibition of the past, trapped in the past.

The exhibition brochure not only indicated why the Holocaust was to be remembered, it also suggested what should be remembered about the Holocaust. The Brochure displayed a conception of the Holocaust as a unique, unsurpassed catastrophe, the “most shameful record”, the “most tragic”, the “darkest years of human history”, and thus not comparable with the increasing brutality expressed by the state in South Africa. A number of historians shared this framing of the Holocaust as unique, and it remains unresolved more than three decades after the 1985 exhibition.³⁴



A number of schools visited the exhibition, and three public lectures as well as two panel discussions were held. Only schools for “white” and “coloured” children were allowed to visit the Museum. When asked why this was the case, and why “black” children didn’t attend, Yvonne Verblun made no mention of the unrest and school boycotts under way. Instead she said that she thought it was logistical.³⁵

The programme of lectures focused on the history of the Holocaust. One of the panel discussions was an interfaith panel addressing the topic, “The Holocaust and its significance to us.”³⁶ The second panel discussion, “We were there,” was a discussion

³⁴ See for example, Davidowicz, *What is the Use of Jewish History?*; Lipstadt, “Not Facing History,”; Bauer, “Whose Holocaust?” Wiesel, “Trivializing the Holocaust”; Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life*; LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*; Craps and Rothberg, “Introduction: Transcultural Negotiations of Holocaust Memory,”; Stone, “The Historiography of Genocide”; Moses, “Conceptual Blockages and Definitional Dilemmas in the ‘Racial Century,’” and Blatman, “Holocaust Scholarship: Towards a Post-uniqueness Era.”

³⁵ Yvonne Verblun, interview by author, 12 July 2014, Cape Town.

³⁶ The panelists were Dean E L King (Church of the Province of Southern Africa), Father R Hickley (Catholic), Rabbi E N Kaye (Orthodox Cape Town Hebrew Congregation), Professor J du Gruchy

among survivors of the Holocaust.³⁷ At the request of the SACHM,³⁸ the exhibition extended its run for a further three weeks.³⁹ Osrin said that the positive response to the exhibition made her understand that while the general public had little knowledge of the Holocaust, they had great interest.⁴⁰ And this positive response was an important motivator for increasing Holocaust education beyond the Jewish community. Subsequently, the 1985 exhibition panels were used for Holocaust education programmes organised by the Gitlin Library.

After the success of the “1985 Exhibition,” a Holocaust Memorial Council (HMC) was established to co-ordinate Holocaust commemoration and education programmes in the Western Cape. The HMC functioned as an ad hoc body under the auspices of the SAJBD (Cape Council) and the WPZC. In a letter to the historian, Professor Martin Gilbert, asking him for a short essay for the Cape Jewish Chronicle, the Executive Director of the SAJBD explained the HMC as follows:

WESTERN CAPE
Until now, all the activities related to the Holocaust were handled by the [South African] Board of Deputies in consultation with She’erith Hapletah. However with the advancing years the members of She’erith Hapletah have decided to gradually hand over their responsibilities in favour of the [Holocaust] Memorial Council.⁴¹

Osrin was appointed chairperson of the HMC in April 1991.⁴² At the meeting of the HMC on 25 July 1991, Osrin raised the need for a Holocaust Centre that would serve

(University of Cape Town). The Chairman was Rabbi Dr D Sherman (Cape Town Progressive Jewish Congregation).

³⁷ *Brochure for the Holocaust Exhibition Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Nazi Concentration Camps*, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

³⁸ Despite the SACHM’s request to extend the exhibition’s run, the SACHM annual newsletter of 1985, *Bulletin of the South African Cultural History Museum* 7, did not make mention of the Holocaust exhibition. I could find no explanation for this omission in any of the records, nor could anyone associated with the SACHM at the time provide an explanation.

³⁹ WPZC. Minutes of the Western Province Zionist Council meeting, 20 May 1985. A5, A, Western Province Zionist Council BC850, Jewish Studies Library, University of Cape Town Archive.

⁴⁰ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

⁴¹ Ian Sacks to Professor Martin Gilbert, 1 March 1991. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁴² Minutes of the HMC: 24 April 1991. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

as a “permanent house for the 1985 exhibition and other relevant material.”⁴³ The Jewish Day School, Herzlia, was suggested as a possible venue, as was the Jewish Museum.⁴⁴ However, there was doubt about the capacity of either venue to house a Holocaust Centre. The meeting reached no decision, nor was action taken until three years later, when Yvonne Verblun, the Gitlin Librarian, “urged the committee to establish a Holocaust Resource Centre.”⁴⁵

How could one account for this apparent “silence” at HMC meetings between 1992 and 1995, concerning the question of a permanent Holocaust Centre? One reason was that the HMC had its hands full, as its list of activities and programmes in that period attests. Between 1992 and 1995, the HMC was involved in organising the annual Yom HaShoah memorial services in Cape Town, it co-ordinated a programme for the travelling exhibition developed by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre called ‘The Courage to Care’, as well as organising a Holocaust education week that included education programmes for state and private schools, as well as Jewish Day schools. In addition to this, it hosted film screenings. It became increasingly clear to Osrin and the HMC that without a permanent home, the sustainability of the HMC projects was in doubt.

The other reason for the apparent silence at HMC board meetings on the question of a permanent exhibition space concerned the arrival of the ‘Anne Frank In The World: 1929-1945’ (‘AFITW’) exhibition in South Africa. The chairperson and some HMC members had been involved in the nation-wide tour of the exhibition.

⁴³ Minutes of the HMC: 25 July 1991. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁴⁴ The Jewish Museum was housed in what had been the first synagogue built in South Africa in 1863. In 1905, a “new” larger synagogue was built next to the original synagogue. The 1905 Synagogue became known as the “New Great Shul” or the “Gardens Shul”, and remains in use more than a century later.

⁴⁵ Minutes of the HMC: 31 October 1995. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Anne Frank in the World and South Africa

Created in 1985 by the Anne Frank House, Amsterdam, the ‘AFITW’ exhibition used over 600 photographs and documents to tell the story of Anne Frank and her family. It included an exhibition that had already travelled in Europe extensively by 1990. The political developments in South Africa in the early 1990s resulted in the Anne Frank House changing its policy of non-engagement with apartheid South Africa. Four months after his release from prison, Nelson Mandela visited the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, to receive the 1988 Sakharov Prize. A photograph taken at the time showed Nelson and Winnie Mandela in front of panels of the ‘AFITW’ exhibition on display at the European Parliament on 13 June 1990. To the left of Winnie Mandela stood a young historian, Dienke Hondius. Her husband, Jan Erik Dubbelman, now a Director of the Anne Frank Stichting and Director of International Affairs at the Anne Frank House (AF House), recalled the moment the photograph was taken:

Nelson Mandela visited the ‘AFITW’ exhibition and told us that he knew the Diary very well – that it was the first book he read in prison. Mandela went on to explain how his lawyer, who was Jewish, gave him the "Diary of Anne Frank" and that the book was a book of hope. Nelson Mandela told us that he and his fellow prisoners had made notes with memorable quotes on toilet paper, as they were only allowed to have one book per month.⁴⁶

This connection between Mandela, South Africa and Anne Frank in 1990 was “personal, direct and meaningful”⁴⁷ for Dubbleman, and encouraged him to consider the possibility of taking the exhibition to South Africa.

Six months after meeting Mandela, Dubbleman wrote to Jan Nico Scholten, the President of the Association of Western European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA). After expressing his delight at having met Mandela, he asked whether

⁴⁶ Jan Erik Dubbleman, interview by author, 1 June 2012, Cape Town. Dubbleman’s entry on his Facebook page, 6 December 2013. Accessed 10 January 2014. Dubbleman recalled that Ahmed Kathrada confirmed Mandela’s account and said that he, Kathrada, still had those notes in his library. Govan Mbeki also confirmed the story to Dubbleman.

⁴⁷ Jan Erik Dubbleman, interview by author, 1 June 2012, Cape Town.

Scholten and he could “explore the possibilities for a visit of the exhibition to – democratic - South Africa” at the beginning of the following year.⁴⁸

From the archive it is evident that Dubbleman had already begun investigating the possibility of taking the exhibition to South Africa before he wrote to Scholten in December 1990. This is evident from a faxed report Dubbleman received on 6 February 1991 from Gillian Walnes, Director and co-founder of the Anne Frank Trust.⁴⁹ The report addressed what would have been Dubbleman’s concerns: whether the South African Jewish community would be receptive to the idea of the exhibition coming to South Africa, whether there would be support from the anti-apartheid movement, whether there would be funding available, and whether the timing was right.



Walnes’s report detailed the “discreet enquiries among leading members of the South African Jewish community” and contacts made in the preceding three months.⁵⁰ It included information about follow-up in London with “people involved with the Anti-Apartheid movement,” concerning the feasibility of bringing the ‘AFITW’ exhibition to South Africa. The report also examined the issue of funding and stated that, “unlike most of the other countries, there will be no problem here.” Not only would funding not be a problem, Walnes reported, but “funding could be found within SA [South

⁴⁸ Translated from the letter written in Dutch and dated 12 December 1990. AF Archives, Amsterdam. “...wellicht kunnen we in het begin van het volgen jaar een nader gesprek hebben ...en misshien ook de mogelikhede verkennen voor een bezoek van de expositie an een – democratisch- Zuid-Afrika?”

⁴⁹ Walnes, G to Dubbelman J, 6 February 1991, File 1, Letters/Notes/Reports South Africa, Anne Frank House Archive, Anne Frank House. The Anne Frank Trust is the UK partner of the AF House.

⁵⁰ Mrs Pearl Dale, a friend of Walnes’s, had visited South Africa, and made some of the “discrete enquiries” with the South Africans.

Africa] for our other international projects as well as the plans for the extension of the Anne Frank Museum.”⁵¹

Furthermore, Walnes stated, the country, “anxious to re-establish cultural links with the world post-Apartheid would buy a permanent copy of the exhibition.” The report also concluded that the “initial tour” should visit Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban, and that the permanent exhibition could visit smaller towns. Walnes included the urging of Shalom Charikar, the Chairman of the London-based organisation, “Jews against Apartheid,” that the exhibition be taken to a “traditionally hard-line city” as it “could do an important job.”⁵²

Walnes reported that “[t]he response in South Africa was one of great excitement,” and that it was important to come “as early as possible (probably early 1992).” The Jewish South Africans interviewed felt that, “there is little knowledge among the black community about the Holocaust.” For the South Africans there was a “real concern among the Jewish community about the support among the ANC for the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organisation] ... and also the support among the Muslim community for Saddam Hussein.” Walnes concluded that the Jewish community felt that ‘AFITW’ “could help break down barriers of suspicion at this crucial time in the history of South Africa.” The sense of urgency expressed by the South Africans interviewed was repeated by Charikar, who, according to Walnes, had said that it was “a marvellous time to take the exhibition: it MUST go there now.”⁵³

⁵¹ Walnes, G to Dubbelman J, 6 February 1991, File 1, Letters/Notes/Reports South Africa, Anne Frank House Archive, Anne Frank House.

⁵² All the quotes in this paragraph come from Walnes’s report. Walnes, G to Dubbelman J, 6 February 1991, File 1, Letters/Notes/Reports South Africa, Anne Frank House Archive, Anne Frank House.

⁵³ Walnes’s emphasis. All the quotes in this paragraph come from Walnes’s report. Walnes, G to Dubbelman J, 6 February 1991, File 1, Letters/Notes/Reports South Africa, Anne Frank House Archive, Anne Frank House.

Dubbleman's concern that the exhibition had the approval of the broader democratic movement in South Africa can be deduced from Walnes's inclusion in the report of the recommendations of Charikar and the Anti-Apartheid Movement of London (AAML). Dubbleman's concern that the exhibition have credibility extended beyond which individuals and/or groupings in South Africa should be included in the project, to whether the SAJBD was seen to be progressive, and whether it would be prepared to engage with the exhibition's examination of racism and prejudice. The latter concern was addressed by Charikar who described the SAJBD of the Cape Province as a "very good organisation to co-ordinate the exhibition, as they were traditionally liberal."⁵⁴

In her report, Walnes included recommendations from Charikar and the Anti-Apartheid Movement of London (AAML), of organisations and individuals they deemed suitable for the project. These included Imam Farid Esack⁵⁵ Professor Dennis Davids, Sally Frankental, Helen Suzman and Rabbi Ben Isaacson, "outspoken and active in the anti Apartheid (sic) movement."⁵⁶ The organisations that Charikar and the AAML recommended were the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), Jews for Justice and The Objectors (The Conscientious Objectors Support Group).⁵⁷ Walnes cited Charikar's assurance that the "radical groups," as Walnes referred to Jews for

⁵⁴ All the quotes in this paragraph come from Walnes's report. Walnes, G to Dubbleman J, 6 February 1991, File 1, Letters/Notes/Reports South Africa, Anne Frank House Archive, Anne Frank House.

⁵⁵ Walnes notes that although Charikar identified Esack as a "radical", Charikar urged that he be invited.

⁵⁶ The SAJBD and the WPZC would have been well acquainted with Rabbi Ben Isaacson, who had been outspoken in his criticism of the attitude towards apartheid of the South African Jewish community and its leadership. (SAJBD Archive, Biographical Files: Rabbi B. Isaacson). The reaction against Isaacson eventually forced him to leave South Africa. He moved to Zimbabwe and joined the exiled ANC. Isaacson was considered a contact person in the event of the exhibition going to Zimbabwe. See Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 144-147, who likens Isaacson's experience to that of Afrikaans cleric, Beyers Naudé ... "who rebelled against the theological and policy norms of their own Dutch Reformed Churches", 147.

⁵⁷ Walnes explained that during the trial of David Bruce – "the best-known Objector" his mother had stated that he had objected because of his strong belief that racial difference were wrong and this had stemmed from the persecution of their own family by Hitler."

Justice and The Objectors, would be able to work “with no problems” on “certain projects such as this” with the “more establishment Board of Deputies.” According to Walnes, the value of the MDM was that although “[a]ligned with the ANC, it was not part of it.” More importantly, the MDM had a “good foothold in every black town.”⁵⁸ Walnes’s evaluation of the MDM suggests a concern held by Dubbleman that the exhibition not be a “whites-only” affair.

However, despite the MDM’s “good foothold,” Walnes encouraged Dubbleman to take up the recommendations of Charikar and the AAML that, “we stick with the Churches rather than political groups.” The AAML had suggested that the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the SAJBD “would work well together” and that it was “wiser to work through them than individuals or political groups.” Both Charikar and the AAML advised that General Secretary of the SACC Reverend Frank Chikane be included. Chikane was identified as “one of the top people in the Democratic Movement... [with] a lot of credibility.” According to Walnes, Charikar felt it imperative that the SACC be involved to ensure that the exhibition “reached all sections of the Black community,” and added that Reverend Allan Boesak and Archbishop Tutu would support the involvement of the SACC.⁵⁹

Among those contacted in South Africa were Ian Sacks (President of the SAJBD: Western Cape), Yvonne Verblun (Director of the Jacob Gitlin Library)⁶⁰ and the Chief Rabbi of South Africa, Rabbi Cyril Harris. The report also stated that the catalogue of the ‘AFITW’ exhibition had been presented to the three, and a

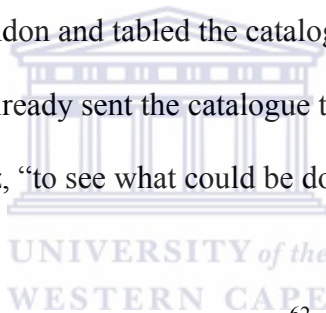
⁵⁸ Walnes, G to Dubbleman J, 6 February 1991, File 1, Letters/Notes/Reports South Africa, Anne Frank House Archive, Anne Frank House.

⁵⁹ The quotes in this paragraph come from Walnes’s report to Dubbleman (Walnes, G to Dubbleman J, 6 February 1991, File 1, Letters/Notes/Reports South Africa, Anne Frank House Archive, Anne Frank House).

⁶⁰ The Jacob Gitlin Library, commonly known as the Gitlin Library, is a division of the Western Cape Zionist Council (WPZC).

commitment was given by Ian Sacks to discuss bringing the exhibition to South Africa with the National SAJBD.

The idea of the 'AFITW' exhibition coming to South Africa was noted first at a Holocaust Memorial Council meeting in January 1991. In response to the observation of board member Mervyn Smith that there was a need to develop a programme that would respond to the numerous 50th anniversaries regarding the invasion of Eastern Europe that were coming up in the following five years, HMC chairperson Ben Surdot, suggested that "another Holocaust exhibition" be organised. In response to this, the Gitlin librarian, Yvonne Verblun mentioned the "Anne Frank Exhibition" (sic) that was available in London and tabled the catalogue of the exhibition. Ian Sacks explained that he had already sent the catalogue to the National Director of the SAJBD, Seymour Kopelowitz, "to see what could be done."⁶¹



At the following meeting of the HMC in April 1991,⁶² Sacks reported that Kopelowitz had handed the material to Frans Auerbach, Chair of the Outreach Portfolio of the SAJBD, but had heard nothing further.⁶³ Echoing Mervyn Smith's concern voiced at the previous meeting about the scale and cost of bringing the exhibition,⁶⁴ Ian Sacks said that he too felt it was too big a project for Cape Town to handle on its own. Osrin suggested a follow-up enquiry to the SAJBD about the costs involved. However, as Osrin reflected in an interview 20 years later, it was clear to her from the start that the exhibition had to be a national project, and that it should not be run under the auspices

⁶¹ Minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 21 January 1991. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶² Minutes of the meeting of the HMC 24 April 1991. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶³ Franz Auerbach came to South Africa as a teenager, having fled Nazi Germany with his family. An outspoken critic of the apartheid government's education system, Auerbach became a founding member of the anti-apartheid movement, Jews for Social Justice and the Vice-President of the World Council for Religion and Peace: South African chapter. In the 1990s, Auerbach took on a part-time post with the SAJBD, chairing its "outreach portfolio".

⁶⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 21 January 1991. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

of the HMC.⁶⁵ Despite the misgivings about the capacity of the HMC to handle the exhibition, the ‘AFITW’ exhibition was included as the major project of 1994 in a list of projects to be undertaken during 1992–1995, tabled at the HMC meeting on 23 October 1991, and at the WPZC on 10 February 1992.

At the first meeting of 1992 Osrin informed the HMC that, “contact had been made with Gillian Walnes regarding the possibility of bringing the exhibition to South Africa”.⁶⁶ By the third meeting of 1992 Osrin could report that she had presented a proposal to the national executive of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies “to co-ordinate the bringing of the Anne Frank International Exhibition on a national tour in 1994.” Osrin added that “[c]hurch groups and patrons would be involved.” She explained that the South African Jewish Board of Deputies had accepted her proposal “subject to the necessary funding being procured.” She concluded by saying that “negotiations were under way with the Anne Frank Centre (sic) in Amsterdam.”⁶⁷

At the same meeting in September 1992, committee member Ian Sacks complimented Osrin on her initiative and the fact that the SAJBD had appointed Osrin as National

⁶⁵ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

⁶⁶ Minutes of the meeting of the HMC meeting: 29 January 1992. CTHC Collection. The CTHC Collection and the Anne Frank House Archive does not point to more developments beyond the “1991 report” faxed to Dubbleman and the few notes in the HMC meetings held during 1991. This apparent slow development should be seen against the backdrop of the debate that continued through 1991, within the Netherlands (and elsewhere in Europe) about the timing of the lifting of sanctions against South Africa. For example, on the 12 May 1991, the Second International Symposium on Cultural and Academic Links with South Africa, organised by the Special Committee Against Apartheid, reaffirmed the need for the cultural boycott to remain in place as a means to retain pressure on the apartheid government to continue with its reforms. This call echoed Mandela’s appeal made during 1990, including June 1990 visit to the Netherlands, that sanctions be kept in place. (IISH web dossier: “The Netherlands and Nelson Mandela”, Richard Hengeveld (2011) p 21. accessed 18 March 2015: <http://socialhistory.org/en/dossiers/mandela/in-the-netherlands>) However, following a conference jointly organized by the Holland Committee for Southern Africa (KZA) and the Standing Committee of NGOs (Brussels, Belgium) on the future relationship of the Netherlands and EC with South and Southern Africa, held in Rotterdam on 24 January 1992, a pamphlet published in March 1992 by the KZA states, “Now that the cultural boycott against South Africa has been lifted, it is important to ensure that the new cultural relations with South Africa work through the organisations in South Africa from the anti-apartheid camp.” Anne Frank Archive, Amsterdam.

⁶⁷ Minutes of the meeting of the HMC meeting: 10 September 1992. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Coordinator of the Project. What the minutes do not reveal are the negotiations that Osrin had been managing skilfully in the months before she submitted the proposal to the SAJBD, nor do the subsequent minutes have much to say about the organising work in the months that followed that culminated in the national tour of the exhibition.

Walnes recalled her “tentative approach” to the SAJBD about the possibility of the ‘AFITW’ exhibition coming to South Africa, and her subsequent meeting with Osrin in London in late 1991.⁶⁸ Osrin recalled that Walnes came to have coffee with her “on behalf of the Anne Frank Centre (sic) in Amsterdam” to ask her whether she would be interested in driving the project of bringing the exhibition to South Africa.⁶⁹ This meeting was followed by another in March 1992.⁷⁰

In March 1992, Dubbleman consulted with Jan Heeren of the *Ideëel Organiseren* about the project of taking ‘AFITW’ to South Africa.⁷¹ *Ideëel Organiseren* had already worked with the AF House in taking the ‘AFITW’ exhibition to Poland. In a comprehensive letter to Dubbleman in June, expanding on their conversations, Heeren laid out the basic frame for the project to take the ‘AFITW’ exhibition to South Africa.⁷² The recommendations of this document significantly influenced the final shape of the project. Heeren identified as potentially contentious the relationship between South African Jewry and Israel, and the question of culpability of Jewish

⁶⁸ Osrin happened to be visiting her family in the United Kingdom at the end of 1991. Gillian Walnes email to author, 3 June 2013.

⁶⁹ Myra Osrin, interview by author, December 2011, Cape Town.

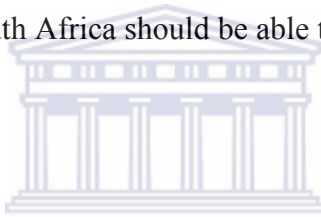
⁷⁰ Fax 30 June 1992, South Africa File 1, Anne Frank archive, Amsterdam.

⁷¹ Jan Heeren co-owned the *Ideëel Organiseren* a communication bureau specializing in the non-profit sector offering support from practical organisation up to fundraising. Heeren had been a field worker for the Holland Committee on Southern Africa (KZA) in the late ‘80s.

⁷² 17 June 1992, South Africa File 1, Anne Frank archive, Amsterdam.

South Africans as “whites” in apartheid South Africa. His concerns proved accurate as the process of developing the project unfolded.⁷³

The Ideëel Organiseren’s document flagged the need for the exhibition to reflect on the South African situation by adding panels to the exhibition and through ancillary lectures and programmes. The document also identified the approval of the ANC and the wider democratic movement’s involvement, as crucial to the success of the project. The document stated that, “broad political support for the project is an absolute necessity, and also an extension of the exhibition with elements from the South African situation.”⁷⁴ Furthermore, the document recommended that “[v]arious democratic movements in South Africa should be able to recognize themselves in the exhibition.”⁷⁵



On 30 June 1992, Walnes forwarded to Dubbleman a fax from Osrin. In the fax, Osrin stated that she had “urged Kopelowitz [of the SAJBD] to meet Dubbleman,” and that she would be coming to see Dubbleman in October.⁷⁶ Shortly after receiving this fax, Dubbleman received a note from Kopelowitz enquiring whether they would be able to meet on 10 July. In an illustration of how elastic memory is, Dubbleman recalled more than twenty years later that Kopelowitz “popped up out of the blue” in Amsterdam in 1992 and approached him with the idea of bringing the exhibition to

⁷³ The interviews conducted for this dissertation, with those involved in the planning of the ‘AFITW’ exhibition in South Africa indicate the tensions that existed around exactly the matters Heeren had identified.

⁷⁴ 17 June 1992, South Africa File 1, Anne Frank archive, Amsterdam. Translated from the original Dutch: “Een brede politieke ondersteuning van het project is dan absolute noodzaak, en evenzeer een uitbreiding van de tentoonstelling met elementen uit de Zuid-afrikaanse situatie.”

⁷⁵ 17 June 1992, South Africa File 1, Anne Frank archive, Amsterdam. Translated from the original Dutch: “Verschillende democratische stromingen in Zuid-Afrika moeten zich in de tentoonstelling kunnen herkennen.”

⁷⁶ Fax 30 June 1992, South Africa File 1, Anne Frank archive, Amsterdam

South Africa.⁷⁷ What is clear from the archive and Osrin's and Kopelowitz's recollections, however, is that much discussion and planning had happened before Kopelowitz and Dubbleman met; and that not only had the AF House been considering how best to take the exhibition to South Africa, but that Osrin and Kopelowitz too had been carefully preparing for their meeting with the AF House and Dubbleman, the person who could approve bringing the exhibition to South Africa.⁷⁸

Osrin had presented the idea of bringing the exhibition to South Africa to Kopelowitz after she had met with Walnes in 1991. Kopelowitz "thought it was brilliant,"⁷⁹ and proceeded to gain the support of the major donors and the voluntary leadership of the SAJBD. If all went according to plan, 'AFITW' was to come to South Africa on the eve of South Africa's first democratic elections. However, the AF House would have to approve the proposal and agree to the preparatory work of training volunteers, in a country still under the rule of the apartheid state. Kopelowitz and Osrin had agreed that a critical part of the preparation for the meeting with Dubbleman was to be able to show that they had the support of some of the major anti-apartheid activists.⁸⁰

The AF House had been committed to supporting the cultural boycott of apartheid South Africa, and a number of its staff had been active in the Dutch anti-apartheid movement. Kopelowitz and Osrin were quite correct in assuming that it would matter to Dubbleman that the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa would approve the AF House's lifting of its boycott. Furthermore, and unbeknown to Kopelowitz and Osrin, the proposal given to Dubbleman by the Ideël Organiseren, had stressed the

⁷⁷ Jan Erik Dubbleman, interview by author, 1 June 2012, Cape Town.

⁷⁸ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town. Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town.

⁷⁹ Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town.

⁸⁰ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town. Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town.

importance of the project having the support of the broad democratic movement. Kopelowitz provided the assurance that this was the case. Osrin and Kopelowitz had secured the support of Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Helen Suzman and Nadine Gordimer.⁸¹ Kopelowitz considered that because he was able to provide Dubbleman with these names, any concern Dubbleman may have had about the SAJBD's motives would be allayed.⁸²

Kopelowitz met Dubbleman on 10 July 1992 and brought with him not only assurances that the Board could work with, and had the support of, prominent members of the anti-apartheid struggle, but also an information brochure on the SAJBD.⁸³ This brochure detailed the Board's history and relationship to South Africa in transition, stating that the,

Jewish Board of Deputies (JBD) EXPOSES ... Anti-Semitic (sic) and racist activities and is committed to play a positive role in the building of a new South Africa. ... work[ing] for the betterment of human relations between Jews and all other peoples of South Africa based on mutual respect, understanding and goodwill. It is committed to a new South Africa where everyone will enjoy freedom from the evils of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination.

Dubbleman in turn, presented Kopelowitz with a seven-page document, the "Memorandum re. visit of the international exhibition 'Anne Frank in the World, 1929 – 1945' to South Africa (Spring Fall 1993)" based on the AF House's "experiences with the tour of the exhibition in the US and South America."⁸⁴ The memorandum drew heavily on the suggestions made in the Ideëel Organiseren's

⁸¹ The report of the Ideëel Organiseren identified Nadine Gordimer twice as well-known example of a Jewish South African who had supported the struggle, and thus having her support would have been significant. AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

⁸² Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town.

⁸³ AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

⁸⁴ AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

report.⁸⁵ Dubbleman's Memorandum outlined in detail, the organisational logistics that the SAJBD would need to consider.

A month later Kopelowitz used Dubbleman's summary of their meeting in his presentation to the National SAJBD.⁸⁶ The National SAJBD adopted the project and approved Osrin's appointment as National Project Co-ordinator. Kopelowitz summarised what happened after receiving the Board's approval as follows: "Once I did the groundwork on the politics of it, Myra must have developed a relationship with him [Dubbleman]. He gave the OK and became quite excited about it."⁸⁷

Osrin met with Dubbleman and Hans Westra, the then Director of the AF House, as well as Heeren, on 8 October 1992. Dubbleman remembered with fondness the meeting with Osrin: "she ha[d] fire in her belly. I connected. She answered all the questions the right way. She was very bright." Osrin recalled the questions that she answered as being quite "tricky"⁸⁸ because Dubbleman and Westra were asking Osrin in her personal capacity, and as a representative of the SAJBD. Osrin explained that she "just loved the idea, and of course was saying 'yes, yes, yes' and I would fundraise, and I would do everything." Revealing her ability to marry her enthusiasm with pragmatism and to think strategically, Osrin went on to recommend that the project "be national ... that it would have to be a partnership, and the Jewish

⁸⁵ 17 June 1992, AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

⁸⁶ The Board meeting was held on the 28 August 1992.

⁸⁷ Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town. As the archive attests, and the subsequent developments reveal, the "political groundwork" claimed by Kopelowitz was not enough to have sustained the project. Osrin's strategic leadership in managing the SAJBD, the AF House and various partners in the exhibition's tour of South Africa, was a key factor in the Project's success.

⁸⁸ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

component of that partnership should be the SAJBD, because that's national. And obviously the Dutch embassy."⁸⁹

On the table at Osrin's meeting with Dubbleman and Heeren was a revised memorandum that Dubbleman had sent to Osrin on 17 September 1992.⁹⁰ The memorandum was similar to that discussed by Dubbleman and Kopelowitz a few months earlier in July, but for three main differences. Two of the three departures from the July memorandum concerned the Ministry of Education. The suggestion made in the July memorandum that the "Ministry of Education and the various Municipalities be approached to become patron (sic.) of the project,"⁹¹ was replaced by the statement that, "the Ministry of Education and the various municipalities need to be informed of the project."⁹² Where the July memorandum identified Ministry of Education staff as the main trainers of the volunteer guides, the September memorandum omitted this, and the training of the guides left unspecified: "[The guides] are to be trained a few weeks before the exhibition opening."⁹³ The final change was the inclusion of Nadine Gordimer as an example of someone who might be a suitable patron.

The context in which the exhibition would tour was clearly on the minds of both Osrin and Dubbleman, and shaped a number of decisions regarding the exhibition, including the constitution of the curatorial group. Osrin described how she and Dubbleman decided to include an interfaith component of the curatorial group instead

⁸⁹ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

⁹⁰ Memorandum faxed by Dubbleman to Osrin, 17 September 1992, AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

⁹¹ "Memorandum re. visit of International exhibition," AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

⁹² Memorandum faxed by Dubbleman to Osrin, 17 September 1992, AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

⁹³ Memorandum faxed by Dubbleman to Osrin, 17 September 1992, AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

of including the state education departments, because of the “delicate time” as Osrin described the period of transition from the dying days of apartheid education. “We didn’t want to go in with the education department because which education department? It was still white, black, coloured.”⁹⁴ The question of patrons was discussed, and Desmond Tutu, Franklyn Sonn, Ebrahim Rasool and Helen Suzman were identified as potential patrons.⁹⁵ The venues for the exhibition and tentative dates were identified.

Dubbleman described the period of organising the exhibition as “the time of faxes,” a phrase that is a reminder of the communication challenges faced by cross-continental partnerships before the internet. Dubbleman recalled how, to “get logistics going... Osrin had this system going of having 20 questions numbered and I answered all 20, usually hand-written because we had few computers and printers.”⁹⁶ In the months that followed Osrin’s meeting with Dubbleman, they engaged the support of the Dutch Ambassador, Mr Roell, added Bloemfontein to the list of venues, and extended the length of the exhibition’s tour.

Anne Frank and South Africa

By the end of 1993, the Royal Netherlands Embassy in South Africa had agreed to present the exhibition jointly with the SAJBD. Representatives of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church), the South African Catholic Bishops Conference (SACBC), the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the World Conference on Religion and Peace (the SA Chapter) had pledged their support for the Project. The patrons of the Project were Dr Reverend Frank Chikane, The Honourable

⁹⁴ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

⁹⁵ Notes by Dubbleman from meeting with Osrin, 8 October 1992: AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

⁹⁶ Jan Erik Dubbleman, interview by author, 1 June 2012. Cape Town.

Justice Richard Goldstone, Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, Archbishop Wilfred Napier, Professor P C Potgieter, His Excellency Mr E Röell, Ambassador for the Netherlands, Mrs Helen Suzman, Member of Parliament and the most Reverend D M Tutu, Archbishop of Cape Town. Osrin had also formed a partnership with the South African National Gallery (SANG). The SANG provided the space for the national education committee to meet together with a number of SANG staff members.⁹⁷ The SANG would also serve as the venue for the first leg of the exhibition tour. Osrin had also secured the support of the international advertising firm, Young & Rubicam, which offered its services pro bono.

Following the suggestions detailed in the July 1992 Memorandum of Agreement, Osrin developed an organizational structure that included a National Exhibition Committee, a National Education Committee and independent regional committees in each of the six cities (Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria) that would host the exhibition. The National Exhibition and Education Committees would provide training guidelines and support in the form of education resources, but each centre would organize its opening function, its ancillary programmes and the training of its guides.⁹⁸

The National Exhibition Committee (NEC) members represented a broad range of constituencies,⁹⁹ as did the National Education Committee (NEdC). The NEdC

⁹⁷ Education Head Jo-Anne Duggan, Education officer Vuyile Cameron Vuyiya, Director of Exhibition Design Jon Weinberg.

⁹⁸ The regional chairs were: Jean Kluk and Sue Edmonds (Durban), Joan Polivnick (Bloemfontein), Marlene Bethlehem (Johannesburg), Selwyn Zwick (Pretoria), Merle Katz and Tom Davey (Port Elizabeth), Melanie Herman (Pietermaritzburg). The regional education chairs were: Claire Dyer (Durban), Arlys van Wyk and John Dale (Bloemfontein); Dr Franz Auerbach (Johannesburg); Prof. K. Kritzing (Pretoria).

⁹⁹ The Members were: Myra Osrin (Chair); Marilyn Martins (Director: SANG); Netherlands Ambassador Eduard Röell and Consul, Dirk Bins; Jelte van Wieran (Cultural Attaché); Dr Hans Sondaal (Pretoria Consul) Rolf Wolfswinkel (Chair of the Education Committee; University of Cape

included personnel from the Heritage sector, tertiary institutions, political parties, government, NGOs, and high school teachers. The committee members were Joanne Duggan (SANG Head of Education), Vuyile Cameron Voyiya (SANG Education Officer), Jon Weinberg (SANG), Gordon Metz (Mayibuye Centre), Brian O’Connell (Director, School of Education and Academic Development Programme at the Peninsula Technicon, acting Vice-Rector in 1994), Nicol Faasen, (Cape Education Department), Naledi Pandor (ANC Western Cape Education Committee, ANC Chairperson for Athlone Central branch, Harold Wolpe (anti-apartheid activist, member of the ANC and SACP, Director of the Educational Policy Unit at the University of the Western Cape), Zubeida Desai (Education Department, University of the Western Cape), Neville Alexander (University of Cape Town), Rob Siebörger (University of Cape Town School of Education), Milton Shain (University of Cape Town History Department), Zozo Siyengo (Luhlaza Senior High School Principal), History teachers Jean Bottaro and Pam van Dyk, Phyllis Klotz (Young People’s Educational Theatre Trust) and Gwen Jones.

The wide net cast by the membership gave the exhibition the political legitimacy hoped for by Dubbleman, the AF House, Kopelowitz and the SAJBD. Furthermore, the broad representation of the committee members allowed access to communities that the complex politics in South Africa in 1993 required. The turbulent landscape was reflected in the state of education: the segregated schooling system was still in place, and when the NEdC sent out information to schools about the upcoming exhibition, schools from four different departments of education received information

Town: Department of Afrikaans and Netherlandic Studies); Seymour Kopelowitz (National Director of the SAJBD); Frank Bradlow (Life Vice-President SAJBD); Jack Tworetsky (SAJBD Cape Council); Mervyn Smith (National Chairman SAJBD); Ian Sacks (WPZC and Executive Director: SAJBD Cape Council); Bishop Cawcutt (Auxiliary Bishop of Cape Town - Catholic Church, representing the South African Catholic Bishops Conference); Dr EJ van der Walt (Dutch Reformed Church: Rondebosch community); Rev B Witbooi (South African Council of Churches: Western Province Provincial Council of Churches); Alicia Pieterse (World Conference on Religion and Peace).

circulars. The need for support from organisations outside the formal education system was clear from the response to the circulars: of 250 circulars sent, 30 were returned. Of these, 15 came from Cape Education Department (CED) schools, five from private schools and 10 from House of Representative (HoR) schools. No responses were received from Department of Education and Training (DET) schools. The DET was the education department for students classified by the state as “black” living outside the “Homelands”. Committee members subsequently drew on their contacts with organisations such as the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) to reach teachers in DET schools.

The question of how to include apartheid history into the exhibition was debated at length and could not be resolved in the NEdC. Committee member and SANG education head Joanne Duggan recalled that, “the education committee did not think it was of any relevance to have the South African component.”¹⁰⁰ The matter was taken to the National Exhibition Committee.¹⁰¹ The SANG education staff argued that the South African material needed to be integrated into the exhibition and that the South African component should not be made into the “tail end” of the exhibition.¹⁰² A separate but related point that the inclusion of apartheid history into the Anne Frank exhibition might provide students with an emotional “bridge” into the exhibition was raised but not expanded upon in the face of the concern expressed by Rolf Wolfswinkel, Chair of the Education Committee, that a “false comparison” would be made between apartheid and the Holocaust.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the National Education Committee: 11 August 1993. CTHC Collection. Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014, Cape Town.

¹⁰¹ Minutes of the meeting of the National Exhibition Committee: 2 September 1993. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰² The minutes do not identify who made this point.

¹⁰³ Minutes of the meeting of the National Education Committee: 11 August 1993. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Although the AF House had agreed to the National Education Committee's request that "material from a South African perspective" be added to the panels of the Anne Frank exhibition,¹⁰⁴ the National Exhibition Committee rejected this, and concluded that the 'AFITW' exhibition was to be "kept as a physical entity" and only "elements of the South African component could be displayed alongside the 'AFITW' exhibition."¹⁰⁵ However, Osrin stressed the need to integrate the South African component in the teaching materials for the education programme accompanying the exhibition.

The education programme included an eight-page hand-out given to students who visited the exhibition, accompanied by their teachers. The hand-out was originally developed by the AF House, but was adapted for the South African exhibition tour by a sub-committee headed by Duggan. The South African version included three pages relating to South African history with images from the newly established Mayibuye archive.¹⁰⁶ A guide for teachers was developed that covered five exhibition-related themes viz. the Holocaust, a diary/journal as a document of a young person, connections to Standard 7 history, Human Rights and Peace, and Making Choices.

Duggan explained the aim of the education programme as follows:

The lesson we wanted people to know is that when prejudice happens, no matter what kind of prejudices, whether its colour, or sexual orientation or religion, people suffer. And how do we open our minds

¹⁰⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the National Education Committee Meeting, 2 June 1993. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰⁵ The outcome of the discussion is not that surprising considering the fact that Osrin, used her prerogative as chair of the meeting, to pre-empt the discussion by stating the importance to the exhibition of the "component being prepared by the Mayibuye Centre", but stressing the need to integrate the South African component in the teaching materials for the education programme accompanying the exhibition. Minutes of National Exhibition Committee: 2 September 1993, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰⁶ See Coombes, *History after Apartheid*, 60, for a brief history of the Mayibuye Archives and Centre. Duggan, Weinberg and Metz had met before the 'AFITW' exhibition placed them together: Metz had been appointed as the representative of the ANC department of Arts and Culture to engage with SANG in terms of the process of transformation of these institutions. In Metz's words, "I was deployed by the ANC in the process of the transformation of the national heritage institutions at that stage." Gordon Metz, interview by author, 10 January 2014. Cape Town.

so that it doesn't happen. So that was the tenure of the education package we developed.¹⁰⁷

The Mayibuye Centre's Gordon Metz headed the sub-committee assigned to develop the Mayibuye component and included SANG exhibition officer Jon Weinberg, Jo-Anne Duggan and University of Cape Town (UCT) academic Milton Shain.

Community and anti-apartheid activist Kay Jaffer wrote the text for the exhibition.

The sub-committee drew from the Mayibuye Archive.¹⁰⁸ The team faced a number of challenges, not the least being budgetary and time constraints. Metz, Weinberg and Duggan remember with affection, how they developed the exhibition:

It was done in a huge hurry... It was done on weekends in Jon Weinberg's garage: photocopying things, typing bits of text and then sticking them together and laminating them onto panels. Obviously drawing on the huge resources [the] Mayibuye [archive] had – the publications – there was a lot of ready information: so it was a very rough and ready exhibition and it was done in a great deal of haste, ... the narrative was cobbled together.¹⁰⁹

The sub-committee had chosen 1990 as the cut-off date for the timeline of the exhibition. However, as Duggan points out, whilst that made the events the sub-committee was describing very fresh, "there was no time to think." Nonetheless, creating the exhibition in the early 1990s had an emotional impact on Duggan and her colleagues, who recalled that, "what we were putting in there was very raw."¹¹⁰

In bringing the 'AFITW' exhibition to South Africa in 1994, interested parties, individuals, heritage institutions, together with the SAJBD, the AF House and the Dutch Government, could signal their desire to align themselves with the nascent democratic South Africa.

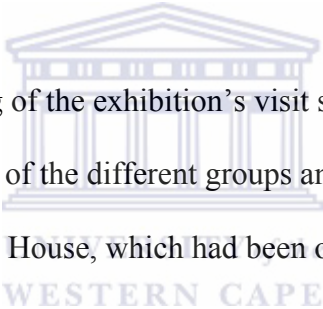
¹⁰⁷ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014, Cape Town.

¹⁰⁸ Gordon Metz, interview by author, 10 January 2014. Cape Town.

¹⁰⁹ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014, Cape Town.

¹¹⁰ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014, Cape Town.

The Dutch government had come under criticism for its attempts to build a relationship with South Africa in transition because its approaches suggested that the “Dutch government still considered the white regime, rather than the liberation movement, to be its principal interlocutor on the road to a non-racial, democratic society in South Africa.”¹¹¹ A letter from the Embassy of the Netherlands to Dubbleman on 2 December 1992, expressed why the Dutch Government was pleased to be associated with the exhibition visiting South Africa: “In the light of the present situation of major changes in South Africa and the renewed possibilities for strengthening cultural relations between South Africa and the Netherlands, this project could not have come at a more appropriate time.”¹¹²



The “usefulness” of the timing of the exhibition’s visit seems to be a common thread running through the responses of the different groups and individuals. Osrin attributes the change in policy of the AF House, which had been one of non-engagement with apartheid South Africa, to the changing political landscape of South Africa. In Osrin’s words, “it was time for Anne Frank to come to Africa.”¹¹³ Did the AF House concur with Osrin’s opinion? Osrin said that she “felt instinctively that it was an opportunity now of really broadening a base...” as well as a “step up from our little poster exhibition”.¹¹⁴ What did the exhibition offer the South African Jewish Board of Deputies? Why had the South African National Gallery agreed not only to host the exhibition, which contained no works of artists, but also to provide personnel and

¹¹¹ <http://socialhistory.org/en/dossiers/anti-apartheid/1990s-1> Accessed 15 March 2015.
<http://www.ravagedigitaal.org/1990/68/4.htm>. Accessed 12 March 2015. According to Chris Landsberg, Nelson Mandela had described the Dutch Government’s proposed visit to De Klerk in South Africa in February 1992, planned without consulting the ANC, as “inopportune and ill-timed”. See Chris Landsberg, *The Quiet Diplomacy of Liberation: International Politics and South Africa's Transition* (Johannesburg: Jacana Media, 2004), 105.

¹¹² AF Archive, South Africa File 1. Amsterdam.

¹¹³ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011. Cape Town.

¹¹⁴ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011. Cape Town.

space for the preparatory meetings to take place? Why would the newly established Mayibuye Centre choose to partner with the ‘AFITW’ exhibition project?

For Kopelowitz, in his position as president of the SAJBD, the timing of the exhibition was very helpful as it offered a way to close the “enormous fissures in the Jewish community.”¹¹⁵ One rift was that between what Kopelowitz described as the “liberal element” of the Jewish community, a reference to anti-apartheid activists, and the organised Jewish community. Further fissures radiated from a concern held by the leadership of the SAJBD, and the members of the community it represented, about how best to position the Jewish community in relationship to the key players in a South Africa undergoing political transition.

Israel and the end of apartheid

Greater than the concerns of various groups that formed the SAJBD about what their future prospects would be without the privileges of belonging to the category labelled “white” by the National Party, was the concern that majority rule would end the two-decade long “very co-operative” relationship between the South African government and the state of Israel.¹¹⁶ According to Kopelowitz, “an element of the leadership... supported De Klerk ... and they felt that De Klerk [was for] the interests of the Jewish community.”¹¹⁷ In contrast, were the voices of others, like Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris and Kopelowitz. They were eager that the mainstream community embrace the ANC and its leadership, as opposed to the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and its leadership,

¹¹⁵ Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town. The fissures in the landscape of the Jewish Community to which Kopelowitz refers, were of course not unique to the Jewish community of South Africa in the 1990s. The faultlines were evident in other moniorty communities.

¹¹⁶ Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town. The concern revolved around the pro-PLO sentiment expressed by Mandela and other members of the ANC. See Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 250-253 in particular.

¹¹⁷ Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town. Kopelowitz points out that these particular “elements” were major donors of the SAJBD and thus their concerns could not just be dismissed.

and by so doing to position the community as an ally of the prospective new government.¹¹⁸ Adding to the sense of a community struggling with the changing landscape, were the voices criticizing the SAJBD for being the “court Jew” – of pandering to “both sides” and of not taking a clearer stand.¹¹⁹ Kopelowitz recalled that “[p]eople were terrified” of the impact of the beginning of democracy on South Africa’s relationship with Israel.¹²⁰ It was also not the first time that the SAJBD had to consider where best to “hang their hat.”¹²¹

The internal divisions, particularly the dissenting voices of some of the SAJBD’s major donors made it clear to the board that they needed, in Kopelowitz’s words, “stuff to bring things together.” The ‘AFITW’ exhibition project appeared to present just the right “stuff”.¹²²



¹¹⁸ See Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 252-253 for a discussion of the role played by the newly appointed Israeli Ambassador Alon Liel in facilitating the relationship between the SAJBD and the ANC.

¹¹⁹ Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town.

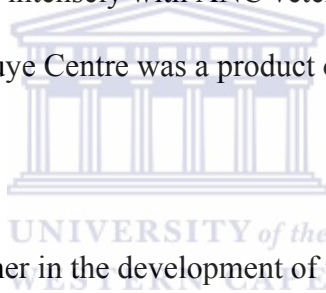
¹²⁰ Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town.

¹²¹ The anxiety Kopelowitz recollected that was expressed by members of the Jewish community through the community organisations represented on the SAJBD, echoes the main points identified by writers such as Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, and Gilbert, “Jews and the Racial State”, who have examined the strategies adopted by the SAJBD in its dealing with the South African government, particularly during the apartheid rule of the Nationalist Party.

¹²² Seymour Kopelowitz, interview by author, 18 January 2014. Cape Town.

The Heritage Sector and the end of apartheid

South Africa's changing political landscape also brought with it a process of positioning and redefining institutional identities such as that of the heritage sector. The heritage sector was a site of great debate, as heritage practitioners and institutions grappled with the implications of a change of rule.¹²³ André Odendaal, a leader of the ANC's cultural wing in the early 1990s, described the state heritage sector as being in a "depression," in contrast to the excitement and energy of the non-racial cultural organisations such as the Community Arts Project.¹²⁴ With the unbanning of political organisations in 1990, the International Defence and Aid Fund (IDAF)'s archive came home to South Africa.¹²⁵ Odendaal recalled the excitement of receiving material that had been banned and working intensely with ANC veterans: "we were intellectuals producing history: the Mayibuye Centre was a product of this energy."¹²⁶



SANG and AFITW

The SANG's decision to partner in the development of the education programme for the exhibition, its co-creation and curatorship of the Mayibuye Panels, its hosting of the 'AFITW' exhibition were all matters of debate and discussion. Duggan pointed out that the "gallery's reputation was at stake as a government institution in the state of transformation."¹²⁷ The SANG consulted with its staff and the teachers in its development programme, and not all wanted the exhibition, seeing it as irrelevant. However, the SANG decided to go ahead with the exhibition because the partnership allowed it to meet its mandate to "use every opportunity to address our own situation in South Africa," and to "address the problems of audience development and

¹²³ See Coombes, *History after Apartheid*, 14-17 for a discussion of the debates that ensued around the transformation of the museum sector.

¹²⁴ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹²⁵ The archive of "Programme 3" – the research and publications departments of the IDAF, was given to the newly formed Mayibuye Centre.

¹²⁶ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹²⁷ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014, Cape Town.

historical exclusions.”¹²⁸ The SANG concluded that this was possible because it could contribute to the presentation of the Anne Frank story as universally relevant in its connection to racism and prejudice and the need for social activism. It could locate this “universality” directly in the South African context through its work on the Mayibuye panels. Furthermore, as Duggan recalled, “if people were coming with masses of resources and logistics and [were] able to bus in thousands of children then we were going to use that in a way that we felt was most appropriate.”¹²⁹

Mayibuye and AFITW

For the Mayibuye team, developing panels to include in the ‘AFITW’ exhibition was a matter of debate.¹³⁰ Odendaal recalled how some of the Mayibuye curatorial team had felt that the ‘AFITW’ exhibition appeared to “gloss over the ... role of the Jewish community in apartheid, and Israel’s support of the apartheid state.”¹³¹ For Odendaal, the “seamless implanting of Anne Frank” by the South African Jewish community, without problematizing the position of the South African Jewish community during apartheid, was impossible, in the South African situation of the time.¹³² Odendaal recalls the politics of the exhibition revolving around the “fault lines within society,” with the “white” community’s denial of their complicity in the functioning of the apartheid state.¹³³ The Mayibuye team was happy to proceed but, as Odendaal pointed out, “it was complicated.”¹³⁴ Both Metz and Duggan concurred with Odendaal.¹³⁵ Duggan recalled that “[i]nitially it was quite oppositional ... I

¹²⁸ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014, Cape Town.

¹²⁹ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014, Cape Town.

¹³⁰ I have used the term, the Mayibuye team, to refer to the group who worked on the Mayibuye panels as well as the educational material related to the Mayibuye panels.

¹³¹ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town. Odendaal’s opinion was shared by Metz in his interview (10 January 2014) and Duggan (20 January 2014).

¹³² André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹³³ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹³⁴ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹³⁵ Gordon Metz, interview by author, 10 January 2014. Cape Town; Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014. Cape Town.

remember it being difficult, confrontational, [a] constant issue of having to stand one's ground against people with big resources.”¹³⁶

It was complicated because the exhibition could not function as a neutral experience. The narratives of the visitors could not be assumed. Odendaal, Metz and Duggan were deeply concerned that the exhibition would obscure the history of apartheid and displace debates about identity and humanity.¹³⁷ For Odendaal, the initial encounter with the “Anne Frank” team and the presentation of the exhibition, gave rise to great concern. The differences expressed between the approach of the T-shirt wearing “activist-archivists,” as Odendaal described the Mayibuye staff, as opposed to the very formally dressed Dubbleman, marked an apparently deeper divide in the understanding of what place the ‘AFITW’ exhibition could occupy in the dynamic political and cultural landscape of South Africa. The Mayibuye team, in Odendaal’s words, “were creating a presence of memory. This was not just an exhibition. Our engagement with an international story was also about cultural representation.”¹³⁸

Odendaal recalled the confidence of Dubbleman’s articulation of the exhibition and how that “confidence”¹³⁹ annoyed the members of the Mayibuye team as it appeared to close down, or make very difficult, any questioning of the assumptions concerning the presentation and meaning of the history of Anne Frank. Odendaal, Metz and Duggan felt strongly that “one couldn’t just shamelessly proceed. If one asked any questions, you (sic) were perceived as anti-Zionist, and accused of antisemitism.”¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014. Cape Town.

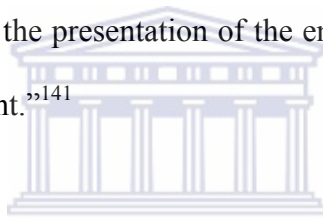
¹³⁷ Gordon Metz, interview by author, 10 January 2014. Cape Town. Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014. Cape Town. André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹³⁸ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹³⁹ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹⁴⁰ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town..

The questions that the Mayibuye panels posed were not as much about the history of Anne Frank as they were about the implications the history held for the present. These implications were not only for the future visitor to the exhibition, but for the curatorial teams and organisational team involved in the making and “doing” of the exhibition. The questions raised were about the complicity of the Jewish community as part of the group classified as “white” under apartheid, and as a result, as beneficiaries of the spoils of the racial state. Participation in the system of apartheid was not merely passive: in some instances, members of the Jewish community had become members of the National Party. The Mayibuye team felt increasingly concerned that the left radical tradition infusing the creation of the apartheid exhibition was in danger of being “co-opted to legitimize the presentation of the entire Jewish community as part of the anti-apartheid movement.”¹⁴¹



For Duggan, Metz and Odendaal, the position of the Jewish community in relation to apartheid had to be problematized, as much as for any other South African community. This “wasn’t welcomed in the promotion of the exhibition,”¹⁴² deepening the misgiving that despite the claims being made that the exhibition was to teach against human rights injustices, “the exhibition wasn’t drawing a sense of universalism ... and was in danger of the immediate becoming more important than the universalism.”¹⁴³ The exhibition had to move beyond the “immediate,” namely the antisemitism experienced by Anne Frank and her family displayed in the exhibition, or else the “immediate” could translate into the idea that only Jews were victims of prejudice, or that prejudice was confined to one time and one place, or that some prejudice mattered more than another’s.

¹⁴¹ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹⁴² André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

¹⁴³ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014, Cape Town.

Duggan expressed the complexities of the personal histories of the guides in relation to both the history of the Holocaust and apartheid, and explained what the Mayibuye team were trying to achieve:

a lot of the guides in the Anne Frank component were survivors of the camps, ... and for them there's a huge personal investment, and what we wanted them to understand was that for South Africans there's the same kind of emotional entanglement with the issue of the Struggle. And particularly where we were bringing in kids into the gallery who had been living in townships where they had grown up with police shooting people The 1980s and the early 90s were the most violent years of the Struggle ... and we were bringing in kids who were in high school, from about Grade 7 upwards who had lived through those years. There was such an opportunity for a degree of reconciliation if you want to use that word, or healing, to at least acknowledge that terrible things had happened, that people could survive them and people could move forward through this.¹⁴⁴

In the light of their concerns, why did the Mayibuye team proceed? For Odendaal, the decision to proceed was made partly because of the pre-existing relationship with certain members of the Jewish community whom the team trusted, and partly because the exhibition would provide another public space for apartheid images and texts to be displayed. In reflecting on how the team proceeded, Metz, Odendaal and Duggan acknowledged that compromises were made. The most prominent compromise they identified was the decision to exclude a panel that the team had developed examining the relationship between Israel and the apartheid state.¹⁴⁵

Asked 20 years later why he had agreed to the compromise, and whether he felt this had in turn compromised the Mayibuye exhibition, Odendaal responded, "I think there might have been a feeling that the Struggle [was] being appropriated to tell a nice story where one didn't have to look too hard at yourself (sic) while you (sic)

¹⁴⁴ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014. Cape Town.

¹⁴⁵ Gordon Metz, interview by author, 10 January 2014. Cape Town. Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014. Cape Town. André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014. Cape Town.

looked at the Anne Frank exhibition.” Odendaal added that “we were all extremely sensitive in 1994 to where we had come from and where we had been and the kind of extreme violence of the whole system,” but he added that he thought that “what we had and what we gave the exhibition was very important [for] the exhibition [which] was a success ... because [the Mayibuye contribution] was the legitimizing aspect of the exhibition.”¹⁴⁶ Odendaal said that he didn’t think there had been an accusation against the exhibition that it obscured the fact that the mainstream Jewish community organisations had not been more critical of apartheid. Odendaal added that “often people today say the exhibition was a hack job: all ANC and PAC,” but Odendaal was at pains to point out that

there was always a lot of thinking: what is legitimate to say in a certain context? Because you must remember the incredible power of the apartheid system, the way it literally wiped out black people from history. Twenty-two editions of a “Bantu Education” history textbook that only mentioned four black people, and that is the spaces which we were going into and middle class white Cape Town was very much part of that blind – how can one put it – “keeping our eyes covered” in terms of how awful actually the system had been in South Africa. That’s why the power of Anne Frank coming into Cape Town in a new space ... suddenly the change is happening and Nelson Mandela was on our side [Mayibuye Centre], and Joe Slovo was a hero in our exhibition [Mayibuye Centre] ... and so we validated the exhibition in a certain way – it’s obvious to anyone who looks critically at these things ... therefore we were careful about how we engaged and we were open about how we engaged.¹⁴⁷

One “public” voice raised against the inclusion of the Mayibuye exhibition was that of Prof Marcus Arkin (former director of the South African Zionist Federation). In his review of the exhibition, published in the KwaZulu/Natal Jewish communal newspaper, *Hashalom*, Prof Arkin purported to voice the concerns of a number of people that the “Mayibuye” section exploited the exhibition. Arkin’s view expressed one of the concerns that had been raised at meetings of the National Exhibition

¹⁴⁶ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014. Cape Town.

¹⁴⁷ André Odendaal, interview by author, 15 April 2014. Cape Town.

Committee.¹⁴⁸ It is interesting to note that the incident was considered significant enough to be included in some detail in the report on South African Jewry, submitted by Milton Shain to the *American Jewish Yearbook* of 1996.¹⁴⁹

Shain noted Arkin's unease that the Mayibuye exhibition was "riding on the coat-tails of 'Anne Frank in the World'— in fact, physically surrounding it." Shain recorded Osrin's response in some detail, which appeared to want to grant both exhibitions equal weight. According to Shain, Osrin was clear that "the exhibition could not have been held in South Africa in 1994 without looking at the country's own history of discrimination."¹⁵⁰

However, Shain was quick to include the caveat that Osrin described the Mayibuye exhibition as "an ancillary exhibition. The introductory panel of the exhibition states that it is not correct to equate the Holocaust with apartheid."¹⁵¹ What Shain and Osrin left unsaid was why such a comparison was "incorrect." Instead, Shain referred to Osrin's explanation that two main aims of the 'AFITW' exhibition were not only to "educate people about the history of the Holocaust and its unique position in history, [but also] to use the Holocaust story to teach people about the evils of discrimination and the importance of human rights." In this way, Shain's report bolstered the idea that only the Holocaust held a unique place in history, as opposed to apartheid. For

¹⁴⁸ Gordon Metz, interview by author, 10 January 2014. Cape Town. Metz recalls concerns being raised that the Holocaust not be compared to apartheid, and the plight of Jewish victims, not being compared to the plight of the victims of apartheid. Osrin's subsequent responses capture the concern that the two histories not be collapsed. At the SAJBD (Cape Council) meeting of 11 May 1993, Mervyn Smith alluded to the Arkin's objection but pointed out that "except for a small division in the Council for Natal Jewry", the "rest of the Provincial Councils and National Management unanimously approved the project."

¹⁴⁹ Milton Shain, *American Jewish Year Book: 1996*, 365, accessed 2 September 2015, <http://www.ajcarchives.org/main.php?GroupingId=10131> . Shain submitted his report in his capacity as Associate Professor of Jewish Studies, UCT.

¹⁵⁰ Shain, *American Jewish Year Book: 1996*, 365.

¹⁵¹ Shain, *American Jewish Yearbook: 1996*, 365.

Shain only the Holocaust could teach people about the “evils of discrimination and the importance of human rights.”¹⁵²

Histories alongside to each other

What connects the concern raised by voices such as Arkin and those of the Mayibuye team is the question of how one navigates the terrain one might call, “the integrity of the historical specificity” of each history: the history of the specific genocide called the Holocaust; the history of the Anne Frank and her family within the Holocaust; the history of apartheid. While there were only a handful of Holocaust survivors who brought their specific history of the Holocaust to the guiding of visitors through the ‘AFITW’ exhibition, all the South Africans who worked on the project had witnessed and survived living in apartheid racial state. The guides for the “Anne Frank” section of the exhibition were volunteers drawn mainly from the Jewish communities in the respective cities where the exhibition travelled. The Mayibuye team employed James April as a guide to the Mayibuye panels. April had been an anti-apartheid activist who had spent time incarcerated on Robben Island before going into exile. His work as the guide for the apartheid exhibition panels was one of his first jobs since his return to South Africa after exile.¹⁵³

So, how was one as visitor and guide to navigate these histories and not get lost?

What narratives of the three histories: the Holocaust, the history of the Frank family, and apartheid, would dominate, and was there any indication that these narratives might be expanded upon and contested? The contract between the AF House and the SAJBD made it clear that no text could be changed or amended. This was not an

¹⁵² Shain’s association with Holocaust education continued after the ‘AFITW’ exhibition. He later served on the Special Committee working on the development of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, and also became a member of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.

¹⁵³ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014. Cape Town.

unusual clause in a lease agreement for an exhibition, particularly one that had already travelled to many parts of the world before it reached South Africa. The ‘AFITW’ exhibition was a “package deal,” carefully controlled by the AF House in Amsterdam, requiring the host country to install and exhibit, and learn from the AF House trainers how to approach the exhibition’s text and images. While it is clear from the correspondence in the AF Archive is that ‘AFITW’ in South Africa was conceptualised as needing to be sensitive to the South African context, and to be a vehicle of support for the newly democratic government,¹⁵⁴ the questions raised by the panels developed by the Mayibuye team, of the meaning of the exhibition in the South African context, did not sit comfortably with the local organising committee, nor always with the AF House representatives either.

AFITW and the new South Africa

The impact of the process of bringing the ‘AFITW’ exhibition to South Africa extended beyond the country’s Jewish community. However, its impact within the Jewish community and its impact on the development of Holocaust education in South Africa, cannot be overstated.

The ‘AFITW’ exhibition differed from the 1985 exhibition held in the SACHM, in its scale and reach and context. Unlike the 1985 exhibition that made no reference to the contemporary reality of South Africa at that time - the state of emergency and state oppression - the ‘AFITW’ exhibition included panels on apartheid history, albeit not integrated into the actual exhibition on Anne Frank. Secondly, the South Africa through which ‘AFITW’ travelled was a different country to the South Africa of the mid-1980s.

¹⁵⁴ See correspondence between Jan Erik Dubbleman and Jan Heeren, 17 June 1992. AF Archive, South Africa File 1, Amsterdam.

The exhibition opened on the eve of South Africa's first democratic elections and sailed into a "new" South Africa. One development in the "new" South Africa was the lifting of state censorship. It would be the first time for most South Africans visiting the exhibition that they had seen the images contained in the "South African" panels. This is a critical element to consider when examining the responses to the exhibition. Dubbleman was struck by the impact this had on the visitors.¹⁵⁵ Duggan recalled how profoundly affecting the experience was for some of the visitors of seeing the reality of their lives reflected in a public space, and of the recognition and status such a venue gave.¹⁵⁶ The educational role of the Mayibuye exhibition for all ages was commented on by Duggan, who recalled how she, Metz and April were,

appalled by the school groups' lack of information about their own history. But not really because we knew that history had been hidden, and covered and underexposed But we had assumed that a lot of kids would know things about '76 for example, being youngsters but of course, they didn't. So it served as a very interesting quick brush-up of the SA struggle history for a lot of people.¹⁵⁷

It is also useful to remember that shortly before the exhibition opened, the film *Schindler's List* opened in South Africa's cinemas. Unlike other countries that had seen the television series, *Holocaust*, South Africa's national public broadcaster had refused to screen the series. *Schindler's List* was South Africa's *Holocaust*. It had the same impact written about in other contexts.¹⁵⁸ Osrin and survivor Lichterman both

¹⁵⁵ Jan Erik Dubbleman, interview by author, 1 June 2012. Cape Town.

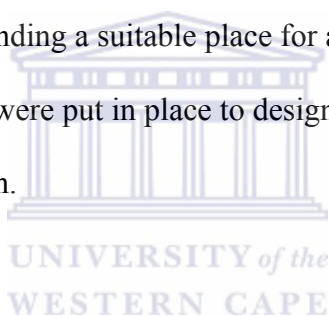
¹⁵⁶ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014. Cape Town.

¹⁵⁷ Jo-Anne Duggan, interview by author, 20 January 2014. Cape Town.

¹⁵⁸ This field includes Novick's *The Holocaust in American Life*, Gavrielle D. Rosenfeld, "The Politics of Uniqueness: Reflections on the Recent Polemical Turn in Holocaust and Genocide Scholarship," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 13, no. 1 (1999): 28-61; Tim Cole, *Selling the Holocaust*, Miriam Bratu Hansen, "'Schindler's List' Is Not 'Shoah': The Second Commandment, Popular Modernism, and Public Memory," *Critical Inquiry* 22, no. 2 (Winter, 1996): 292-312; Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget*; Yosefa Loshitzky, ed., *Spielberg's Holocaust: Critical Perspectives on Schindler's List* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); Lawrence Baron, *Projecting the Holocaust into the Present: The Changing Focus of Contemporary Holocaust Cinema* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005); Michael André Bernstein, "The *Schindler's List* Effect," *The American Scholar* 63, no. 3 (Summer 1994): 429-432, and Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*.

commented on the public prominence “Schindler’s List” gave to the history of the Holocaust in South Africa.¹⁵⁹

What was significant was that unlike the 1985 exhibition, the response to the ‘AFITW’ exhibition project suggested to Osrin that, “telling the story about the Holocaust” did not just have to be her or the “Jewish community doing their thing,” but that it “was actually very central to where South Africa was, that it really could be very useful in the transformation process.”¹⁶⁰ The ‘AFITW’ tour of South Africa had also suggested to Osrin a model of presenting Holocaust education in post-apartheid South Africa that placed the history of the Holocaust and apartheid at arm’s length of one another. The tension of finding a suitable place for apartheid history became increasingly evident as plans were put in place to design the exhibition of a permanent centre for Holocaust education.



¹⁵⁹ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town. Miriam Lichterman survived the Warsaw Ghetto, Majdanek, Auschwitz- Birkenau, Ravensbruck and Malhof. She and her husband came to South Africa in 1948. Lichterman was very active in SH, and has since 2010, served as chairperson of SH.

¹⁶⁰ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town. Some of the statements selected by Osrin from the comments written by high schools students who visited the exhibition, illustrated Osrin’s observations. For example, a student from Oranje High School in Bloemfontein wrote, “I can’t understand how anyone could still be racist after they’ve seen this exhibition. It was wonderful.” Translated by author from Afrikaans. The Afrikaans text read: “Ek kan nie verstaan hoe kan iemand nog rasisties wees na hull (sic) hierdie uitstalling gesien het nie. Dit was wonderlik.” Bloemfontein was the judicial capital of South Africa, and regarded as a National Party stronghold. Comments in Annexure “C” of the Report of the National Tour March 1994–May 1995. The original collection of all the comments is missing from the CTHC Collection.

CHAPTER THREE

CONCEPTUALISING A PERMANENT CENTRE

The 'AFITW' exhibition closed its doors on 21 May 1995, 14 months after it had opened in Cape Town. The exhibition had been seen by 125 000 visitors, of whom 48 900 were school children from 514 schools. The exhibition had visited eight centres in South Africa and Windhoek in Namibia and had travelled over 50 000km. The 'AFITW' had generated over 225 articles in national and local newspapers, as well as significant radio and television coverage. More than 500 people had participated in the guide training workshops and over 600 teachers had participated in teacher workshops and had received educational materials.¹ In all the centres where the exhibition had been held, prominent anti-apartheid activists had opened the exhibition.² In their speeches they linked the history of the Holocaust and Anne Frank with the history of apartheid, and connected the history of the oppression of European Jewry with the history of the victims of apartheid.³

'AFITW' had left a huge footprint. It served as evidence that Holocaust education, and by association, the Jewish community, had a place in a newly democratic country. 'AFITW' was an "excellent public relations exercise for the Board."⁴ The importance of the relationship between the position granted the Jewish community in the "new" South Africa, and Holocaust education, was to become increasingly clear to the

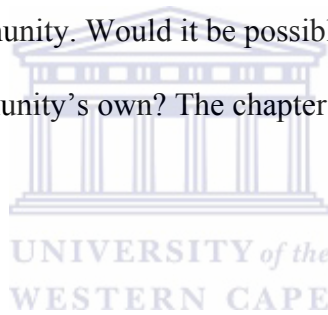
¹ Report of National Tour, March 1994–May 1995. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

² Cape Town: Archbishop Tutu; Port Elizabeth: Minister Bantu Holomisa; Senator Govan Mbeki; Durban: Premier Dr Frank Mdlalose and Minister Bantu Holomisa; Bloemfontein: Premier Patrick Lekota; Pretoria and Johannesburg: President Nelson Mandela.

³ 'AFITW' collection. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the SAJBD (Cape Council), 15 November 1994, Cape Town. Box P4, UCT Archive.

SAJBD, who would support wholeheartedly Osrin's proposal a year after AFITW had left, for a permanent Holocaust Centre. The anxiety and ambivalence about connecting apartheid history to Holocaust history, that had characterised the AFITW project, would remain a source of concern and friction as Osrin and the team she assembled, considered the construction of a permanent Holocaust Centre. This chapter examines the processes involved in the shaping of the concept of the Centre. I argue that these processes revealed the tensions inherent in building a memorial to the victims of the crimes committed in the name of race, in a country where the scars of a brutal racist regime were still very fresh. The discussion of what the Centre would do for Holocaust education was also a conversation of what role the Centre could play for the minority Jewish community. Would it be possible to invite the public in, but to retain the Centre as the community's own? The chapter explores how these tensions were expressed.



Holocaust Centre options

Galvanised by the success of the AFITW, Osrin set about examining options for the construction of a permanent centre that would be home to the Holocaust Memorial Council's educational outreach programme and a Holocaust exhibition. The construction of the Centre was seen as a way of placing South African Jewry alongside other Jewish communities worldwide who had Holocaust Centres. Osrin's references to other centres "all over the Jewish world," revealed a concept of the Centre as first and foremost, part of the "Jewish World."⁵ The venues proposed for the Centre, namely the Albow Brothers' Centre, the Gitlin Library, a proposed new

⁵ Minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 29 January 1992, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

lecture theatre at Herzlia High School or a house opposite the Albow Centre, reflected this view.⁶

While the 'AFITW' exhibition had been touring the country, the Holocaust Memorial Council had not met. This is unsurprising considering the extent of organisation required by its chairperson Osrin, and the involvement of most of the volunteers in the 'AFITW' project. Osrin noted Yvonne Verblun's report to the SAJBD (Cape Council) at its meeting on 28 November 1995. Verblun called for a "central Holocaust Resource Centre which people would be able to visit at all times and from which exhibitions could be based and monitored."⁷ In response to a suggestion from committee member Mrs Sandler that the "Resource Centre (or Holocaust Museum) be incorporated into the New Jewish Museum" being planned by prominent Johannesburg businessman and benefactor of the Jewish Community, Mendel Kaplan, Osrin said that she would "prefer that such a Holocaust Resource Centre ... be linked with the Gitlin Library."⁸ The Committee approved Osrin's suggestion, as well as the establishment of a Cape Town Holocaust Education Trust Fund, that would be administered by the SAJBD. The Trust would "grant financial support to specific Holocaust Education Projects."⁹

⁶ The Albow Brothers' Centre is a Jewish Community Centre. The Gitlin Library was established in 1959 by the Western Province Zionist Council to serve the Cape Town Jewish community through building a collection of books, journals, archived material, brochures and other material considered of interest to the community. (source: <http://www.sazfcape.co.za/divisions/gitlin-library/>) accessed 8 January 2014. Herzlia High School is a Jewish Community school in Cape Town.

⁷ Minutes of the meeting of the SAJBD (Cape Council), 28 November 1995, Cape Town. Box P4, UCT Archive, Cape Town.

⁸ Kaplan had proposed to renovate the existing Jewish Museum, housed in what had been the first synagogue built in South Africa in 1863. A "new" larger synagogue had been built next to the "Old Shul" in 1905. The Synagogue offices are in what was known as the Albow Centre – a space used by the Jewish community for various events. Kaplan's plan was to renovate not only the Old Synagogue but also the Albow Centre, creating a "campus." Minutes of the meeting of the SAJBD, (Cape Council) 13 February 1996, 12 March 1996, Cape Town. Box P4, UCT Archive, Cape Town.

⁹ Minutes meeting SAJBD (Cape Council) 15 November 1994, Cape Town. Box P4, UCT Archive, Cape Town.

Following the “Days of Remembrance” Holocaust education programme,¹⁰ Osrin had taken the idea of extending the first floor of the Albow Centre for the proposed permanent venue to Jon Weinberg, Director of Exhibitions at SANG, for his opinion on the suitability of the venue.¹¹ Osrin’s criteria for suitability reflected the need to keep costs low, and also indicated a modest imagining of the reach and function of the Centre. The Albow Centre was suitable for three reasons: it was already a functioning communal facility with a suitable infrastructure and running costs would be limited, its proximity to the new Jewish Museum would increase the number of visitors to the Centre. Finally, the Centre would be able to save further costs by sharing the use of facilities such as the tearoom and lecture theatre being developed by the Jewish Museum.



Having had a draft plan drawn up by the architect Max Klein,¹² Osrin presented her plan and proposal to the SAJBD (Cape Council) at a meeting on 30 April 1996. The “permanent Holocaust Centre” presented by Osrin would be educational and would also arrange exhibitions from time to time, and would not be confined to a section of the Jewish Museum. Buoyed by Osrin’s enthusiasm and her record of success with the ‘AFITW’ project, the Board approved the plan and proposal in principle, on condition that all funds required could be raised from one or two sponsors. In her report to the HMC on 17 September 1996, Osrin stated that she “was hopeful that the

¹⁰ Yvonne Verblun, chief librarian of the Gitlin Library, had organised an annual Holocaust Education and commemoration week to coincide with *Yom Hashoah*. The education programme for 1996 was organised by members of the HMC and was held at the Albow Centre. Since *Yom Hashoah* fell on Tuesday 16 April in 1996, the education programme ran from 14-21 April. The programme included educational posters, film screening, book displays and school visits. *Yom Hashoah* is also a day of Holocaust commemoration and was initially assigned by an Act of the Israeli Knesset. In South Africa, the regional committees of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies organised the commemoration programme on the day of Yom Hashoah.

¹¹ Weinberg had worked with Osrin on the ‘AFITW’ exhibition in assisting with the development of the Mayibuye panels.

¹² Max Klein to Myra Osrin, 30 April 1996. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Klein’s firm, Klein & Louw, had designed the original Albow Centre.

required sponsorships would be available.”¹³ The chairperson of the SAJBD (Cape Council) Ian Sacks, in turn, informed Mendel Kaplan of the new developments.¹⁴ Kaplan responded the next day, and although the letter was somewhat terse, the way forward was cleared.¹⁵

Minutes of meetings are by their nature, understated, but considering the years of talking about the need for a permanent structure for Holocaust resources, to have Osrin present such concrete plans must have led to a very excited discussion at the HMC meeting of 17 September 1996 when Osrin tabled the developments of the preceding months. Instead the minutes outlined the issues clarified after the discussion. These mainly related to the running of the Centre and reflected a concern about budgetary constraints. The points raised by the HMC suggested that they shared Osrin’s modestly imagined Centre, one that would open only three days a week – Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday, “or by appointment.”¹⁶ The HMC suggested that the Centre be served “in the main by voluntary workers” in order to save costs, and that a “part-time paid employee” be appointed. Furthermore, additional income might be derived from a collection box at the Centre, and it was hoped that the existence of a Holocaust Centre would “hopefully attract donations from interested members of the community.” The HMC also agreed that the establishment of a permanent venue

¹³ Minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 17 September 1996, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

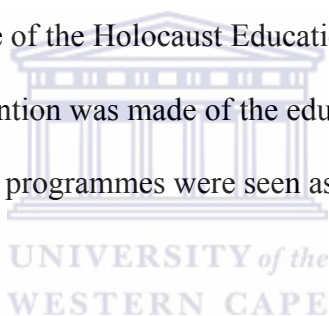
¹⁴ Ian Sacks to Mendel Kaplan, 1 July 1996, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁵ Mendel Kaplan to Ian Sacks, 10 July 1996, CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Osrin had “hoped the Centre might be located at the new Museum, but was not sure whether this would be possible.” (Minutes of the meeting of the SAJBD (Cape Council), 27 February 1996, Cape Town. Box P4, Rochlin Archives, SAJBD, Johannesburg. However, two months later, Osrin reported that Kaplan had “stated clearly that there would be no Holocaust section to his Museum.” Minutes of the meeting of the SAJBD (Cape Council), 30 April 1996, Cape Town. Box P4, Rochlin Archives, SAJBD, Johannesburg. Despite the rather strained relationship between Kaplan and the HMC, the HMC consulted with the SAJM’s architect team and Israeli design team. The advice from the Israeli design team provided an important provocation in the Centre’s dealing with South African history. This is explored later in the chapter.

¹⁶ All phrases quoted in this paragraph are taken from the minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 17 September 1996, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

would avoid the costs of mounting multiple temporary exhibitions. However, they went on to add that the Centre would also house temporary exhibitions along with the permanent exhibition. The HMC expressed the hope that the permanent display would contain donations of documents and memorabilia from survivors and their families.¹⁷

The discussion revealed a conception of the Centre as a receptacle not only for survivors' tangible memory of the Holocaust in the form of "documents and memorabilia,"¹⁸ but also a vehicle for Holocaust education. The HMC noted that a permanent Holocaust Centre would "greatly facilitate an educational outreach programme to Government schools." This programme, the HMC added, would "tie up very well with the programme of the Holocaust Education Resource Project (HERP) at the Kaplan Centre." No mention was made of the education programmes organised by the Gitlin Library, as these programmes were seen as a function of the HMC already.



Whereas some of the points raised by the HMC indicated a conception of the Centre as being within a space occupied by the Jewish community (the Albow Centre and Jewish Museum had facilities which the Centre could access), the discussion also included the point that the Centre would function as an independent entity. The HMC further underlined the notion of the Centre as independent in its response to the idea mooted that the Gitlin Library relocate to the Albow Centre. While stating that such a move was "highly desirable," the Committee noted that "this was not the agenda of the Holocaust Memorial Council" and urged instead that the Gitlin Library itself

¹⁷ Minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 17 September 1996, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁸ All phrases quoted in this paragraph are taken from the minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 17 September 1996, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

lobby for the move.¹⁹ What is curious about this response is the fact that the Gitlin Library was represented on the HMC. The Gitlin Library's Holocaust education programmes and Holocaust resources had been part of previous HMC activities. The Gitlin Library also served as a receptacle for Holocaust books and audio-visual material, such as the set of Claude Lanzman's "Shoah" videotapes acquired and donated by Osrin at the same meeting.

What "independence" would entail, how it would be expressed, and from whom the Centre would be independent was not clarified during the meeting. From the minutes there appears to have been no discussion of the exact nature of the relationship between the Centre and the various organisations and bodies represented on the HMC. Possible areas of difficulty were evident however, when one considers some of the points raised during the rest of the meeting. While the minutes recorded the activities of the Holocaust Education Resource Project (HERP) of the Kaplan Centre, there was no record of any discussion of what the relationship would be between the proposed Holocaust Centre and the Holocaust Resource Project, other than that the activities of the proposed Centre could "tie up very well" with the HERP.²⁰ Whether that meant a collaborative relationship or supportive relationship, was not clarified.

The minutes, however, indicated a general acceptance of the HMC idea of a Holocaust Centre separate from the Jewish Museum, separate from the Synagogue and the University (through the HERP) and not incorporated in any of the three. The

¹⁹ All quotes in this paragraph are taken from the minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 17 September 1996, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²⁰ The Jessie and Isaac Kaplan Centre (known as the Kaplan Centre) was established in 1980 as a gift to the University of Cape Town (UCT) by the Kaplan Kushlick Foundation (named after Mendel Kaplan's parents). The Centre is autonomous and acts as a co-ordinating unit in the University. The Centre's special focus is on the South African Jewish community. <http://www.humanities.uct.ac.za/hum/research/groupings/cjsr/about#sthash.IcaQkVpU.dpuf>. Accessed 7 January 2014.

lack of discussion about the implications of this independence is not that surprising when one remembers that this was the first time there was any real possibility of a permanent Centre becoming a reality. The recent memory of the great success of 'AFITW' no doubt played some part in explaining the HMC's confidence in the project's viability.

Ian Sacks (in his position as Secretary of the Western Province Communal Priorities and Planning Board) wrote to Osrin at the beginning of October 1996 informing her that the Board of the SAJBD (Cape Council) had approved the proposal for a "Holocaust Resource and Education Centre in Cape Town." Sacks was also quick to assure Osrin in his second letter on 2 October that it was not an obstacle that Osrin's proposal was still "in its infancy" and that she was still to "submit concrete information to the Board."²¹ Osrin only submitted this "concrete information" on the 24 February 1997. The reason for the lengthy delay could be traced back to a chance reading of a newspaper in Israel a few days after Sacks's second letter, and a subsequent meeting with a young man in the middle of rural England.

By the time the HMC next met, at a special meeting called for 20 January 1997, Osrin's vision of the function and reach of the Centre had undergone a major shift. Pure chance had prompted this development. During a visit to Israel for a family wedding in October the previous year, Osrin had happened across an article in the *Jerusalem Post*, entitled "Tough Lessons amid Tranquillity."²² It told the story of a young Englishman Stephen Smith, who together with his brother James and his parents had opened England's first Holocaust Centre, The Beth Shalom Holocaust

²¹ Ian Sacks to Myra Osrin, 2 October 1996. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²² Tom Gross, "Tough Lessons Amid Tranquillity," *The Jerusalem Post*, 11 October 1996, accessed 1 April 2015 from HighBeam Research: <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P1-2825097.html>

Centre, in Nottinghamshire. Osrin made her way to England and visited the Centre. What she saw had a profound impact on her conceptualisation of what a Holocaust Centre could look like. What excited Osrin most was the fact that, unlike the enormous United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) which had recently opened in Washington D.C. and the Yad Vashem complex in Jerusalem, Beth Shalom was very small. Osrin said that she realised that if the Centre was thought of in this way, “it felt do-able.”²³ Her visit to Beth Shalom marked the start of a very close and co-operative partnership between Beth Shalom Director Stephen Smith, and the nascent Centre in Cape Town.

Osrin returned to South Africa excited by the possibilities her visit to the Beth Shalom had revealed and by Smith’s offer the Cape Town Holocaust Centre replicate the Beth Shalom exhibition. It was an offer Osrin happily accepted. A special meeting of the HMC was called for 20 January 1997. A register of those attending displayed the broad nature of the organisations and bodies associated with the HMC: the SAJBD, the WPZC and Gitlin Library, She’erith Hapletah and the Kaplan Centre. The meeting had one item on its agenda viz. the “Holocaust Centre Project.”

Osrin tabled the final proposal that the Board of Deputies (Cape Council) had approved for the “Cape Town Holocaust (Memorial) Centre” Project.”²⁴ The proposal confirmed the Centre’s geographical location “on the first floor of the newly constructed Albow Brother’s Centre, Hatfield Street, Gardens,” with the Project to be located within the “framework of the Cape Town Jewish Community,” but also “an

²³ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 14 December 2011, Cape Town.

²⁴ The inclusion of the word “memorial” did not move beyond the parenthesis in the proposal. The Board’s approval was contingent on the approval of the WP Jewish Communal Priorities and Planning Board. Osrin submitted the proposal to the WP Jewish Communal Priorities and Planning Board on 24 February 1997.

independent organisation” within this communal framework. This proposal did not clarify the relationship of the Centre to the Jewish Community “framework” however, and there was no indication in the minutes of any representatives of that “Jewish Community framework” on the HMC questioning the Centre’s degree of independence.

The final proposal quite dramatically extended the concept of the Centre as simply being a holding place for an exhibition and a permanent space for temporary displays. The proposal also noted that the exhibition would be “largely modelled on much acclaimed Beth Shalom Holocaust Memorial Centre in Nottingham, England.”²⁵ In explaining to the HMC why Beth Shalom’s exhibition would be appropriate, Osrin described the Beth Shalom exhibition as “small; 1,600 square feet but very powerful.”²⁶ Furthermore, Osrin was able to report that the Director of Beth Shalom had assured the new Cape Town Centre of his “every assistance.”²⁷ The HMC agreed that in addition to a general overview of the history of the Holocaust as per the Beth Shalom exhibition, the exhibition should include a focus on two specific aspects of the history pertinent to South African Jewry namely, the destruction of the Jewish Communities of Lithuania/Latvia and Rhodes Island.²⁸

²⁵ “Proposal for the establishment of a Cape Town Holocaust Centre submitted by Mrs Myra Osrin, Chairman (sic) of the Cape Town Holocaust Memorial Council to the WP Jewish Communal Priorities and Planning Board,” Monday 24 February 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²⁶ Minutes of HMC meeting, 20 January 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²⁷ Osrin added that Smith would be in Cape Town from 28 April to 5 May, to speak at the Cape Town Yom Hashoah commemorations of 4 May, and to meet with She’erith Hapletah.

²⁸ The majority of the South African Jewish community has Lithuanian/Latvian roots. See Mendelsohn and Shain, *The Jews in South Africa: An Illustrated History*; Saul Isseroff, “South African Jewish Genealogy,” accessed 8 March 2014, <http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/za-infoa.txt>; Gideon Shimoni, *Jews and Zionism: The South African Experience (1910-1967)* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1980). A number of the members of She’erith Hapletah in Cape Town were originally from the Jewish community of Rhodes Island. The chairperson of She’erith Hapletah from the 1980s to 2000 was Violetta Fintz, a Rhodesli. See Renee Hirschon, “Jews from Rhodes in Central and South Africa,” in *Encyclopedia of Diasporas II*, eds. Melvin Ember, Carol R. Ember and Ian Skoggard, (New York: Springer Science, 2007): 925-933.

The HMC examined the project's proposed organisational structure of a Board of Trustees to which a management committee would report. Reporting to the Management Committee in turn would be two bodies, namely the Holocaust Centre Planning Committee (HC Planning Committee) and the Cape Town Memorial Council (CTMC). An Education Sub-Committee would report to the CTMC. The HC Planning Committee was envisaged as a temporary body that would fall away once the Centre opened. The HC Planning Committee would be advised by a Technical Advisory Sub-Committee.

The HMC agreed that the composition of the HC Planning Committee should reflect the community organisations already represented on the HMC, as well as drawing on the technical expertise of certain people. It was decided that the chairpersons of the HMC, the Education Sub-Committee and the Priorities Board should be part of the HC Planning Committee, as should two members of She'erith Hapletah, two members of the HMC, the Director of the Kaplan Centre, the Co-ordinator of the Holocaust Education Research Project of the Kaplan Centres, the Director of the SAJBD (Cape Council) as well as the chairperson or representative of the WPZC. A representative of Herzlia Day School, nominated by the principal, would also be a member of the HMC. Finally an exhibition designer, a project architect and photographic advisor would join the Committee.²⁹ The HMC suggested that the South African Jewish Museum be represented as well on the HC Planning Committee. The HMC agreed that Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris should be one of the Trustees and that Stephen Smith be approached to serve as a Special Advisor.

²⁹ The HMC identified a number of individuals at this stage of the discussion: Jon Weinberg would be approached to take on the role of exhibition designer, the architect Max Klein who had drawn the original sketch for Osrin in 1996 would be included as project architect, and Gerald Hoberman was to be asked to be the photographic advisor.

Three objectives envisioned: Holocaust education, anti-racism education and commemoration.

The HMC examined the three objectives of the Centre spelled out in the proposal. The first objective was to “educate the public, both Jewish and general, in particular young people about the Holocaust.” Secondly, the Centre was to “heighten public awareness of the evils and the dangers of prejudice and racial intolerance and the implications of indifference.” The third objective was to “serve as a place of commemoration and remembrance of the destruction of six million Jews during World War II.”³⁰

The proposal also identified the Centre’s four “targeted publics”. These were high school, university and college students, teachers, the general public and visitors/tourists to Cape Town. The proposal’s list of “possible services undertaken by the Centre” and the ensuing discussion at the meeting added to the HMC’s conception of the Centre’s role as being a memorial and an education centre. An interesting development in the conceptualising of the relationship between the Centre and other institutions such as the Gitlin Library was also evident in the discussion about the list of services.³¹ The HMC identified a number of the Centre’s suggested services that would not be viable unless the Gitlin Library relocated to the Albow Centre. Unlike the previous meeting of the HMC in 1996 in which it had distanced itself from the Library’s request to relocate to the Albow Centre, the HMC now agreed that “a strong recommendation be made to relevant persons/bodies for the library to be relocated ... in order to serve, not only the Holocaust Centre but the Jewish Museum as well.” The

³⁰ Whilst the name proposed in the final proposal for the Centre was the “Cape Town Holocaust (Memorial) Centre,” and appeared thus to indicate the importance of the Centre as a commemorative space, but ultimately the Committee could not reach a final decision about the inclusion of the word “memorial” in the name. Nothing is said in any of the records nor could anyone interviewed recall, why the name did not eventually include “Memorial.”

³¹ The list included: research; school programmes; group tours; library; adult education; teacher training workshops; speakers’ bureau; lectures/seminars; oral history programme; films/videos; audio-taped self guided tours; docent training’ commemorations; educational materials; travelling exhibits; conferences; curriculum development; student prejudice reduction programmes.

inclusion of the SAJM as a future beneficiary of the Library was a strategic move, since Kaplan, the initiator of the construction of the Museum, was also the main funder of the renovations to the Albow Centre. To have Kaplan's support would weigh heavily in favour of the Library's quest to move to the Albow Centre. This in turn would benefit the Holocaust Centre.

The discussion of services the Centre might undertake prompted the Committee to revise the function of the Education Sub-Committee to include advising the HC Planning Committee and the HMC. The Education Sub-Committee was tasked with "networking with High school educators from Government schools to gain an understanding of their work," and encouraged to investigate having Holocaust Studies included in the High School Curricula.³² The remainder of the meeting examined the proposal's funding strategy. The HMC identified the need to raise R1 500 000, and clarified that the source of funding would be from within the Jewish community. Osrin also urged Committee members to consider people from within the Jewish community who could be approached as governors or sponsors.

The discussion from the meeting at the end of January 1997 revealed a more developed conception of the Centre from that envisaged in 1996 as a modest and permanent venue for exhibitions. Instead the Centre was seen as having a much larger function, educating about, and commemorating the Holocaust on a far greater scale, reaching beyond the Cape Town Jewish Community to the national education stage and curricula.³³ However, the proposal underwent further fine-tuning between the January meeting, and the meeting with the Western Province Communal Priority and

³² HMC special meeting: 20 January 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

³³ HMC special meeting: 20 January 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Planning Board (Priorities Board) in February. This was the final step in the process of getting the “green light”.

Osrin met once more with Smith in England before she presented the proposal to the Priorities Board on 24 February 1997. While it was much the same as the proposal discussed with the HMC a month earlier, there were certain changes. The first was to the order of the three objectives. The role of the Centre as a place of commemoration was moved ahead of its function to teach about prejudice. Another change, possibly reflecting Smith’s influence, was to replace the word “Holocaust” with the word “Shoah”.³⁴

The changes revealed further developments in the conceptualisation of the relationship of the Centre to other community organisations and institutions. This was evident in the paragraph that replaced the list of services the Centre would provide. The replacement paragraph instead stated that the Holocaust Education Research Unit of the Kaplan Centre at the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the Gitlin Library would “partner” the Cape Town Holocaust Centre in research, teacher training, curriculum development and workshops/seminars.

A further paragraph revised the Centre’s relationship with the SAJM in terms of its design and explained that “in consultation with Mr Mendel Kaplan and Mr Michael Hackner” the project would use its own architects Klein and Louw who would “liaise whenever necessary with Michael Hackner.”³⁵ This development signalled the

³⁴ The two terms are most widely used to refer to the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis and their collaborators. *Shoah* is used in Israel and France, whereas the word, *Holocaust* is used in most other countries, and had been frequently used in South Africa. The Committee would choose the word “Holocaust” eventually.

³⁵ Hackner was the third partner of the firm, Fabian, Berman and Hackner, architects of the new Jewish Museum.

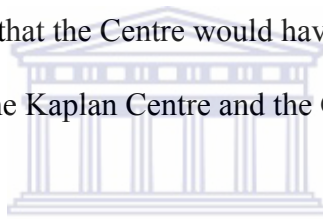
position of the Centre as independent of the SAJM and not a “partner,” but with some degree of connection.

The final part of the proposal detailed the running costs of the Centre and its funding plan. In explaining the running costs, reference was made to “Holocaust Centres world wide, which function with one professional and volunteers.” The funding plan indicated that once open, the Centre would receive an allocation from the SAJBD currently given to the HMC. This signalled the replacing of the HMC with the Centre as an entity, and the nature of the relationship between the community, as represented by the SAJBD, and the Centre. The anticipated annual budget of R66 000 would be covered by the Board’s allocation, the income from the Capital Fund (monies donated by the Harold and Beatrice Kramer Foundation), an additional allocation from “a charitable foundation,” donations from “interested and supportive members of the community” and the proceeds of the Donations Box. That the community was already invested in the project was evident in the fact that at the time of tabling the proposal to the Priorities Board, 15 individuals had given R25 000 each, and two of these individuals had pledged to contribute R25 000 per annum for four years.

The Priorities Board received Osrin’s proposal presentation “with much enthusiasm,” she reported happily to the HMC meeting two days later.³⁶ Not only was the Centre given the final go-ahead, but the Priority Board approved the moving of the Gitlin Library to the Albow Centre. Galvanised by the positive news, the HMC established the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Planning Committee (Planning Committee), and set a tentative date for its first meeting in March 1997.

³⁶ Minutes of the meeting of the HMC, 26 February 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Osrin informed the SAJBD (Cape Council) the day before. (Minutes of the SAJBD (Cape Council), 25 February 1997.

The planning committee agreed that the timing was right to introduce the project to the wider Jewish community through producing a brochure and placing an article in the *Cape Jewish Chronicle*. The brochure gave a brief overview of the need for a Centre arising out of the experience of the HMC's Holocaust education work, and in this way located the Centre as a product of a broad range of organisations within the mainstream Jewish community. Secondly the brochure set out the three objectives of the Centre and expanded on the content of the proposed exhibition, with its focus on the "fate of two specific communities particularly relevant to the South African Jewish community viz. Lithuania/Latvia and the island of Rhodes." The relationship with the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre was explained. The brochure also referred to the collaborative relationship that the Centre would have with the Holocaust Education Research Unit of the Kaplan Centre and the Gitlin Library.³⁷



Despite the success of the 'AFITW' exhibition, which had included panels on apartheid South Africa and examined prejudice and racism in the apartheid state, none of the minutes of subsequent HMC meetings made any reference to a discussion or debate about how a future Holocaust Centre would contextualise the Holocaust in terms of the wider South African landscape, beyond the inclusion of a particular focus on the Lithuanian/Latvian and Rhodes Islanders' experience of the Holocaust. This is somewhat surprising considering that the members of the Planning Committee were either members of the HMC or else had been involved in the development of the proposals, and/or in the 'AFITW' tour.³⁸ This was also true of the chairs of the 12

³⁷ 1997 Introductory Brochure, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

³⁸ The members of the Planning Committee represented a number of Jewish community organisations and included the Chair of the SAJBD (Lester Hoffman) and the executive director (Ian Sacks); the Chair of the WP Zionist Council (Adv. Jonathan Silke); the Chair of the Leeusig Albow management (Jack Tworetzky), a representative of the WP Jewish Communal Priorities and Planning Board (Mike Kovensky); the Director of the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies at UCT (Milton Shain); the co-ordinator of the Holocaust Education Research Unit of Kaplan Centre (Rolf Wolfswinkel); two HMC representatives (Benzion Surdut and Cynthia Maresky); the chair of She'erith Hapletah (Violette Fintz)

sub-committees established at the Planning Committee's inaugural meeting. Rolf Wolfswinkel, for example, who had chaired the 'AFITW' education committee and oversaw volunteer training, was appointed chair of the Volunteer Training sub-committee. Milton Shain, a member of the 'AFITW' Coordinating Committee, was appointed chair of the sub-committee on South Africa; Jon Weinberg, who had assisted the Mayibuye team in developing its panels on apartheid history that formed part of the 'AFITW' tour, was appointed head of the Exhibition Design sub-committee, together with Stephen Smith.³⁹

While one of the Centre's objectives was to "heighten public awareness of the evils and the dangers of prejudice and racial intolerance and the implications of indifference," there was no evidence of a discussion as to whether the "evils and the dangers of prejudice and racial intolerance and the implications of indifference" would reference the history of apartheid and the recent past of South Africans, Jewish and non-Jewish. In some ways, thus, the initial conceptualisation of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre was closer to the conceptualisation of the 1985 exhibition insofar as "context" included reference to survivors who had come to live in South Africa, or else, South African Jewry who had ties to Eastern Europe in particular, or to Rhodes Island.⁴⁰

and representative Zavier Piat; the Chair of the Holocaust Education Sub-committee (Marlene Silbert); Head Librarian: Jacob Gitlin Library (Yvonne Verblun); a representative of the SAJM (Michael Hackner); Treasurer (David Resnick) and Project Architect (Max Klein).

³⁹ Members of the Jewish community with expertise or experience were appointed as heads of the sub-committees. The other sub-committees were: Education (chair: Marlene Silbert, retired vice-principal of Herzlia Senior High School); Island of Rhodes (Rabbi R Suiza); Lithuania/Latvia (Benzion Surdot, former Chair of the HMC); Finance (David Resnick); Business Plan (Mike Kovensky; apart from representing the WP Jewish Communal Priorities and Planning Board, Kovensky was one of the first "Founders" of the Centre – "Founders" were those who donated R1 000 000 to the Centre); Building Consultant (Geoffrey Breskal); Photographic and Design Consultant (Gerald Hoberman); Marketing and Publicity (Sheryl Ozinsky); Computers (Stephen Kovensky).

⁴⁰ As set out in the various drafts of the proposal for the Centre and the final version of the proposal accepted by the Priorities Board.

The Planning Committee and sub-committees arranged a meeting on 1 May 1997 to accommodate Stephen Smith's visit to South Africa from 29 April to 5 May. A special preparatory meeting was held on 16 April at which a video of the Beth Shalom exhibition was screened. Marlene Silbert and Rolf Wolfswinkel presented on the Beth Shalom exhibition text, followed by an "outline on South Africa during the Holocaust years" by Milton Shain.⁴¹ Discussion during the meeting on 16 April revealed the Planning Committee's view of the Centre as being firmly located within the Jewish community, funded by the Jewish community and served by a volunteer corps recruited from the Jewish community.⁴²

Developing the exhibition's narrative

The presentations of Silbert, Wolfswinkel and Shain reflected what they considered important to tell about the history of the Holocaust and how the exhibition would tell this history. The presentations and discussion showed the outline of a "master narrative" that would inform the exhibition text and be expressed in the design of the exhibition.⁴³

Among the considerations when designing an exhibition text and exhibition itself is whether to organise the display following a "timeline" or whether to focus on a number of themes and build the text and display to respond to those themes. Each choice has its own challenges: choosing to arrange the exhibition "thematically"

⁴¹ Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting, 20 March 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁴² In response to a question about approaching institutions such as the Old Mutual for funding, Osrin indicated that "at this stage" appeals should be confined to the Jewish Community. Although the Committee agreed that volunteers be recruited "from the widest possible spectrum of the general community, and not restricted to the Jewish community" the recruitment notices were to be placed only in the *Cape Jewish Chronicle* and through word of mouth e.g. Interfaith Forums. The Committee concluded that, "only once the Holocaust Centre was functioning, would volunteers be recruited through the general press."

⁴³ Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting, 16 April 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

might result in a decontextualizing of the history, and choosing to follow a “timeline” immediately begs the question, when should it begin and end? A third option is to combine both, including a “timeline” for reference, and then arranging artefacts to match the “theme”. Another challenge for an exhibition designer is to consider the way in which the visitor might engage with the exhibition, and the relationship envisioned between the visitor and the exhibition’s display and content. Museums might create spaces within the exhibition for visitors to leave comments or ask questions. Technological advances may give visitors a chance to choose which artefacts they find of interest, giving visitors a chance to build their own display.

Apart from the involvement of Beth Shalom and discussions regarding its exhibition, the minutes of the first meeting of the planning committee and the relevant sub-committees did not reveal any discussion about other museums or what approach would be taken.⁴⁴ Although the minutes of the preparatory meeting of 16 April 1997 referred to the “thematic sequence” proposed for the exhibition text, the outline submitted by Silbert and Wolfswinkel showed the privileging of a linear progression in the narrative text with “themes” more akin to headlines for each consecutive period of time.⁴⁵ One of the themes was “universal lessons,” but Silbert and Wolfswinkel did not clarify what this constituted.⁴⁶ The inclusion of such a theme was an indication of

⁴⁴ Shain had recommended that the Committee meet with Professor David Cesarani who had been involved in the development of the Imperial Holocaust Museum, when Cesarani came to Cape Town in September 1997. However, the minutes do not indicate any influence this meeting may have had on the way the Committee considered the exhibition design or content.

⁴⁵ Silbert’s report to the Planning Committee referred to “four thematic exhibition sections.” These were “resistance and rescue,” “liberation,” “biographies,” and “universal lessons.” However, in her detailed synopsis, neither “biographies” nor “universal lessons” appeared, nor was there an explanation as to how “liberation” would be discussed thematically.

⁴⁶ An indicator of what were considered to be “universal lessons” is evident in the minutes of the first meeting of the Holocaust Memorial Education sub-committee on 12 March 1997. Under the subheading, “the universal lessons of the Holocaust,” the minutes note that “it was agreed that at the end of the exhibition, there should be some reference to the evil of racism, prejudice, totalitarianism and indifference – particularly within the South African context...”

the trends in Holocaust education of that time.⁴⁷ Smith encouraged a conception of the Centre as extending beyond the teaching of history and the historical period by stating, “The Centre must be a place that works towards the creation of peace.”⁴⁸

Silbert and Wolfwinkel’s report explained how the exhibition text would frame the history of the Holocaust. They stated, “we would not like to end the exhibition on an utterly depressive note, without hope. We would like visitor to take away a message of belief in the future in education and in the possibility of change.” Their report provided an example of how this could be achieved: “The final exhibit could be a short video composed of fragments of survivors (sic) testimonies which will show the pain, suffering and anguish, but will also focus on episodes of rescue, resistance (armed and spiritual), resilience, compassion and hope.”⁴⁹ Silbert and Wolfswinkel’s report described a redemptive frame for the exhibition. This desire for a redemptive frame for the genocide was not unique to the Centre and reflected a trend in Holocaust education of the early 1990s.⁵⁰

The April 1997 minutes illustrated the Planning Committee’s understanding of what constituted the exhibition “text,” and the place of artefacts in this text. Although the

⁴⁷ The mission statements of the USHMM and Beth Shalom, for example, refer to the moral lessons emanating from their exhibition of Holocaust history: “...encourage its visitors to reflect upon the moral and spiritual questions raised by the events of the Holocaust as well as their own responsibilities as citizens of a democracy,” (USHMM Mission Statement, <http://www.ushmm.org/information/about-the-museum/mission-statement>. Accessed 13 January 2015; “...present programmes of learning, based on the Holocaust, that encourage personal responsibility and the promotion of fairness and justice but also challenge learners to take positive action,” (National Holocaust Centre and Museum (Beth Shalom) Statement of Purpose, <http://www.nationalholocaustcentre.net/our-vision>. Accessed 13 January 2015.

⁴⁸ Silbert’s notes from her meeting with Stephen Smith on 1 May 1997. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁴⁹ Report on exhibition text, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵⁰ See for example Peter Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory*, (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2001) and *The Holocaust in American Life*; Young, *The Texture of Memory*; Tim Cole, “Nativization and Nationalisation: a Comparative Landscape Study of Holocaust Museums in Israel, the US and the UK,” in *After Eichmann: Collective Memory and Holocaust Since 1961*, ed. David Cesarani (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2005), 130-145 and *Selling the Holocaust*; Dan Stone, *Histories of the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Planning Committee agreed that “as many original documents and three-dimensional artefacts as possible be included” in the exhibition, and that an appeal for donations be made to the Jewish and general press and international Holocaust museums, the discussion did not reveal any consideration as to how those artefacts might themselves impact on the text, or be part of the “text.” Instead, artefacts and photographs were seen as illustrations only of the text. The exhibition “text” was conceived of as being the “academic’s written text,” and not inclusive of archival material.

The nature of the relationship between the text and artefacts was most clearly captured by the comments of the Photographic Advisor, Gerald Hoberman, who explained that, “once the academics completed the text [the] sub-committee would consider the selection of archival photographic material to support the narrative and the visual presentation of the text.”⁵¹ Silbert and Wolfswinkel’s report also showed a particular understanding of what constituted the “text” of the exhibition. In reference to the inclusion of music in the exhibition their report recommended that “at a *later stage*, appropriate, *unobtrusive* music” should be included.⁵²

The likely future visitor to the Centre was already being imagined in the choice of location of the Centre in the “Museum Mile” of central Cape Town, a location accessible to tourists and locals alike.⁵³ Much was made of the Centre’s location in the publicity released as well as the proposal. The Centre was to reach beyond the Jewish community, and its location was to enable this, and to signify this. The minutes of 16 April 1997 illustrated that the Committee’s conception of the exhibition

⁵¹ Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee: 16 April 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵² Report on exhibition text. My emphasis. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵³ The Centre is in walking distance to a number of state museums as well as the National Gallery.

as being responsive to the “local context” extended beyond the physical location of the Centre.⁵⁴ The Committee concluded that the Beth Shalom text would need to be “modified for the Cape Town exhibition.”⁵⁵

Furthermore, Osrin stressed the importance of the overview being “inclusive and comprehensive.” However, as the subsequent discussion revealed, the Committee understood that modifications to the text to make it “inclusive” needed to take into consideration a specific “local” community, namely the local Jewish community. This was evident in a number of ways. A recommendation was made that a 45 minute-long video be created of edited testimony of Holocaust survivors who had settled in South Africa, detailing their experiences before, during and immediately after the Holocaust. Note was made of the importance that the Planning Committee had clarified that the exhibition would reflect the experience of the communities to which South African Jewry had connections.⁵⁶ Following the report detailing the outline of the exhibition text, Shain provided an overview of possible content to be considered for the section entitled “South Africa during the Holocaust years.” The section referred to matters affecting only South African Jewry during the Holocaust years and the response of the minority of South Africans to events in Europe.⁵⁷ Other than antisemitism, nowhere in

⁵⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee, 16 April 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

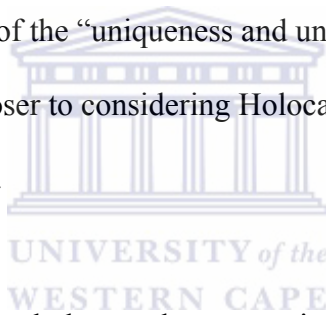
⁵⁵ Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee, 16 April 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵⁶ Much concern was expressed about the impression an article in the *Cape Jewish Chronicle* (March 1997) had given that the exhibition would refer only to the experiences of Jewish communities of Lithuania, Latvian and Rhodes Island, and exclude the experiences of, for example, the Jewish communities of Poland and Germany. Osrin reported that she had been contacted by certain members of the community who were very distressed by the report. The committee agreed that a meeting be set up with the members of She’erith Hapletah in order to quell this anxiety, as well as a meeting with Stephen Smith when he came to South Africa.

⁵⁷ The overview included: The Grey Shirt Movement; the Stuttgart; Jewish/South African participation in the war effort; the Government report of 1945 on the conditions in the Concentration Camps. The overview suggested that the section on the “aftermath of the Holocaust” include local Holocaust Commemorations and programmes in South Africa.

the presentations by Silbert, Wolfswinkel and Shain was reference made to racism, segregation and discrimination in South Africa, nor to apartheid.

The subsequent meetings with Beth Shalom's Stephen Smith in May 1997 brought the Planning Committee closer to considering how the exhibition spoke to the "new" - and old - South Africa. Was there a place in the exhibition for a discussion of racism as it had presented itself in South Africa before, during and after the Holocaust? Smith gave input on various logistical matters, ranging from how long the walk through the exhibition should take, and how many TV monitors and computers should be included in the exhibition, to staffing requirements and volunteering. However it was Smith's raising the issue of the "uniqueness and universality" of the Holocaust that moved the Committee closer to considering Holocaust history in relation to South Africa's experience of racism.



Smith suggested that the text include a prologue to orientate the visitor to the Centre's examination of the Holocaust. Silbert's notes taken at the meeting quoted Smith's suggestion for the wording of the prologue: "We live in a troubled world – racism, prejudice, hatred – This is a unique experience in which Jews were annihilated simply because they were Jews."⁵⁸ At the subsequent meeting of the Planning Subcommittee in June, Shain was tasked with drafting the prologue to "contextualise the Holocaust for the general public," which was to be included in the mission statement of the Centre.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Silbert's notes. Undated. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵⁹ Minutes of meeting of Planning Committee: 9 June 1997. The prologue read as follows:
Over many centuries, racial discrimination and religious intolerance have resulted in untold suffering, persecution and mass murder. Our own country has emerged only recently from the ravages of apartheid (sic). Discrimination does not always lead to genocide, but invariably precedes it. In this century alone here have been hundreds of conflicts in the name of race and religion. Genocides have claimed many millions of victims.

Although a number of museums such as the USHMM had offered loans of their artefacts, the costs of installing equipment that met the stipulations of the museums proved too great for the Centre. As a result, the exhibition leaned heavily on the use of reproductions of photographs and documents, and included very few original artefacts.

The minutes reflected Osrin's concern that the Centre not be viewed as a national project, but as a modest project with a modest budget. It is not clear from the minutes why Osrin would have felt the need to make these points, however there were a number of factors that provided a backdrop to Osrin's assertions. The proposal approved by the SAJBD had very clearly identified the Centre as a Cape Town project and not a national undertaking. Furthermore, Kaplan's Jewish Museum was also under construction and was being called the South African Jewish Museum (and not the Cape Town Jewish Museum). A third development that might have shaped Osrin's response was the establishment in Johannesburg of a Foundation for Holocaust Education for Jewish Day Schools. These factors might have contributed to Osrin's need to fend off any accusation of taking possible funding away from a national pool. Furthermore, there was a history of separate initiatives undertaken by the Jewish community centres as opposed to national initiatives.⁶⁰ This too may have impelled Osrin to clarify the scope of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Project as a

During the period 1933-1945, Nazism was driven by a racist ideology obsessed with the belief in the purity of a superior Aryan race. This led, step by step, to a civilised country embarking on a programme of persecution against groups that did not conform to the Nazi idea. It then set out to isolate and systematically annihilate every Jewish man, woman and child in Nazi –occupied Europe. Six million Jews were murdered in the Holocaust – not because of their beliefs, political opinion or economic situation, not because of what they had done, but simply because they were Jews.

This exhibition depicts events which occurred first a few decades ago. They remain a tragic warning to us in our troubled world today.

⁶⁰ The 'AFITW' exhibition was a notable exception.

Cape Town project without national aspirations. More pertinent to Osrin perhaps, was the degree of control that would be lost should the project become national.⁶¹

The exhibition prologue was mentioned again in the minutes of the Design Committee's meeting of 25 November 1997.⁶² The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the plan of the exhibition, and included an item called "Text: Prologue/Intro, South African Content, timeline." The minutes described the discussion as: "long discussion around prologue – especially South African components again."⁶³ The "South African components" continued to be discussed into 1998.

By mid-August 1997, Osrin had contacted 150 Holocaust Centres and institutions worldwide, advising them of the plans to establish a Cape Town Holocaust Centre and requesting support in terms of material and information about their institutions.⁶⁴ A Board of Trustees had been appointed, a Trust Deed drawn up to formalise the structure of the Holocaust Centre and a Board of Patrons was in the process of being constituted.⁶⁵ While all the Trustees were prominent members of the Jewish community, individuals invited to be Patrons came not only from the Jewish community, but were more widely known through their contributions to the anti-apartheid struggle and for their international stature.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Myra Osrin, interview by author, 19 April 2015, Cape Town.

⁶² Design Committee November 1997, Jon Weinberg Private Collection, Cape Town.

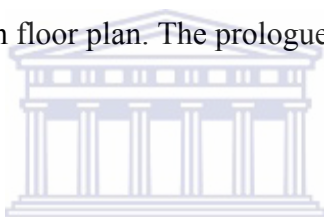
⁶³ Minutes of the Design Committee, 25 November 1997, Cape Town. Jon Weinberg Private Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁴ Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting, 7 August 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁵ The Trustees were Chief Rabbi C.K. Harris; Dr David Susman, doyenne of Cape Town Jewry; Mr Mervyn Smith, President of the National Board of Deputies and Myra Osrin. Mendel Kaplan was appointed an honorary member of the executive committee. Minutes of the Planning Committee, 16 April, 9 June, 16 August and 18 September 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. The Trust Deed was approved at the Planning Committee's meeting on 4 December 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁶ The patrons invited were Deputy President Thabo Mbeki; Stephen Smith; Rev. Frank Chikane (South African Council of Churches); Archbishop Desmond Tutu; Rev. Beyers Naudé; Prof Kader

The newly appointed curator of the South African Jewish Museum (SAJM), Viv Anstey clarified the relationship between the Museum and the Centre.⁶⁷ She confirmed that the SAJM would not focus on the Holocaust and that the Holocaust Centre “would complement the Museum.” Anstey concluded that she looked forward to “close co-operation with the Centre.”⁶⁸ The close cooperation between the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Project and Smith of Beth Shalom had continued with visits by the Design Committee chairperson Jon Weinberg to Beth Shalom and Smith to Cape Town.⁶⁹ At the final meeting of the Planning Committee in 1997, Smith reiterated the need for a “well-worded prologue” to “introduce the visitor to the exhibition and contextualise it for a South African audience.” The Design Committee then tabled the draft exhibition floor plan. The prologue was given prominence in the introduction.⁷⁰



By the end of 1997, the chairperson HPC reported that R2.1 million had been pledged for the Centre’s development and that the shell of the Centre would be finished in July 1998, leaving three months for the exhibition to be installed. The Board of Trustees indicated that three members of staff were to be appointed, and that the training of volunteers would commence in 1998. The opening of the Centre was proposed for 9 or 10 November. These dates coincided with the commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Kristallnacht Pogrom.⁷¹ The Project Concept ready to be released to funders and other potential supporters, echoed the words of Sheryl Ozinsky, head

Asmal and Justice Richard Goldstone, Sir Martin Gilbert (historian); Elie Wiesel and Steven Spielberg. Minutes of the Trustees Meeting 8 September 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁷ The Jewish Museum was formally renamed the South African Jewish Museum.

⁶⁸ Minutes of the Planning Committee, 4 December 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

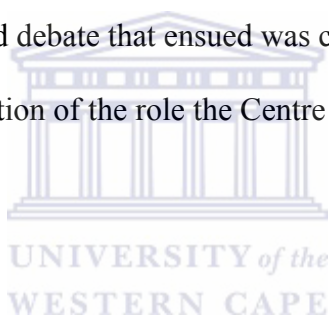
⁶⁹ Minutes of the Planning Committee Meetings, 9 October and 30 November 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁷⁰ Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting, 4 December 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁷¹ Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting, 4 December 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

of the marketing/publicity portfolio, who had stated at the June 1997 meeting that, “it was essential to create a feeling that the Centre was not only for Jews but for all Capetonians and the general public.”⁷²

Thus, it would appear that the path towards the opening of the Centre was now just a matter of maintaining the considerable momentum of 1997. However, a meeting in February 1998 with the Renee Sivan and Dorit Havel, Israeli museum designers and consultants to the SAJM, made Osrin and the Committee re-examine the way in which the exhibition “contextualise[d]” the history of the Holocaust for a South African audience, and whether the prologue, however “well worded,” was sufficient to the task. The discussion and debate that ensued was critical in shaping the exhibition text and the perception of the role the Centre would play.



⁷² Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting, 9 June 1997, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONSTRUCTING A HOLOCAUST CENTRE: FROM CONCEPT TO OPENING

By the end of 1997, the Cape Town Holocaust Planning Committee had agreed upon the role of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre. The Cape Town Holocaust Centre (CTHC) was to be the permanent home of the Holocaust education outreach programme of the Cape Town Jewish community, and would “change the perception that the Holocaust is important and relevant only for Jews.”¹ By the time the CTHC opened in 1999, its role had been transformed from community outreach to that of national reconciler. It was not a role that the SAJBD or WPZC had assigned it when the decision to build a CTHC had been made. In contrast, the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Planning Committee (Planning Committee) had been ambivalent about including a representation of apartheid into the exhibition and the CTHC’s education programmes for fear of “diluting” the history of the Holocaust.

However, when President Nelson Mandela bestowed an identity on the CTHC that inextricably linked it to the construction of a collective apartheid memory, the founders of the CTHC welcomed it warmly. It was clear by then that this identity assigned the CTHC a legitimate place in the new South Africa, and by association, the Jewish community. Mandela’s identity offered the Jewish community a chance to

¹ Cape Town Holocaust Centre Project Concept document. Jon Weinberg Private Collection, Cape Town.

recast its position as beneficiaries of the apartheid state, through taking on the mantle of guides for the new South Africans to come to terms with *their* troubled past.

Through becoming Mandela's conduit of reconciliation, the Jewish community could cast aside their culpability.

CTHC and apartheid in a changing South Africa

Clarifying and stating the position of the CTHC in various constituencies was a key task of the Planning Committee. The CTHC's position within the Jewish community was vital to secure funding for the construction of the CTHC and its exhibition.

Claiming the CTHC's position in the broader society was important if the CTHC were to fulfil its function as an education outreach arm of the SAJBD and WPZC.² How the CTHC was positioned in the broader society was shaped by the developments in South Africa in the late 1990s. The construction of the CTHC took place against the backdrop of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and a country grappling with issues relating to identity, history and memory as it emerged from the apartheid past.³ The CTHC was thus being "positioned" as the ground of the new democracy was still settling.

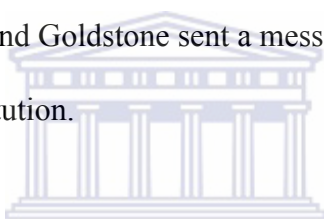
In 1998, the tasks for the Planning Committee were clear: an exhibition needed to be designed and constructed, and the support from the Jewish community ensured. The support of the Jewish community was vital. The Centre had to be positioned as essential to the Community, if financial support from the Jewish community were to be assured. The fact that Planning Committee was broadly representative, in some

² Orsin had submitted the proposal for the CTHC to the SAJBD in the name of the Holocaust Memorial Council (HMC). The HMC was established under the joint auspices of the SAJBD Cape Council, and the WPZC. Most of the members of the HMC were also members of the WPZC.

³ The process of positioning reflected a wider context of questioning of where one fitted into the newly democratic South Africa. Questions of identity, of finding a new language to match the new constitution to signal one's position in relation to the present and past were matters of concern for communal bodies, institutions, businesses and civil society.

ways, a mini-SAJBD, meant that a positive reception of the Centre was highly likely. Nonetheless, the Planning Committee organised a comprehensive information campaign to tell the community about the CTHC.

On 5 February, at its first meeting of 1998, the Planning Committee reported that R2.3 million had been raised. Two newspaper articles had already been published about the Centre, one in a community newspaper and one in a regional newspaper, and the publicity had resulted in donations of photographs, Hitler Youth uniforms, propaganda leaflets and passports.⁴ Archbishop Tutu, Justice Goldstone and Reverend Naudé had accepted the invitation to become the Patrons of the Centre. The appointment of Tutu, Naudé and Goldstone sent a message about the CTHC's position as a progressive institution.



At the same meeting on 5 February, Marlene Silbert, the chairperson of the Education sub-committee, reported back on a meeting she had had with five educators from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).⁵ The purpose of the meeting had been to inform the educators about the Centre, and to “ascertain the reactions of the educators” to the idea of the CTHC. Silbert had wanted to “assess whether non-Jewish people would view the centre as being relevant only to Jews, and if their

⁴ *Cape Jewish Chronicle*, February 1998. *Sunday Argus*, 1 February 1998. CTHC Collection. The CTHC did not have an archivist until 2012, nor an archival policy. Before then, the system of accessioning donations of documents and ephemera was erratic at best, and provenance in some instances being lost or not recorded.

⁵ Present at the meeting were two members of the WCED: Trevor van Louw (History Subject Advisor for the Cape Town Region of the WCED) and Colleen Meinert (Education Department Library Services for Human and Social Sciences), as well as John Gibbon (education consultant on implementation of Curriculum 2005; former principal of Westerford High School, a high-performing state school; Jeff Cohen (principal of the Jewish Day School, Herzlia High School) and Irene Jardeen (Senior History teacher, Mondale High, Mitchell's Plain).

responses were favourable, to establish further contacts.” The discussion, Silbert was happy to report, “was most encouraging and exceeded all expectations.”⁶

Silbert’s meeting with the five educators led her to conclude that the “broader community would accept the Centre’s visions and plans.”⁷ However, a meeting of the Exhibition Committee at the end of January with Renee Sivan and Dorit Harel, the two Israeli consultants to the South African Jewish Museum, had raised concern whether the CTHC exhibition as it stood, could convince non-Jewish people of the Centre’s relevance. There are no minutes of this meeting, but there are two reports about it and correspondence that indicate its impact.⁸

Osrin’s report to the CTHC Board of Trustees on 9 February 1998 shed more light on the content of the meeting with Sivan and Harel.⁹ Describing the meeting as “most fruitful,” Osrin reported that although Sivan and Harel had considered the purposes, target publics and mission statement outlined in the exhibition’s draft prologue to be an adequate contextualisation of the Holocaust Centre for the South African audience, they were troubled by the fact that this was not carried beyond the prologue into the actual exhibition. The pair recommended that “some exhibition space be allocated to addressing the question of prejudice, discrimination and racism in general and

⁶ Silbert’s report to the CTHC Planning Committee, 5 February 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁷ Report on education meeting held at Herzlia High on 4 February 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸ Weinberg’s report to the CTHC Planning Committee 5 February 1998; Osrin’s report to the CTHC Board of Trustees, 9 February 1998 and Smith’s letter to Osrin, 8 February 1998. Weinberg’s report to the CTHC Planning Committee on the 5 February, described the meeting with Sivan and Harel as “most valuable,” and added that the suggestions made by Sivan and Harel were “being considered.” CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹ The CTHC Board of Trustees held its inaugural meeting on 18 September 1997. Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 9 February 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

apartheid in particular.”¹⁰ Osrin reported that the design team had “accepted this viewpoint and had amended the exhibition synopsis and floor plan accordingly.”¹¹

The day before Osrin’s meeting with the CTHC Board of Trustees, she received a faxed letter from Steven Smith.¹² Osrin had informed him of the recommendations of Sivan and Harel. Smith’s letter to Osrin began with his appreciation that Sivan’s team had “brought up the issue of the South African context” as “we all know how important it is for everything to be right if our constituency is to appreciate the sincerity of our efforts.”¹³ Despite Smith’s stating that his “initial concerns [on starting the project] revolved around the issue of context.... [T]he question is how do you talk about the racial state which the Nazi’s (sic) created and not link it to the racial state of the apartheid era?”¹⁴ His letter to Osrin was the first indication of any discussion or possible disagreement that “the South African context” might mean more than merely relating the experiences of certain South Africans in relation to the Holocaust. Until Smith’s letter, there was no mention in the minutes of the CTHC Board of Trustees of any discussion of South Africa’s past of racial segregation and human rights abuses being represented in the design of the exhibition save for a brief reference in the exhibition’s prologue.¹⁵ The letter was also the first time that there

¹⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the CTHC Board of Trustees, 9 February 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹¹ Minutes of the meeting of the CTHC Board of Trustees, 9 February 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹² Smith, S. Faxed letter to Osrin, M. Dated 8 February 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹³ Smith, S. Faxed letter to Osrin, M. Dated 8 February 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁴ Smith, S. Faxed letter to Osrin, M. Dated 8 February 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁵ Project Concept document. Jon Weinberg Private Collection, Cape Town. The document gives as the purpose of the Centre: “to cultivate an awareness and understanding of the Holocaust amongst young people; to serve as a place of commemoration and remembrance of those who died in the Holocaust and other victims of Nazism; By highlighting the lessons of history, to instil a spirit of tolerance, an appreciation of the value and dignity of human life and a determination to combat ethnic, religious and ideological hatred in all its human expressions.” Following the listing of the purposes of the CTHC, is written in bold, the “major challenge for the Centre” namely, “to change the perception that the Holocaust is important and relevant only for Jews.”

was mention of a possible tension between the memories of living in the racial state of South Africa and the portrayal of the history of the Holocaust in the exhibition.

Smith expressed his concern that “simplistic comparisons” would arise from the inclusion of a section on the history of South Africa as “whether you state otherwise or not, the very presence of the imagery of apartheid in the museum space will draw comparisons in the minds of your visitors.” Although Smith acknowledged the importance of doing justice to “what is a very deep and meaningful issue in South Africa,” he cautioned against what he saw as, “addressing an issue for a political reason or even just to be politically correct.” Smith emphasised to Osrin that they “be very cautious if [our] message is in any way proscriptive” and that “generally speaking, to make conclusions in an exhibition space is not wise.” Although Smith said earlier in his letter, that he would suggest “it is better to explain why we have not included the apartheid issue than to try and get it wrong,” he concluded that an “appropriately worded prologue ... [that] could include some sensitive imagery and text to show that the context of South Africa has been taken fully into consideration in the building of this important memorial museum,” would be the “appropriate way to deal with this.”¹⁶

Osrin shared Smith’s responses with the CTHC Board of Trustees. In preparation for the meeting, Osrin also included an extract from the book, *Holocaust Museum in Washington* by Jeshujahu Weinberg and Rina Elieli.¹⁷ The pages selected referred to the debate surrounding the question of whether to include other instances of genocide or human rights abuses in the exhibition of the United States Holocaust Memorial

¹⁶ Stephen Smith, faxed letter to Myra Osrin, Dated 8 February 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁷ Jeshajahu Weinberg and Rina Elieli, *Holocaust Museum in Washington* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications 1995).

Museum (USHMM). The copies for the CTHC Board of Trustees included Osrin's underlining of certain sections. These underlined portions revealed not only what Osrin considered significant, but also showed what would have possibly influenced the response of the Trustees.¹⁸ The minutes indicated that while the CTHC Board of Trustees agreed on the "principle of the amendment" to the exhibition, they also made a number of recommendations. Firstly they suggested that the "presentation of the Holocaust story should not be diluted or confused." Secondly, the Board felt it was preferable "to deal with the issue of discrimination, racism etc. (sic) in an extension of the prologue," and thirdly, that the references to apartheid "should not be presented as just one of many instances of racism and discrimination but should receive significant prominence."¹⁹



The Trustees' final observation marked a significant development in the conceptualisation of the CTHC insofar as it indicated an acknowledgement of the location of the CTHC within a post-apartheid South Africa. It illustrates as well, the concern expressed in the Project Concept document that the CTHC "adequately contextualise"²⁰ the exhibition, so that the CTHC would not be seen as being relevant only to Jews." The decision to invite South Africans who were not Jewish and had been active in the anti-apartheid struggle to be Patrons of the Centre illustrated the

¹⁸ The underlined portions are: "The planners came to understand that by telling this particular story from the past they were dealing with the present. At times, some staff members may also have thought that exhibition should include other genocidal events... It may have seemed that, to fulfill its mission, the Museum should deal not just with the past but also with contemporary issues that related to the themes of racism and genocide.... An emotionally loaded debate among senior staff about the mission of the Museum questioned whether its mission lay in providing knowledge about the Holocaust as an event in history or in treating the Holocaust as a metaphor that could serve as a weapon in the struggle for human rights. ... the Museum as history or metaphor.... Although inclusion of non-Holocaust elements would have blurred the Museum's focus, once the exhibition opened to the public, however, the Museum immediately began to develop activities that applied the lessons of the Holocaust to related contemporary issue of genocide and racism." 165. The heading for the text on Pages 174 and 175 is "the museum as a voice of morality."

¹⁹ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 9 February 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²⁰ Myra Osrin's report to the CTHC Board of Trustees, 9 February 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Trustees' attempt to connect the Centre to the "new" South Africa. By 5 February 1999, Archbishop Tutu and Rev. Beyers Naudé had accepted the invitation, while Rev. Frank Chikane and Deputy President Thabo Mbeki had also been approached.²¹ What was not yet clear at this point, was whether the CTHC Planning Committee and its Trustees had considered *how* the inclusion of "apartheid in particular" in the exhibition would affect the meaning of the Centre as a "memorial museum" and the meaning of "the story of the Holocaust."²²

On 11 February 1998, Osrin and Shain attended the meeting at the University of Cape Town's Kaplan Centre. Other attendees included members of the design committee, Jon Weinberg and Linda Coetzee; the team working on the exhibition text viz. Rolf Wolfswinkel and Marlene Silbert; as well as human rights activists and academics Julian Sonn, Wilhelm Verwoerd and Rhoda Kadalie. The meeting continued the discussion Sivan and Harel had started. Its purpose was to "develop a conceptual direction in relation to the inclusion of such issues as Racism, Prejudice, Apartheid (sic) within the ambit of the Holocaust exhibition project."²³

According to the notes by an unnamed note-taker, at the centre of the discussion was the question of whether references to apartheid and racism should be integrated throughout the exhibition, or whether they should bookend the exhibition.²⁴ However,

²¹ Frank Chikane and Thabo Mbeki declined the invitation.

²² Minutes of the meeting of the CTHC Planning Committee, 5 February 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²³ Notes from the meeting, 11 February 1998 at the Kaplan Centre, University of Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²⁴ Throughout the document in the archive, certain points have been underlined and highlighted. It is not clear whether the underliner was the note-taker. However, what is clear is that the note-taker and the underliner were members of the Planning Committee. The discussion was based on an introduction given by Wolfswinkel in which he explained that the exhibition text was following a "thematic rather than an historical approach". What Wolfswinkel meant by an "historical approach" is not recorded in the notes. The synopsis of the text in February 1998, however, did not support Wolfswinkel's description of the exhibition being "thematic," as the organising frame of more than three quarters of the text is a timeline, and events are organised chronologically. However, if one considers

the notes showed that the discussion went beyond the specifics of how to incorporate the issue of apartheid and racism into the exhibition, to considering the entire exhibition's approach and relationship to the visitor. The points recorded by the note taker provide some insight into what might have influenced the way the Committee thought about the "message" and function of the Centre, and whether the exhibition should approach the visitor as an agent in constructing their own meaning from the exhibition, or whether to view the visitor as an object to be filled with the meaning the Centre wanted to provide. The first two points challenged the notion of a visitor without agency, and suggested ways in which a dialogue between the visitor and the exhibition might be encouraged. According to the notes, the experience for the visitor should be one "*which raises important questions.*" These questions could either be included as "*actual questions*" within the exhibition or in a more subtle way the exhibition could act as a prompt and pose questions. This could be a feature applied throughout the entire exhibition. Secondly, the meeting agreed that the exhibition must be a provocative and provide an "*educational experience.*"²⁵

Another suggestion was to add a section to the exhibition text that focused on the development and "*basis of race thinking and philosophy developed in the 19th century*" in relation to issues of "*Eugenics, American racism, notions of colour.*" The exhibition, it was suggested, could make "*historical linkages*" i.e. "early apartheid leaders (Verwoerd) gaining ideas from Nazi leaders and the issue of the classification of Jews as "white" etc. etc. (sic)."²⁶

Wolfswinkel's assertion that Osrin had closed down the option of including in the exhibition text, any indication of the developing field of Holocaust historiography, one might conclude that what Wolfswinkel means by "historical approach" is that the exhibition text was not going to include any historical analysis of events that took place.

²⁵ Note-taker's emphasis. Notes taken at the meeting on the 11 February 1998, Kaplan Centre, University of Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²⁶ Note-taker's emphasis. Notes from the meeting 11 February 1998, Kaplan Centre, University of Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

A number of possible themes were listed, namely, “nation-building, liberation, reconciliation” and “*memory and remembrance as an antidote to racism, prejudice and antisemitism*”, a “*shared experience*” and “*amnesia is contagious*”. “[W]itness in a local context – youth” and “*notions of perpetrators and culpability*” were also listed as themes. While these themes could offer other forms of “linkages” between the history of the Holocaust and apartheid, a point raised and underlined by the note-taker, is that “*the major focus should be on the Holocaust* in order to do justice to all the issues related to that experience.”²⁷

The notes then listed suggestions for the implementation of these ideas into the design of the exhibition. These included that the exhibition begin with a “threshold area of the ‘Oblivion of memory’ or something similar related to the absence of memory.” It was then suggested that the exhibition “trace the development of Race through to recent patterns in racial ideology... Nazism... apartheid etc.” and that the content be relayed through a number of vehicles viz. video footage, decrees, proclamations and audio footage, and “examples of (in)famous (sic) race ideologies of recent times”. It was suggested that the development of race thinking then “flows into antisemitism (sic) and then into the themes as laid out.”²⁸

The notes included examples of the potential “prompt” questions that could be incorporated into the exhibition. Two examples of questions were given that could be used to encourage reflection on the issue of complexity. These questions were, “Why

²⁷ Note-taker’s emphasis. Notes from the meeting 11 February 1998 at the Kaplan Centre, University of Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. All phrases quoted in this paragraph come from the notes taken at the meeting on the 11 February 1998, Kaplan Centre. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²⁸ All phrases quoted in this paragraph come from the notes taken at the meeting on the 11 February 1998, Kaplan Centre. CTHC Collection.

did ordinary people stand and watch or even assist?” and “how did neighbours to the Death Camps respond? (sic).” Two other questions were suggested, namely, “What is a human rights culture? What causes it to be important at different times?” These questions could also serve to connect the past with the present. The final question suggested was, “where do I stand?” The question could invite the visitor to engage with their contemporary society.²⁹

Subsequent meetings of the CTHC Planning Committee showed that the decision reached at the Kaplan Centre meeting would ensure that “*the major focus should be on the Holocaust* in order to do justice to all the issues related to that experience.”³⁰ In a talk delivered to the Union of Jewish Women on 22 April 1998, Silbert summarised the position taken by the Planning Committee:

... while the main function of the Holocaust Centre is to serve as a memorial and to present the public with the facts of the Holocaust, the planning team realised that if it is to have relevance for the majority of viewers outside the Jewish community, the story must be told within the South African context. ... We wrestled long and hard with this issue... we realised that we could not ignore Apartheid (sic) history. But how to do so without diluting or muddling the Holocaust story was not easy to resolve. We decided that we would present chronologically and thematically, the undiluted factual story of the Holocaust, but the story would be contextualised through an appropriate prologue and some of the moral lessons and South African parallels would be illuminated by way of an introduction.³¹

Designing the CTHC exhibition

A series of draft sketches submitted at the meeting of the Planning Committee on 27 April 1998 showed the influence of the Beth Shalom’s exhibition as well as the

²⁹ All phrases quoted in this paragraph come from the notes taken at the meeting on the 11 February 1998, Kaplan Centre. CTHC Collection.

³⁰ Note-taker’s emphasis. All phrases quoted in this paragraph come from the notes taken at the meeting on the 11 February 1998, Kaplan Centre. CTHC Collection.

³¹ Marlene Silbert, speech to the Union of Jewish Women, 22 April 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

recommendations of the various consultative meetings.³² The exhibition design appeared to heed Chief Rabbi Harris's call that the exhibition "endeavour to include positive elements wherever possible." The final sections of the exhibition included the voices of survivors (through the footage of their interviews), and a gallery of contemporary photographs of well-dressed survivors to counter images of the emaciated survivors newly liberated in the panel preceding it. Panels entitled "Liberation", "Justice – Nuremberg Trials", "Resistance" and "Rescue," in which the stories of the Righteous of the Nations were shown, were included in the exhibition.³³

The incorporation of the suggestion to include a section on memory was evident in the opening panel in the "threshold area" which was entitled, "Memory and Remembrance" and indicated on the draft sketch.³⁴ The prologue, written by Shain, was referred to as "Statement" and stood outside, at the doors leading into the exhibition. The additional content on the development of "race thinking" was included in the exhibition, as was the inclusion of a section called "prejudice, discrimination and racism."³⁵ These sections were placed at the beginning of the exhibition – suggesting that the Committee chose "bookending option."³⁶

³² Jon Weinberg private collection and CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Minutes of meeting of Planning Committee, 27 April 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

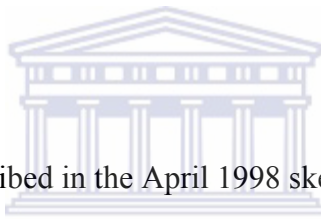
³³ "The Righteous" refers to "the Righteous among the Nations", defined by Yad Vashem as anyone who was not Jewish who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. See <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/faq.asp> (accessed 14 January 2015). The desire for the exhibition to show redemption as discussed earlier, was not Chief Rabbi Harris's alone. Silbert had already tabled the vision of a narration that would "show moral lessons" through giving examples of "good behavior" at the Planning Committee meeting of the 16th April 1998.

³⁴ The name "threshold area" was used in the design. The originator of the term is not specified.

³⁵ There is no mention of apartheid as a separate panel within the broader area dedicated to "prejudice, discrimination and racism".

³⁶ Two options had been suggested in the various discussions regarding where to place the issues of racism and prejudice in the exhibition viz. either to integrate these issues throughout the exhibition or to place them at the beginning of the exhibition and ending with moral lessons – what I've described as the "bookending" option.

The sketches also indicated which recommendations made by April 1998 had been rejected by the Design Committee. For example, the sketches did not indicate any space for the history of Anne Frank, as requested by the Trustees. The approach of the 'AFITW' exhibition was to foreground the personal history of the Frank family as a way of considering the broader history of the Holocaust. This was not the approach of the Cape Town Holocaust exhibition. While the design sketches of April 1998 included a screening room for a video of survivor testimony, as well as a gallery of contemporary portraits of survivors who had come to settle in South Africa, the sketches did not show an integration of these individual experiences into the rest of the exhibition, nor a portrayal of the broader history of the Holocaust through any one particular individual's history.



The spatial arrangement described in the April 1998 sketches also suggested a perception of the visitor's relationship to the Centre in odds with that proposed at the Kaplan Centre meeting on 11 February 1998 with human rights activists and academics Julian Sonn, Wilhelm Verwoerd and Rhoda Kadalie. At the Kaplan Centre meeting, the suggestion was made to encourage a "dialogue" between visitor and the exhibition through the inclusion of a series of provocative questions within the exhibition. This strategy assumed a degree of agency for the visitor.³⁷ However, the sketches submitted in April 1998 did not provide a space for these provocative questions. Yet, the sketches included some features that suggest the Design Committee did not perceive the visitor as being entirely passive. These included the provision of space to allow for moments of reflection, a bench inside the exhibition for visitors, as well as the inclusion of a number of screens that used touch-screen technology to allow the visitor to interact with the exhibition. Although the touch-

³⁷ Notes taken at the meeting on the 11 February 1998, Kaplan Centre. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

screens remained, the bench was removed following the discussion of the April sketches.³⁸

The April sketches also revealed another the idea that had fallen off the page, namely that the exhibition would reference other genocides, apart from the Holocaust. The Design Committee decided at the April meeting to move the gallery of contemporary portraits of local survivors into the area previously designated for “Genocides post-1945.” No alternative space for the “Genocides post-1945” section was indicated on the revision notes made on the sketches, nor did any discussion regarding this decision appear in the minutes of the April meeting, nor subsequent meetings.³⁹

A “plan layout of proposed Holocaust Centre” that was completed in May 1998, showed a consolidation of the changes.⁴⁰ Noticeable was the prominent position given to the prologue. It faced the visitor as they entered the exhibition space. A panel called “Racism and Discrimination” followed the prologue. The visitor then walked down a passage, on the right side of which there were three panels. Two of these panels were entitled “Antisemitism” and one was entitled “South African Antisemitism.” The plan layout indicated a “quotation” on the wall opposite these three panels, but did not specify what the quotation was. The May 1998 layout plan showed an auditorium at the end of the exhibition for “meditation,” opposite the final panel “Nuremberg Trials.”

³⁸ A member of the Design Committee, Linda Bester (nee Coetzee) identified the lack of reflection spaces within the exhibition as the one area she would most like to have done differently. Linda Bester, interview by the author, 5 June 2012, Cape Town.

³⁹ Minutes of meeting of the Design Committee, April 1998, Cape Town. Jon Weinberg private collection, Cape Town.

⁴⁰ Jon Weinberg private collection, Cape Town.

The May 1998 layout plan showed the use of materials as a means of suggesting place or time. For example, cobblestones were indicated for use in the “ghetto section” and part of a railway track for the section on deportations. The May 1998 layout plan also noted the use of life size images in certain sections. These strategies created a sense of verisimilitude. The use of life size images had the effect of breaking the metaphorical glass of the picture frame that ordinarily served to remind the viewer that the photograph was of a different place and time. Instead the use of life size images brought people in the photograph into the visitor’s space and placed the visitor inside the photograph.⁴¹

The Design Committee met again on 27 August 1998. Max Klein’s comment at the beginning of the meeting, that the builders were pressing him for the final drawings but “changes were still being made in the design, up until very recently,” is a reminder that while the Exhibition Committee was engaging in the task of finding ways to express concept and content in the exhibition, the “bricks and mortar” team was waiting, not too patiently, in the wings.⁴² Klein’s comment is also useful in that it indicated that time was another source of pressure that seemed to shape design decisions. The Planning Committee meeting on 5 August 1998 expressed the hope that the Centre would open in April 1999. This deadline would have been uppermost in Osrin’s mind while discussions ensued on the exhibition design.

At the Exhibition Committee’s meeting on the same day, Weinberg discussed the plans for an introductory “memory” section. He pointed out that the purpose of the

⁴¹ These are strategies employed in many museums. They became increasingly important in the Cape Town Holocaust Centre’s exhibition space once it became clear that the Centre could not afford the equipment that would enable the Centre to house artefacts safely.

⁴² Minutes of the Design Committee meeting, 27 August 1998, Cape Town. Jon Weinberg private collection, Cape Town.

Memory Section was to “create a reminder to visitors of recent Holocausts (sic).”⁴³ Weinberg then described what the Memory Section would look like. Images that were larger than human size would be projected onto screens and fade in and out. Some of the images would be of the visitors as they watched the projected images, meaning that they would see themselves. The concerns raised in the ensuing discussion revolved around whether the concept might not be lost, either because the images might require explanation or that children might become awed by seeing themselves projected. A new member of the Exhibition Committee, Milly Pimstone, suggested using South African images only. Wolfswinkel expressed his concern that the exhibition design “guard against seeing the Holocaust in terms of South African apartheid.” Both Wolfswinkel and Smith shared the conviction that memory only existed when externally prompted. The architect’s plan dated September 1998, revealed the conclusion to the discussion: the Memory Section no longer appeared. It was replaced by a “children’s memorial space.” This change was also a reflection of the impact of Osrin’s visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum mid-1998.

Osrin’s visit to the USHMM influenced the exhibition design and its content.⁴⁴ She returned with the idea to focus on the experience of children during the Holocaust. This idea was given expression most obviously in the development of a section in the exhibition called the “children’s memorial space.” It also influenced the choice of

⁴³ Minutes of the Exhibition Committee’s meeting, 5 August 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. As noted earlier, the section dealing with post-Holocaust Genocides had been removed after the Design Committee’s meeting in April 1998. Weinberg’s suggestion of a “Memory Section” was the last time a space in the exhibition was suggested that would acknowledge other genocides, other than the passing reference in the prologue.

⁴⁴ Osrin reported to the Planning Committee on the 5th August 1998, that the USHMM had assisted her in sourcing photographs for the exhibition and was also “considering loaning artefacts but it was conditional on the Centre having appropriate air-conditioning.” The costs of installing “appropriate air-conditioning” were too high for the Centre, and thus a decision was made to use reproductions of images as far as possible, and to display only those artefacts that were donated to the Centre from the local community.

photographs and text used in the exhibition. Following Osrin's visit, the USHMM offered the Centre audio-visual assistance from the USHMM temporary exhibition on Kovno and the Kovno Ghetto. This resulted in the addition to the exhibition of a "major section" on the Kovno Ghetto. The USHMM's use of survivor testimonies had an impact on the design of the Centre as well. An enlarged video-testimony area for the screening of survivors' testimonies replaced the "meditation" area set aside for contemplation and reflection at the end of the exhibition.⁴⁵

Osrin was well aware that the assigning of exhibition space to a topic could be read as an indication of the significance the Committee, and by extension, the Centre, gave to a particular aspect of the history over another. For this reason she said that the "section on Kovno must be prefaced with an explanation of why it is given such importance (local origins)." This comment revealed not only Osrin's awareness of the potential dismay that visitors to the Centre from Jewish communities that were connected to areas other than Lithuania might raise but also an awareness of the visitor who did not know that the majority of South African Jewry had roots in Lithuania. But the awareness of the relationship between spatial arrangement and understanding expressed in the discussion around the Kovno Ghetto display, was not evident when it came to decisions reached over other parts of the exhibition. Thus, for example, there was no record of a discussion about the implication of replacing the introductory section, "Memory", with a display named "Children's Memorial Space", nor the removal of the section on "Genocide post-1945" and the contemplation space.

⁴⁵ Minutes of the Exhibition Design Committee meeting on the 27 August 1998, Cape Town. Jon Weinberg private collection, Cape Town,

The minutes of the last Planning Committee meeting for 1998 showed that the design of the exhibition and the written text continued to evolve.⁴⁶ However, as Osrin reported to the Planning Committee, building delays had necessitated that the opening, planned for April 1999, would have to be moved to August. The deferral of the opening served to ease the considerable pressure the Exhibition Committee was under. The challenges facing the Exhibition Committee included editing the exhibition text, developing certain sections of the exhibition such as the section called “Racism and Discrimination”, and processing and selecting photographic material donated or on loan.⁴⁷ Osrin reported that approximately 450 photographs would be used in the exhibition, and these were being sourced from some 40 institutions worldwide. Furthermore, an appeal in the *Cape Jewish Chronicle*⁴⁸ for photographs of Jewish life in inter-war Europe had elicited an overwhelming response from the local community, and, once scanned, a selection of these photographs would be incorporated into the exhibition.⁴⁹ However, the gallery of contemporary photographs of local survivors had been completed and the editing of the filmed interviews with the survivors was underway.⁵⁰

By the end of January 1999, further changes had been made to the exhibition space and design. In an email on 23 January, the ever-pragmatic Osrin explained to Klein that “we have to be practical” in dealing with the challenge of lack of space. Thus, Osrin, Coetzee and Weinberg (exhibition designers) and the Project Manager, Eric

⁴⁶ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Planning Committee meeting on the 24 November 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Minutes of the Exhibition Design Committee Meeting 26 November 1998, Cape Town. Jon Weinberg private collection, Cape Town. The minutes note the “leading role” played by Stephen Smith in the on-going adjusting of design and text editing. One of the main developments reported was the Children’s Memorial, designed by Smith.

⁴⁷ Pimstone had been tasked with editing Wolfswinkel and Silbert’s text.

⁴⁸ *Cape Jewish Chronicle*, November 1998, Gitlin Library, Cape Town.

⁴⁹ Although Osrin observed that the photographs were an important record, not only for the local community but that they “could be of interest to Yad Vashem and the USHMM”, the photographs remained unlabelled until after 2012.

⁵⁰ Photographed by Gerald Hoberman.

Michaels, had decided that the auditorium in which the Survivor Testimony was to be screened would be opened up into a semi-circular space so that all visitors would be able to view the film. Secondly, the entrance to the exhibition was to be opened so that it was “much less cluttered” by moving the Prologue to occupy the panel where the “Racism” panel had started. The racism section would be made smaller and moved farther into the exhibition space so that the entrance “allowed more people to view the Children’s Memorial at one time,” and “absorb the all-important prologue which would now no longer be stuck in a corner.”⁵¹

The Progress Report of March 1999 on the design of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, detailed other developments. It noted that there had been “small thematic adjustments en route” and that these had been made “in the main out of the work done by Milly Pimstone who has been tirelessly adjusting the text to make it more accurate and accessible.” The Progress Report did not explain what these thematic adjustments were, although it did mentioned the “new placement of the Prologue and rearrangement of the section dealing with Racism, Discrimination and anti-Semitism (sic) and others.”⁵²

The March 1999 plan showed a discreet section on Anne Frank and the Rhodes Island section having its own “corner.” For the first time, a panel entitled, “Racism in South Africa” appeared in the exhibition plan, replacing a panel called “Antisemitism in

⁵¹ Myra Osrin, email to Max Klein, 23 January 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵² Progress report on the design of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, March 1999. CTHC Collection. There is no further detail as to what the “adjustments” were. Although there were 12 sub-committees involved in the planning of the Centre, Osrin was closely involved in every stage and step, and took in some instances, unilateral decisions that affected the content and design of exhibition. An example of a unilateral decision was the process of finalising the written text of the exhibition: having the text edited was not discussed with Wolfswinkel or Silbert, who expressed great dismay decades later as what they saw as their work being taken from them without consultation or receiving recognition. The issue of the editing of the text was one of the few areas of tension expressed in any of the interviews conducted with the founding members of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre. Rolf Wolfswinkel, interview by the author, 14 January 2014, Cape Town. Marlene Silbert, interview by the author, 25 February 2014, Cape Town.

South Africa” that had been in the September 1998 and October 1998 sketches. The revised exhibition design was tabled at the Trustees’ Meeting held on 8 March 1999 and approved.⁵³



⁵³ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 8 March 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Designing a Holocaust museum education programme

The Board of Trustees appointed the newly retired Vice-Principal of Herzlia High School Marlene Silbert as Education Director at their meeting in February 1998.⁵⁴ Silbert's reports to the Planning Committee and to the Trustees in March 1999 provided an indication of her vision for the role the Centre's Education Department would play, and the role of the Centre as a whole. Her reports described the development of a close relationship through a series of meetings and workshops with senior members of the WCED involved in curriculum development and teacher training, and the inclusion of senior education department officials in the Education Advisory Committee that she had established.⁵⁵

Silbert described her work as a "mission" to "advance public awareness, further education and understanding of the Holocaust, and promote lessons of tolerance, respect and individual responsibility."⁵⁶ The coupling of the desire to "promote lessons of tolerance, respect and individual responsibility" with Holocaust education, is the frame for the development of the education programmes of the exhibition were to be developed. Silbert saw Holocaust education as including morality lessons, and linked Holocaust education to the National Curriculum. She stated in the report that she "endeavoured to convince [the Subject Advisors] that a study of the Holocaust is important, not only on historical or moral grounds, but also because it provides a framework for the implementation of Curriculum 2005."⁵⁷ This linking of the

⁵⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 9 February 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

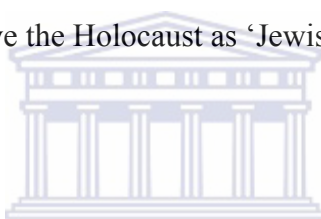
⁵⁵ Silbert also met with the Chairman of the Association of Principals for the Western Cape because the Association was involved in "project initiatives and curriculum development, and the Chair had "contact and influence with all school principals in the Western Cape.

⁵⁶ Education report to the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 8 March 1999, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵⁷ Education report to the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Planning Committee, 18 March 1999, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

particular historical period known as the Holocaust to the National Curriculum, in which the Holocaust was not explicitly mentioned, was a critical strategic move.

Silbert also distinguished between the work the CTHC Education Department needed to do within the Jewish community and outside of it. She described the work with the Jewish community as a “relatively easy task” as the Cape Town Jewry was “supportive” of the venture, citing as evidence the response of over 100 “members of our community” to attend the volunteer training programme she had designed. On the other hand, Silbert described the “broader community” as a more “daunting task” as “the majority of South Africans, with their own history of discrimination and human rights abuse, tended to perceive the Holocaust as ‘Jewish history’ with little relevance to their own situation.”⁵⁸



Silbert’s distinction between the two communities positioned Jewish South Africans outside their own country’s “history of discrimination and human rights abuse,” where they were unaffected by that history in their view of the Holocaust. It suggested that, unlike the “majority of South Africans,” Jewish South Africans did not need to learn the “universality” of the Holocaust nor its relevance to “South Africans who have so recently emerged from the Apartheid era and have much to learn about prejudice, racism and intolerance.” Silbert’s description of the response of “our community” to the Holocaust suggested that the history of the Holocaust had nothing new to teach that community, and that arguably, that it would be from that community that the teaching *about* the history would take place.

⁵⁸ Education report to the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 8 March 1999, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Silbert's notes on her meetings with members of the WCED indicated that she introduced the Centre as a teacher resource and a partner of the WCED.⁵⁹ Silbert connected the Curriculum Outcomes relevant to each subject to what the Centre could offer and encouraged a view of the Centre as a vehicle for the implementation of the Curriculum. She concluded each meeting by asking whether the Subject Advisor or Principal Subject Advisor (PSA) would consider being part of a consultative body. This further strengthened a perception of the Centre and its education programme as a willing partner in the role-out of education in schools in the Western Cape.

Towards the end of her first year as Education Director, Silbert informed the CTHC Planning Committee that the issue of apartheid had to be addressed as part of the conversation of explaining the "relevance" of the history.⁶⁰ This comment illustrated the shift in her thinking from her first meeting with teachers in February 1988. At this consultative meeting she had explained that "for clear understanding and thematic neatness," the permanent exhibition would be confined "primarily to the circumstances which led to the Holocaust and this historic event within the context of World War II."⁶¹ Two months later Silbert met with Brian O'Connell (Deputy Superintendent General of the WCED).⁶² O'Connell agreed that the CTHC could be a helpful resource for teachers and their students. He also pointed out that Silbert

⁵⁹ Meetings with Principal Subject Advisor Theo Smit; Chairman: Principal's Association, Melvyn Caroline; Subject Heads: Human and Social Sciences, Principal Subject Advisor Gail Weldon; Subject advisors Trevor van Louw (CT region – Mitchell's Plain) and Eddie Smuts (Bellville region]; meeting with history subject advisors; meeting with Brian O'Connell; meeting with language, literacy and communication subject advisors. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁰ The teachers' comments were repeated by the Language, Literacy and Communication Subject Advisors a few weeks later in a meeting with Silbert on the 23 November 1998. Silbert records in her report that all the Subject advisors "made the same request as the History teachers: "in your teachers' packs, please be sure to include a comparative study on the Holocaust and Apartheid (sic)." CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶¹ Silbert does not explain what she means by this rather curious turn of phrase, but the upshot is clear: the exhibition was not going to examine other histories of genocide, nor would the exhibition change – as it was a permanent exhibition. Education report to the Trustees, 8 March 1999, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶² The meeting took place on the 8th April 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

would have to consider the possible perception of the Centre as Jewish-centric and thus not relevant for South Africans who were not Jewish, as well as a perception of the Centre as a Zionist endeavour. While Silbert made notes of O'Connell's responses, she did not include his comment about the view that the Centre could be seen as "Zionist" in her reports to the Trustees.⁶³ The history teacher workshop organised in partnership with the WCED in August 1998 would be the final determinant for Silbert that apartheid had to be included in the Holocaust education programme if the programme was to be seen as relevant.

In partnership with the Senior History Advisor, Gail Weldon, Silbert organised two workshops for history teachers on 5 and 6 August 1998. Stephen Smith, who was in Cape Town at the time, also made a presentation. The two workshops were an early indication of the close relationship that came to develop between the WCED and the education department of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.⁶⁴ The invitation to the workshops was sent to teachers on an education department letterhead, thereby granting the workshop official sanction. The Department invitation endorsed the Centre (and Holocaust Education) and framed it as relevant to all South Africans. In her invitation Weldon wrote

This Centre could be of tremendous assistance to teachers and learners. Although the focus will be on the plight of the Jews during the Second World War, the aim is to provide the opportunity for young people to learn from the terrible past and to ensure that racism and ethnic superiority and their possible

⁶³ Silbert referred to O'Connell's concern in her report back to the Education Advisor Committee but closed down any subsequent discussion in the EAC meeting by explaining that she "discussed these issues [with O'Connell] and Mr O'Connell appeared satisfied with my responses." Minutes of the meeting of EAC, 18 May 1999, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. It is not clear from the archive or interviews why Silbert omitted this from her report. One possible answer could lie in Shimoni's observation that there is a "tremendous identification of South African Jews with the Zionist Movement and Israel." (Shimoni, *Community And Conscience*, 202). Thus, for Silbert, there was no omission: if O'Connell's concern was that the Centre might be perceived as too "Jewish," it amounted to the same as saying it was too "Zionist."

⁶⁴ In particular, with Gail Weldon.

effects do not happen again. This is very relevant to South Africa in the light of our apartheid past.⁶⁵

At the workshops Smith spoke to the teachers about “the significance of the Holocaust for people *other* than Jews,” (my emphasis) whilst Silbert explained to the teachers, “the relevance of the Holocaust to South Africans living in a pluralistic, multi-ethnic society.”⁶⁶

Silbert reported the results of a survey conducted with teachers at the workshops, to the CTHC Planning Committee.⁶⁷ All the teachers had indicated that they wanted to bring their history students to the Centre, and “enthusiastically endorsed [Silbert’s] intention to produce a teacher’s pack with education support material... and pupils’ worksheets.”⁶⁸ Silbert added that the teachers had requested that she include in their packs, “material relating to questions of rationale (why teach the Holocaust); the relevance of the Holocaust for contemporary South African society; the issue of racism, prejudice and discrimination in Germany and South Africa; and the comparative material on Apartheid and Nazi Germany.” Silbert emphasised to the CTHC Planning Committee that the teachers’ comments were clear indicators of the need to include apartheid in the conversation of explaining the “relevance” of the Holocaust history.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Gail Weldon, invitation to teacher workshop 5 and 6 August 1998. July 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁶ Marlene Silbert, report 4 November 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁷ Minutes of the CTHC Planning Committee meeting 26 November 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁸ Minutes of the CTHC Planning Committee meeting 26 November 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁹ Minutes CTHC Planning Committee Meeting 26 November 1998, Cape Town, CTHC Collection. The teachers’ comments were repeated by the Language, Literacy and Communication Subject Advisors a few weeks later in a meeting with Silbert on the 23 November 1998. Silbert recorded in her report that all the Subject advisors “made the same request as the History teachers: “in your teachers’ packs, please be sure to include a comparative study on the Holocaust and Apartheid (sic),” Cape Town, CTHC Collection.

Silbert reported that the teachers had commented that, “the issue of racism and prejudice and discrimination in Germany and South Africa should be included in the exhibition” and “there doesn’t seem to be a clear link in the museum between the experience in Nazis Germany and that in South Africa. A clearer context would be beneficial.”⁷⁰ The question remained whether the exhibition would reflect a response to these requests. It was only in March 1999 that that the matter of where and how to address the “relevance of the Holocaust for contemporary South African society; the issue of racism, prejudice and discrimination in Germany and South Africa,” was resolved.⁷¹

The exhibition and Holocaust survivors

Unlike the construction of the USHMM, where a number of Holocaust survivors had been active in the Museum’s development, members of She’erith Hapletah had a lesser role.⁷² Although the chairperson of She’erith Hapletah was a member of the SAJBD (Cape Council) to whom Osrin presented her progress reports on the CTHC, the survivors were not involved in any of the sub-committees or in the direct shaping of the exhibition design. The voices of the survivors were not entirely absent, however. Through the donation of photographs, the survivors from the Sephardic community added to the development of the section of the exhibition that portrayed the experience of the Jewish community of Rhodes Island. Osrin described this as very meaningful for survivors, since the community felt that their story was very rarely displayed in museums.⁷³ The inclusion of the exhibition panels on the Warsaw

⁷⁰ Marlene Silbert, Analysis of teacher’s questionnaire completed at the Teacher’s Centers 5th and 6th August 1998, tabled at the CTHC Planning Committee Meeting 26 November 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

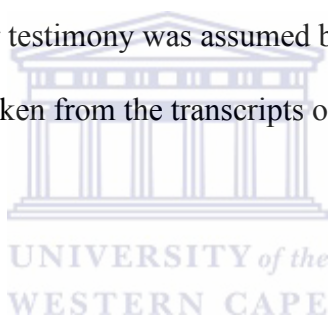
⁷¹ Minutes of CTHC Planning Committee Meeting 26 November 1998, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁷² See Edward T. Linenthal, *Preserving Memory: the Struggle to Create America’s Holocaust Museum* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), on the history of the establishment of the USHMM.

⁷³ Myra Osrin, interview by the author, 19 April 2015, Cape Town.

Ghetto and the Warsaw Uprising was in response to a request of the survivor, Miriam Lichterman whose brother had fought and had been killed in the Warsaw Uprising while fighting.⁷⁴

Furthermore, excerpts from the testimony given in the video that was being prepared, were chosen to amplify several of the panels in the exhibition. These short excerpts were placed on small boards that appear beneath the main exhibition panels. The selection was made by planning committee member Millie Pimstone, and the criteria were that the excerpt be short enough to fit on a board, and pertinent to the content of the exhibition panel. The survivors were not involved in the selection process.⁷⁵ Their permission for the use of their testimony was assumed by Pimstone and Osrin, because the selections were taken from the transcripts of the survivors' filmed testimony.⁷⁶



The survivors were also not involved in the development of the education programmes or the preliminary consultations with the Education Department, nor in the development of the training programme for the volunteers. Although the survivors attended the training programme, they did so as participants or else contributed by telling their experience in a section of the programme called “survivor testimony.” This contribution was carefully contained within an hour, and although questions were permitted, the survivor did not engage with the participants before the session or afterwards. Osrin explained that the decision to include in the exhibition, the “portrait gallery” of contemporary photographs of each survivor and a short biography of each

⁷⁴ Lichterman's parents did not survive the Holocaust.

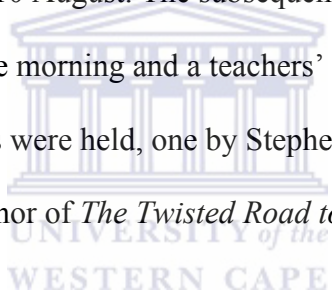
⁷⁵ Millie Pimstone, interview by the author, 22 April 2015, Cape Town.

⁷⁶ Myra Osrin, interview by the author, 19 April 2015, Cape Town. Millie Pimstone, interview by the author, 22 April 2015, Cape Town.

person, was taken order to make all the survivors feel that their experiences had been acknowledged, even if their testimony was not included in the film or on the boards.⁷⁷

Opening the Holocaust Centre

The opening of the Centre included a week of previews: a media preview on Friday 6 August, a preview for the volunteers on the morning of 8 August and a preview of the Centre and the exhibition for Holocaust survivors and their families that afternoon, and finally a preview for the benefactors of the Centre on the morning of 9 August. The opening week provided a chance for the founders' vision of the meaning of the Centre to be articulated publicly. The Centre's official opening was planned to take place in the early evening on 10 August. The subsequent two days included a workshop for volunteers in the morning and a teachers' workshop in the afternoon and evening. Two public talks were held, one by Stephen Smith and the other by Professor Karl Schleunes, author of *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz*.⁷⁸



The extensive invitation list to the official opening on Thursday 12 August 1999 included guests from a number of countries and constituencies. Prominent members of the South African and international Jewish communities, former President of South Africa Nelson Mandela, newly elected President Thabo Mbeki, directors and senior staff from Holocaust Museums, including Jan Erik Dubbleman from the Anne Frank House, and Gillian Walnes from the Anne Frank Trust: UK. Also invited were MPs, academics, teachers, clergy, Minister of Education Kader Asmal, and senior Department of Education personnel, politicians, members of the diplomatic corps, heritage practitioners and anti-apartheid veterans. The list of acceptances was not only a who's-who of the Jewish community, but also included ANC MPs Janet Love,

⁷⁷ Millie Pimstone, interview by the author, 22 April 2015, Cape Town.

⁷⁸ Karl Schleunes, *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz: Nazi Policy towards German Jews, 1933-1939* (Urbana-Champaign: Illinois University Press, 1990).

Andrew Feinstein, Cape Town Mayor Nomaindia Mfeketo and Western Cape Province Minister of Education, Helen Zille.

Reverend Beyers Naudé had been due to give a presentation on behalf of the patrons at the opening, but because of ill health did not attend.⁷⁹ His letter of apology expressed heart-felt regret:

... You know how much I have looked forward to participate and to actively give my moral support to this wonderful vision of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre. I sincerely hope that this event will be very meaningful and impressive and that it will be able to convey a very strong message to South Africa that we should never allow to happen here in South Africa what has happened during the time of the Holocaust.⁸⁰

Another letter of apology came from the Minister of Education, Kader Asmal. Asmal's impassioned letter linked the history of the Holocaust to international examples of human rights abuses:

... the holocaust (sic) however unique it was and however appalling its scope, should not be seen totally apart from other deliberate annihilations by official decree. Worldwide one finds – today and in history – people who are victims of the sort of thinking that led to the holocaust (sic), be it in Kampuchea, Belfast, Jerusalem, Kosovo, Kampala, Cambodia – yes, and Sharpeville and Vlakplaas.⁸¹

Asmal saw the Centre's function as a commemorative one, and through commemoration, becoming a "binding force" in that it showed "the wreckage of human life wrought by such evil." Asmal linked the Holocaust to apartheid through the location of the Centre within 10 minute's walk of the Supreme Court and Parliament, "so close to where our equivalent of the Nuremberg Laws were passed." Thus for Asmal, the history of the Holocaust was connected to South Africa's history

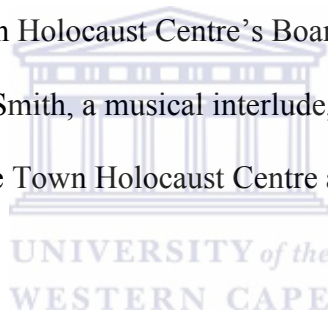
⁷⁹ Beyers Naudé, letter to Myra Osrin, 31 March 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸⁰ Beyers Naudé, fax to Myra Osrin, 1 July 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸¹ Kader Asmal, Message for Use at the Launch of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 10 August 1999, 17h30. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

of apartheid; the Holocaust Centre was connected to apartheid through its location and functioned as a commemoration of the Holocaust and a reminder thus of “our equivalent.” But it is South Africa’s Constitution that Asmal identified as the source of inspiration for South Africans to take action to defend the “inherent dignity” of others. His letter echoed the call for reconciliation and unity: “let us link hands and emerge from all these appallingly wrenching events united in a new and gentle generosity of spirit.”⁸²

The evening’s programme began with a prayer delivered by Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, and then a message from Mayor of Cape Town Nomaindia Mfeketo. A presentation to Myra Osrin by the Cape Town Holocaust Centre’s Board of Trustees was followed by a speech by Trustee Stephen Smith, a musical interlude, a speech by Justice Richard Goldstone, Patron of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre and finally, a candle-lighting ceremony.



President of the SAJBD and Trustee of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Mervyn Smith, then thanked and welcomed the guests. He noted three apologies: Rev Naudé and Archbishop Tutu, whose letter was printed in the programme. The apologies articulated a particular framing of the Centre as a place of memory that mattered for all South Africans, not only Jewish South Africans.

The third dignitary’s letter, however, Smith chose to read out to the audience. The letter was an endorsement of the relevance of the Centre to all South Africans, and of

⁸² All quotations are from the “Message for use at the launch of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 10 August 1999, 17h30” by Kader Asmal. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

the place of the Jewish community in South Africa. This endorsement carried great weight, written as it was from former President Nelson Mandela.⁸³

The letter began by expressing “sincere regret” at missing the opening and then proceeded to claim the Jewish community as “an integral part of our nation”. Mandela claimed Holocaust memory as South African memory, by talking about the Jewish community’s act of remembering a “part of its past wherever it occurred” as “recalling a part of our nation’s past.” Mandela explained that the CTHC was relevant because it commemorated the past of a community that was “an integral part of our nation”, and in so doing, the Centre was “recalling a part of our nation’s past.” The past, “wherever it occurred” is the past of all South Africans, Mandela asserted. The Centre would help “all children understand that human rights are indivisible and that tolerance is essential to a free society”. Mandela continued to connect “the memory of the Holocaust” and the “recollection of apartheid’s inhumanities”. He concluded that the act of recollection in the Centre serves a common function of healing, reconciling; of “strengthen[ing] the foundations upon which we are building a nation dedicated to ensuring that never again shall our land see such wrongs by one against another.”⁸⁴

Stephen Smith’s speech that followed picked up parts of Mandela’s framing of the Centre. Smith referred to the Centre as playing a healing function through affording the visitor “a glimpse into the dark soul of humanity and yet [being] given a means to confront it.” The Centre, Smith claimed, would act as a reconciler, bringing people together, “bridg[ing] our divided past and creat[ing] the means to a shared and meaningful future.” Smith cautioned against comparing suffering, saying that “this is

⁸³ Message from former President, Nelson Mandela on the occasion of the opening of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸⁴ Message from former Nelson Mandela on the occasion of the opening of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

not about who suffered more or less than anyone else as there is no such thing as a hierarchy of suffering.” Smith concluded by describing the Centre as a “place of hope” where “young people will stop and listen and learn.” Smith explained that the Centre would be a place that would teach young people to “make choices for the better... and have courage to speak out and to intervene.”⁸⁵

In Smith’s speech, however, there was no direct reference to apartheid. His examples of questions with which young people “should grapple” were all located within the hypothetical realm, with enough clues to suggest the history of the Holocaust. He ended with a powerful rhetorical flourish by addressing the audience of adults: “When would you intervene? When should we intervene?”⁸⁶ As powerful a conclusion as it was, it did not ask the guests to consider their actions during apartheid or link their choices to their immediate circumstances. Smith’s speech allowed the guests to keep their eyes on a particular past, the Holocaust, and averted from the immediate past, apartheid.

Mervyn Smith’s introduction of the lighting of the memorial candles confirmed again the Centre’s role as a place of commemoration of a particular event – the Holocaust, and a place connected through symbol to the sacred, by explaining the significance of the memorial light that would stand in the foyer of the Centre, as it does “in every synagogue.” The memorial light’s six branches, Smith explained, was symbolic of the “six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, and on the base is written the word ZACHOR – REMEMBER. We remember also the heroic deeds of those who had the

⁸⁵ Stephen Smith, speech given at the opening function of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 10 August 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸⁶ Stephen Smith, speech given at the opening function of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 10 August 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

courage to care – despite the terrible dangers – who performed acts and deeds which resulted in rescue and saving of lives of many.”⁸⁷

The speeches of both Stephen Smith and Mervyn Smith provided an elision from the more confrontational rhetoric of Mandela and Tutu. They provided a way of avoiding the question of what “heroic deeds” were done by those who “had the courage to care” during apartheid. They allowed instead an unchallenged view of belonging to a community of the oppressed and a false sense of solidarity between South Africans privileged by the apartheid system and those oppressed by apartheid.

It is worth remembering that a speech is not always heard the way it is written. What precedes or follows a speech, whether people have a chance to read the words, the length of a speech, whether the listener was too hot or too cold while listening – there are a myriad of variables that can affect the meaning a listener makes of what they have heard.⁸⁸ With this caveat in mind, the letters of thanks and congratulations sent to Osrin after the opening indicate the meaning those in attendance derived from opening event.

Many of the letters expressed a perception of the Centre as a place of memorial or monument. In a heartfelt letter to Osrin, former chairperson of the Western Province Communal Priorities and Planning Board Ian Sacks wrote, “whatever is said, the fact is that this Centre will stand as a monument to the Martyrs and the Heroes of the

⁸⁷ Mervyn Smith, speech given at the opening function of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 10 August 1999. Smith had written the words, “Zachor – remember” in capital letters. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸⁸ The speeches were followed by a performance of the theme from *Schindler’s List* by a young student from Herzlia High School, Dani Asherson. Although *Schindler’s List* had been screened in South Africa in 1995, the music would have been familiar to most members of the audience: functioning as an auditory unifier in a way that a Yiddish folk song would have potentially excluded some of the guests. The irony that the violin solo was composed for the film, and was not connected historically to the Holocaust, was not considered a problem.

Holocaust.” The role of the Centre as a “reminder of man’s inhumanity to man” was a sentiment often repeated in as many words by a number of the letters. A perception of the Centre as an educational space where lessons about the Holocaust would be taught was also expressed. Some, like Marlene Bethlehem, National Chairperson of the SAJBD, saw the Centre as a teacher of Holocaust history: “the Centre will lead to greater knowledge of the Shoa (sic)”. The Centre was seen by some as a place where, in M Joselowsky’s words, “many, many people, both Jewish and non-Jewish will see what *really* transpired,”(Joselowsky’s emphasis). For some, like Annette Milliner, writing on behalf of the South African Zionist Federation of Israel, the Centre was an answer to Holocaust denialism.⁸⁹

For others, the Centre was seen as a place that “lessons” *from* the Holocaust would be taught. Some of the letters saw the “lesson” as meaning that the Holocaust be remembered and not forgotten. Tony Leon, writing in his capacity as Leader of the Opposition, summed up what others perceived the Centre’s role to be – as a “living monument to our words, “never again.” Others, like Jack Tworetsky (chairperson of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies Cape Council) saw the Centre as a “wonderful educational facility in teaching the lessons of racial discrimination.” Marlene Benjamin, President of the SAJBD saw the Centre as able to teach “tolerance and understanding between various communities.” This sentiment was shared by Ronnie Mink, chairperson of the South African National Yad Vashem Memorial Foundation based in Johannesburg, who added that the Centre’s role in “forging good will among our divergent groups” was a “sacred task.”⁹⁰

⁸⁹ All the extracts quoted in the paragraph come from letters of thanks sent to Osrin. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹⁰ All the extracts quoted in the paragraph come from letters of thanks sent to Osrin. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Tworetsky and others like Kate and Niel Jowell, saw the Centre's teaching about the Holocaust as a way to prevent future persecution. Moonyeen Castle, writing in her capacity as chairperson of the B'nai Zion Association of Cape Town added to this vision of the role of the Centre to eliminate "every form of racial discrimination."⁹¹ For many of the letter writers, the Centre was an expression of Osrin's "communal responsibility," because the Centre belonged to the Jewish community first and foremost. Many of the letter writers expressed their gratitude to Osrin personally for her dedication and saw the Centre as a great achievement for the Jewish community of Cape Town and South Africa.⁹²

From the letters of thanks it appears that the audience largely agreed with the roles ascribed to the Centre by the speakers at the opening of the Centre. It was to be a Holocaust memorial, an educational space teaching Holocaust history and through that, teaching against racism and discrimination, and a vehicle for reconciliation and healing. The Centre and the exhibition were collapsed into one entity with no distinction made between the exhibition and a separate educational programme. This was understandable, as people were responding to the opening of the Centre, an opening that took guests inside the exhibition, but not "inside" the programme designed by the Education Director.

Prior to, and immediately following, the opening function, the indicators of the Founders' vision of the meaning of the Centre were evident. These "indicators" affected how the invitees to the opening functions saw the Centre. The Planning Committee had designed a pre-opening brochure that explained the rationale of the

⁹¹ All the extracts quoted in the paragraph come from letters of thanks sent to Osrin. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹² All the extracts quoted in the paragraph come from letters of thanks sent to Osrin. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Centre, and used images from the exhibition.⁹³ The brochure was sent with the invitation to the opening function, and a number of invitees, such as Glenda Regenbaum, the Executive Director of the Holocaust Museum in Houston, commented on the impact of the brochure.⁹⁴

Two public lectures followed the opening function.⁹⁵ These lectures added to the idea of the Centre as public memorial and educational institution. Comments like those of struggle stalwart, Ahmed Kathrada, then Chairperson of the Robben Island Museum Council, that the Centre was a “tragic reminder of [what] racialism can do [and that] all South Africans must visit” suggested that the Centre was being seen as a space relevant to all South Africans.⁹⁶ Kathrada’s comment, and a photograph of him inside the exhibition, appeared inside a brochure produced after the exhibition opened, alongside a selection of comments that included that of Zola Piatka (daughter of Xavier Piatka, the late chairperson of She’erith Hapletah), Willem Steenkamp (defence analyst and advisor to the newly formed Ministry of Defence) and Rabbi Ivan Lerner, the senior minister at the Orthodox Claremont Hebrew Congregation.⁹⁷

⁹³ The pre-opening brochure included the prologue to the exhibition. The back page of the pre-opening brochure had the words, “Learn the lessons of the past to build a better future” – indicating to the reader the Centre’s purpose. Whilst pithy, the slogan reveals an assumption that learning about acts of injustice leads to social activism. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹⁴ Glenda Regenbaum, letter to Myra Osrin, undated. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹⁵ Smith repeated much of his address that he gave at the opening function on the 10th August. Schleunes’s book *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz* is considered an example of the “functionalist” school of Holocaust historians. In contrast to the “intentionalist” school that posits that there was a “master plan” to the genocide in place before 1941, and that the genocide was a logical outcome of an antisemitic ideology, the “functionalist” school would have argued that the genocide was not planned before 1941 and was instead developed in response to changing realities. For a more nuanced and detailed exploration of the two positions, see Dan Stone, ed., *The Holocaust and Historical Methodology* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012).

⁹⁶ Ahmed Kathrada, 1999 Opening Brochure, c. 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹⁷ Steenkamp had worked as the military correspondent until 1990 for a Cape Town daily newspaper, the *Cape Times*, writing a column called “On Parade”. From 1997-1998, Steenkamp was a member of the SANDF education, training and development team. Rabbi Lerner had expressed publicly his discontent with the Truth and Reconciliation Committee and President Mandela’s relationship with Hamas. This had alarmed the SAJBD (Cape Council) as they were concerned that the Rabbi’s words would reflect badly on the entire Jewish community. Minutes of the Meetings of the SAJBD (Cape Council), 16 January 1996; 12 March 1996, 14 May 1996. Box C850. File P4, UCT Archive, Cape

The inclusion of these diverse personalities in the brochure produced after the opening suggested not only a skilled public relations eye at work, but also a desire to encourage a view of the Centre as a space for all. Every person mentioned on the back of the brochure was recognisable to a particular constituency, be it secular or Orthodox Jewry, Muslim, Christian, struggle activist. Their endorsement acted as a reassurance to the constituency that felt connected to them. The brochure bolstered the conception of the Centre as a place that was at once needed by all South Africans, but also a space that honoured Holocaust survivors, taught Holocaust history and connected to the “new South Africa”.

However, it was arguably the two-day teacher workshop held after the opening, organised by the Education Advisory Committee, that lent most weight to the perception of the Centre as an educational institution that taught about the Holocaust, and was connected to South Africa’s immediate apartheid past. The teacher workshop added to the identity of the Centre as being an integral partner to the WCED in the delivery of the curriculum.

It was not so much the establishment of an Education Advisory Committee (EAC) that created a strategic partnership, as it was the composition of the EAC.⁹⁸ The chairperson, Gail Weldon was the History/Human and Social Sciences Subject Advisor and 19 of the 24 Committee members were senior personnel of the WCED and represented the subjects History, Human and Social Sciences, Life Orientation,

Town. See also Shimoni, *Conscience and Community* and Dana Evan Kaplan, “Reconciliation and Healing: A South African Jewish Perspective,” *The Reconstructionist* 63, no. 2 (Spring 1999): 76-92.

⁹⁸ The EAC was established after Silbert had had a series of meetings with WCED, informing each person of the Centre’s aim, and inviting them to become part of a consultative body. At their meeting on the 1st March 1999, Silbert and Geoff Cohen, Principal of Herzlia Senior High School, agreed that the Chair should be someone from the Education Department. The EAC first met on the 19 March 1999, to plan two workshops for teachers in August to introduce the Centre to them. Using the response to the workshops, the EAC planned the two-day seminar for 1999.

Language, literacy and communication, and Arts and Culture.⁹⁹ Apart from having in-depth knowledge of the curriculum and the needs of the teachers, the Subject Advisors had the ear of the teachers. Thus, when the EAC advised all the principals in the province about the workshop, the invitation, although on a Cape Town Holocaust Centre letterhead, clearly had the sanction of the WCED as it was co-signed by Gail Weldon in her capacity as Principal Subject Advisor: History/ Human and Social Sciences, and the names and designations of the WCED personnel who formed the committee of the EAC were listed on the left of the letterhead.¹⁰⁰

The invitation described the Centre as an educational institution, “dedicated to the struggle against prejudice and racism, and to the promotion of tolerance and understanding,” as well as providing teachers with “powerful, hands-on educational resources.”¹⁰¹ The Centre’s role as a memorial to the Holocaust was not mentioned. The Holocaust was framed as “an excellent case study of the effects of racism,” not as the *only* case study.¹⁰² The Centre was depicted as a space relevant to South Africans as it had “potent resonance” for South Africans.¹⁰³ The Centre was also described as a provider of teaching resources accessible to all. This inclusive nature of the Centre was underlined by noting that the “instructional guides” for teachers were available in

⁹⁹ A Chief Education specialist; a Circuit manager, Principal and Senior Subject Advisors, and 14 subject advisors.

¹⁰⁰ Marlene Silbert and Gail Weldon, Letter to all High School Principals, WCED, 25 May 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. The two-day Seminar was open to teachers from the four learning areas represented by the members of the EAC namely, language, literacy and communication, Human and Social Sciences, Arts and Culture and Life Orientation.

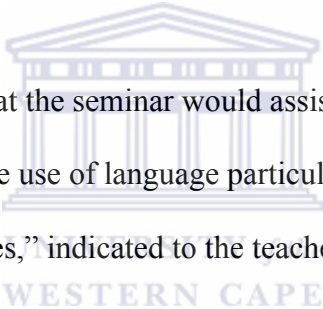
¹⁰¹ Quoted from handout included with the invitation entitled, “Teaching for Tolerance: a unique seminar for high school teachers.” CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰² Quoted from handout included with the invitation entitled, “Teaching for Tolerance: a unique seminar for high school teachers.” CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰³ Quoted from the handout included with the invitation entitled, “Teaching for Tolerance: a unique seminar for high school teachers.” CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

“English, Afrikaans and Xhosa.” Furthermore, the invitation was sent out in the three main languages spoken in the Western Cape, Afrikaans, isiXhosa and English.¹⁰⁴

The invitation and name of the seminar (“Teaching for Tolerance”) cast the Centre as a teaching space that countered racism. It also cast the teaching of Holocaust history as the vehicle of antiracism that would teach teachers both how to be tolerant and how to teach their students to be tolerant. Teachers were told that they would be given “factual material” about the Holocaust “within the context of World War II.” The seminar would also address the issue of the “relevance to other instances of racism and genocide, most notably apartheid.” Teachers would also “generate teaching ideas and materials around the theme of prejudice.”¹⁰⁵



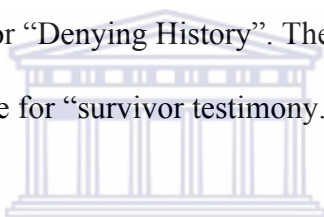
Thus teachers were assured that the seminar would assist them with implementing Curriculum 2005 (C2005). The use of language particular to C2005 such as the terms “learning areas” and “outcomes,” indicated to the teacher that the seminar organisers were very familiar with the Curriculum. It reinforced the perception of the Centre as a legitimate educational resource for teachers. The fact that the seminar, materials, refreshment and supper were free is not to be dismissed as a mere logistical footnote. Apartheid education had created huge discrepancies in resources, and thus the offer of teaching materials would have been a powerful draw-card. Access to resources (educational or otherwise) would have been a huge attraction for teachers.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ That the Seminar was conducted in English (clearly stated in the invitation) would not necessarily have struck the teachers as being exclusionary, although the issue of language of instruction continues to be a contested area. The inclusion of international speakers would have been sufficient explanation for the Seminar being conducted in English.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted from handout included with the invitation entitled, “Teaching for Tolerance: a unique seminar for high school teachers”. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰⁶ The introduction of C2005 had resulted in considerable anxiety for teachers. In 2001, the new Minister of Education, Prof Kader Asmal, commissioned a Report into C2005. The report team confirmed the objections that had been raised in the previous six years about C2005. One of the main objections voiced by teachers was its vagueness about content selection. This should have come as little surprise to the developers of C2005, considering the manner in which educational policy had been implemented for decades during apartheid. The apartheid curricula were highly prescriptive and teachers, like their students, were expected to ‘do’ without question what was given to them. Teachers

The topics that keynote speakers would address were listed on the invitation.¹⁰⁷ The topics included the Holocaust, the Centre as a resource for C2005, the similarities and differences between Nazism and apartheid, and a cross-curriculum approach. The programme indicated that teachers would participate in small group discussions on the topics, “Prejudice, stereotyping, racism” and “Victims, perpetrators, bystanders, and resisters.” Considerable time was allocated to workshop sessions for each learning group, facilitated by the respective Subject Advisors, all of who were members of the EAC. During the workshop sessions, teachers would develop teaching material. The teachers could choose from three “focus groups” that had as their topics for discussion: “What makes it possible for ordinary people to become murderers?” or “Post-Holocaust Genocides” or “Denying History”. The programme also indicated that an hour would be set aside for “survivor testimony.”¹⁰⁸



The response to the invitation was considerable. Over 300 schools applied, each school putting forward the names of four teachers. The Seminar could only accommodate 50 schools. Members of the EAC selected the final 50 participants.¹⁰⁹

This decision further reinforced the idea of a consultative partnership between the Education Department and the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.

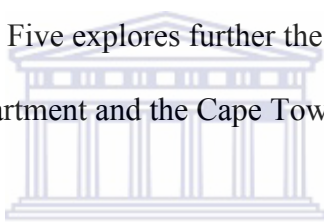
teaching in the transition period, no matter their politics or how positively or otherwise they viewed the change from apartheid education to post-apartheid education, were experiencing the stresses that accompany any period of change. C2005 created for many teachers, a vacuum – and the lack of specificity resulted in many teachers feeling insecure, and increasingly demotivated. Any form of support would have been highly attractive.

¹⁰⁷ The programme listed the international speakers – Stephen and James Smith from Beth Shalom, UK; and Jan Darsa of Facing History and Ourselves, USA, and local speakers – Milton Shain from UCT; Gail Weldon and Sandy Zinn, from the WCED. The involvement of the Subject Advisors, listed as facilitators on the programme, would have assured teachers even further of the programme’s potential to help them translate C2005 into their classrooms. The inclusion of the subject advisors as an integral part of the seminar, also reinforced the perception of the Centre being closely aligned with the WCED.

¹⁰⁸ Programme for Teaching for Tolerance Teacher Workshop. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰⁹ At the meeting of the EAC on the 17 March 1999, it was decided that the EAC members who were subject advisors/circuit managers and the Executive of the Association of Principals, Mr Melvyn Caroline, should determine the final selection. Minutes of the meeting of the EAC on 17 March 1999. Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

The Seminar was significant for a number of reasons. It established the Centre as an educational institution and a resource for teacher support. The close working relationship with the WCED not only gave the Centre the official status of “service provider,” but also positioned the Centre as supportive of the broader Human Rights agenda with which the Curriculum was identified.¹¹⁰ The relationship developed by the Centre with the members of the EAC would long outlast the Seminar. Some of the EAC members subsequently left the WCED to become Heritage practitioners, but their relationship with the Cape Town Holocaust Centre was still evident in their responses to the Centre over the following decade. Many of the teachers who attended the Seminar brought their successive Grade 9 and Grade 11 students to the Centre in the following decade. Chapter Five explores further the relationship between teachers, the provincial Education Department and the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.



Reflections upon the exhibition

The Centre, unlike the USHMM and other major Holocaust museums, did not have recognised Holocaust historians on its development team.¹¹¹ Furthermore, apart from Stephen Smith who had had the experience of developing Beth Shalom, there were no people on the Committee who had experience in the field of museum studies.¹¹² What did this mean for the shape the Centre took?

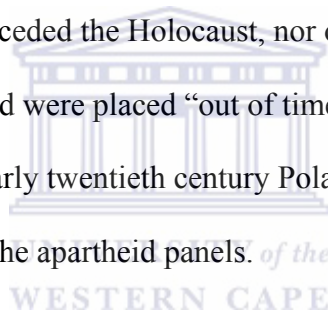
¹¹⁰ Gail Weldon, interview by the author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town.

¹¹¹ While Stephen Smith was certainly knowledgeable about aspects of the Holocaust, he was a theologian in training, concerned with matters of reconciliation. Shain was an historian, but his area entailed South African Jewish history, and not the Holocaust. Wolfswinkel’s interest lay in literature and the Holocaust, and was a member not of the History department but of the Arts department at UCT. Whilst he had appealed for the exhibition to include some reference to historiographical debates, his argument was not persuasive. Silbert was a senior high school teacher, but not a history teacher. Pimstone, who edited the exhibition text, was a retired primary school principal.

¹¹² Other than Shain, no South African historians were consulted. Osrin had asked the Israeli Museum’s consultants, Harel and Sivan – experienced Museum developers – for advice in 1998. Their input and impact is discussed earlier in the chapter.

The absence of an historian of the Holocaust meant that there was no discussion of Holocaust historiography and the merits of different schools of thought as well as how these might shape the focus of the exhibition. Would the exhibition reflect an intentionalist or functionalist line or it would it suggest an understanding of the history as a combination of the two? The lack of debate does not mean, however that the exhibition did not reveal how the history of the Holocaust was understood by the Committee, or for that matter, how history was understood.

The exhibition also presented a narrative of the uniqueness of the Holocaust, despite the inclusion of a panel on racism and on apartheid in South Africa. There was no mention of genocides that preceded the Holocaust, nor of those that followed. The panels that examined apartheid were placed “out of time,” floating disconnected to the historical period and place (early twentieth century Poland) that followed in the exhibition immediately after the apartheid panels.



The exhibition showed evidence of its borrowing from the Beth Shalom exhibition and the USHMM exhibition in one particular aspect. Despite the founders’ experience of the successful tour of the ‘AFITW’ exhibition, an exhibition which explored the macro history through the micro-history of Anne Frank and her family, the Cape Town Holocaust Centre exhibition adopted the same approach in its representation of Jewish people as taken by Beth Shalom, Yad Vashem, the Holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War Museum and the USHMM.¹¹³ Instead of representing the stories of individuals or at least, individual communities, the Cape Town Holocaust Centre followed the “Israeli School” tradition by representing “Jews” as a “national

¹¹³ See Linenthal, *Preserving Memory*, Weinberg, *The Holocaust Museum in Washington*, Novick, *The Holocaust in American* and Cole, *Selling the Holocaust* for a discussion of the methodology employed by the USHMM’s “identity cards.”

collective”.¹¹⁴ The exhibition did not indicate the divisions of class, ideology, geography or otherwise that existed within Jewish communities, and in so doing, suggested a homogeneity that was not necessarily the case, ironing flat the complexities of human experience.¹¹⁵

In his address to teachers in 1998, Smith had explained that the Centre wanted to “portray what happened in Nazi Germany during those years” in such a way that it was “integrated and connected to people’s experiences.”¹¹⁶ Instead, visitors were left to guess why there was a panel on apartheid so close to the beginning of the exhibition, and whether there was a relationship between the two histories, and if so, what it was. Visitors could as easily *not* have guessed or considered the two histories together. The “disconnected” apartheid panels did not make any mention of who had benefited from apartheid or who had resisted. Instead, photographs showing the Separate Amenities Act in action and a list of the legal “building bricks of Apartheid (sic)” filled the panels.

On the one hand, the exhibition appeared to have met Smith’s recommendation that it should not tell people what to think, that it “inform and provide an opportunity for discussion.”¹¹⁷ However, the actual exhibition design made the spaces for debate quite narrow, and provided very few moments when the complexity of the history is

¹¹⁴ Goldberg, *Marking Evil*, 83.

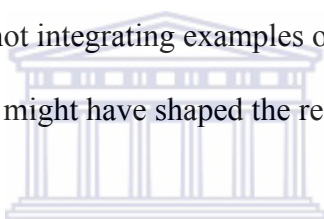
¹¹⁵ There is an attempt to humanise the victims, through for example, the inclusion of a panel of photographs of the Jews of Bedzin that has the name of each person included, and the attempt to convey an appreciation of the lives that existed before the Holocaust, through the inclusion of family photographs taken before the WWII. However, there is no suggestion of beyond their names, of what they might have thought or believed or understood about their world. Although the exhibition includes the voices of witnesses to the Holocaust, these voices are either disembodied recordings or else written sentences interspersed through the exhibition as a way of illustrating or supporting the fact indicated on the panel. These written testimonies appear beneath the panel, literally disconnected from the facts that are given prominence.

¹¹⁶ Transcript of Smith’s speech to teachers at the teacher workshop in Parow, 5 August 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹¹⁷ Transcript of Smith’s speech to teachers at the teacher workshop in Parow, 5 August 1998. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

observable. Any contemplative space was removed from the exhibition design and the visitor had little encouragement to consider what they were seeing, hearing or reading as they moved through the exhibition, as there was no place to sit.¹¹⁸

A second way in which the exhibition design narrowed the space for discussion was illustrated by the choice to place certain parts of the history as discreet packages outside of the main part of the exhibition. The visitor was encouraged to view the history of the Holocaust as happening in a straight line from point A to point Z, beginning in 1933 and progressing to 1945. The redemptive narrative chosen by the exhibition was illustrated in the placing of the history of rescue as a discreet parcel at the end of the exhibition. By not integrating examples of rescue in the preceding panels, the factors at play that might have shaped the responses were lost.



One could say that the exhibition revealed through omission, a particular view of history as a subject. There was little suggestion in the exhibition of how history was created. If the génocidaires had wished to remove every trace of their victims, how then could there be photographs from which a Holocaust exhibition could be constructed?¹¹⁹ There was one mention in the exhibition's text that suggested differing views as to the significance of certain aspects of the history.¹²⁰ In other words, the exhibition did not engage with the Holocaust as an event that happened within an historical period. Whilst there was a suggestion of the "outside world" in the section portraying events in Germany before 1939, the sections that followed were

¹¹⁸ The only seating available was at the end of the exhibition in the space where the survivor testimonies are screened on a loop.

¹¹⁹ Three exceptions include the explanation of how George Kadish, a prisoner of the Kovno ghetto, was able to photograph life in the ghetto; an explanation of how the Bedzin photographs were discovered, and an explanation of how the photographs used to show Jewish life before the Holocaust came to be part of the Centre's collection.

¹²⁰ The text reads, "Opinions vary on the importance of *Mein Kampf*, some scholars believing that the book was only a propaganda tool while others believe that it contains a clear statement of the policies Hitler was to pursue when he attained power."

presented with hardly any reference to events happening elsewhere. The exhibition suggested a relentless progression from ghetto to genocidal killing. This relentless progression suggested an inevitability to the genocide, and in so doing, it could be argued that the exhibition displayed an intentionalist framing of the events.

The placing of Tutu's words as the last panel in the exhibition, after the survivor testimonies and their photographs, served as a retrospective framing of the exhibition, and the final reminder to the visitor of what meaning they were to make of the history of the Holocaust, and of its relevance to South Africa. Taken from Tutu's speech for the opening of the Centre, the text reads:

We learn about the Holocaust so that we can become more human, more gentle, more compassionate, valuing every person as being of infinite worth so precious that we know such atrocities will never happen again and the world will be a more humane place.¹²¹

Tutu, through his description of the Centre as the vehicle conveying the "lessons of the Holocaust," claimed the Centre as a part of a national project of reconciliation.¹²²

However, "national reconciliation" was not a goal originally envisaged by the founding committees, despite the Centre's conception and construction occurring at the same as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was in session. The recommendation of the consultative group at the beginning of 1998, that "nation-building, liberation, reconciliation" be used as a way to link the history of the Holocaust and apartheid, was not pursued or mentioned ever again by the Planning Committee or any of its sub-committees, after the CTHC opened.¹²³ The mantle of

¹²¹ Desmond Tutu, An extract from his message for the opening of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre. 10 August 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²² The extract chosen from Tutu's message is the second last paragraph of the letter. His message concludes, "The Holocaust Museum is an invaluable tool towards that end". Tutu, An extract from his message for the opening of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre. 10 August 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²³ The consultative group's recommendation was made at the meeting on the 11 February 1998, Kaplan Centre. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

reconciliation was laid on the shoulders of the Centre at its opening, and as the next chapter will show, this was an identity the Centre embraced in the decade following its opening.¹²⁴ The Cape Town Holocaust Centre was a community initiative, developed and largely funded by the Cape Town Jewish Community.¹²⁵ The Centre's organisational structure continued to remain integrally connected to the Jewish community structures to which its directors and Board of Trustees belonged, even as the Centre, took on the identity of being a place "for all."



¹²⁴ A number of articles that appeared around the opening of the CTHC reinforced this view of the Centre. For example, "Holocaust Centre is a Signpost to Tolerance," *Southern Suburbs Tatler*, 12 August 1999; "Healing Role for City Holocaust Centre," *Cape Times* 6 August 1999. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²⁵ Although the project was not a national project, funding was received from South African Jewry across the country and without.

CHAPTER FIVE

DEVELOPING THE CAPE TOWN HOLOCAUST CENTRE

“...commit to plant the seeds of a better future amidst the soil of a bitter past.”¹

The first six years following the opening of the CTHC saw a period of extraordinary growth for the CTHC. Acknowledged in Parliament for its memory and mediation work, the CTHC formed with institutions ranging from civil society groups engaged in conflict resolution, to working alongside the South African Police Services, with whom it worked to promote gang mediation, and the department of Correctional Services, which they assisted as the department grappled with transformation. Significantly for our purposes, the CTHC was sought out for its work with teachers. The CTHC stretched beyond the exhibition boundaries, and organised workshops and seminars on issues relating to other genocides and apartheid, and the collective memory of the Holocaust and apartheid it was creating appeared to sit well with the participants in its programmes.

However, the CTHC faced a number of challenges. The decade after Mandela's presidency brought with it growing challenges to the rhetoric of reconciliation, which was perceived to obscure the fact that the iniquities of the apartheid years continued to grow. Questions of justice and restitution challenged those who had benefited from the apartheid system. Would the CTHC be able to retain its status of legitimacy and relevancy, a place for all? The conflict in the Middle East challenged the CTHC to

¹ Excerpt from the Stockholm Declaration on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research. Stockholm: January 2000.

find ways to signal its position as neutral, without alienating any of its supporters. The crises in the Middle East put pressure on the collective memory the CTHC had been building of the Holocaust as vehicle for reconciliation, and allied to that, the Jewish community as the drivers of reconciliation. Would the CTHC be able to control the memory of the Holocaust being constructed? Finally, its ability to sustain the range of programmes was under enormous strain. The growth of the Centre also outstripped the personal capacity of the CTHC. The education programmes were developed and facilitated by one person, Marlene Silbert, and there was no plan in place to grow a team of “Silberts”.

In this chapter I examine these six years following the opening of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre (CTHC) and do so, considering Erika Apfelbaum’s argument about memory. Apfelbaum argued that “[p]ublic recognition of the facts legitimizes the social existence of victims; it provides the historical framework within which they feel entitled to speak up and to make their stories heard.”² The CTHC provided a space of “public recognition” for two histories, not just one. In this chapter I consider the implications of this for visitors to the CTHC.

I explore whether the representation of apartheid in the exhibition informed the creation of the identity of a “new” South African, not only for those whom the apartheid system victimized but also for apartheid’s beneficiaries. Here, I ask whether the exhibition encouraged a sense of shared victimhood, not just between victims of apartheid and the Holocaust, but also among perpetrators and beneficiaries of the apartheid system. While the inclusion of the brief mention of segregation and

² Erika Apfelbaum, “Halbwachs and the Social Properties of Memory,” in *Memory: Histories, Theories and Debates*, eds. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwartz (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), 90.

apartheid in the exhibition may have encouraged some to consider the iniquities of both apartheid and Nazism, I argue that for others, the exhibition encouraged a misplaced catharsis where the tears shed for the victims of the Holocaust substituted as an act of redemption for culpability during apartheid.³

A new Centre for a new South Africa in a new millennium

The CTHC opened on the eve of a new millennium, and a few months after South Africa's second democratic election in 1999. Two years following the country's first democratic elections in 1994, the country approved a new Constitution that had enshrined a human rights culture. Any concern that the founders of the CTHC might have had that the CTHC would be perceived as irrelevant in the "new" South Africa was challenged by the statistics. 8225 visitors came to the CTHC in the first six months of its opening. Of these, 6185 had been individual visitors, 823 visitors had participated in adult education programmes, and 1417 were high school students.⁴ By May 2000 the Education Director reported that the CTHC was fully booked for educational programmes until mid-August.⁵ This pattern continued every year.

The CTHC received international exposure at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust (Stockholm Forum) hosted by the Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson at the end of January 2000.⁶ Osrin was the only South African invited to the Stockholm Forum, and the only African asked to make a presentation. In her address, she described the CTHC as a memorial and "an educational centre which, by

³ The panels that are related to South Africa before and during apartheid, and not connected to antisemitism, number four, less than 0,5% of the exhibition. There is no commentary on the post-apartheid context, nor is there an explanation of how or why Holocaust survivors came to South Africa.

⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 6 March 2000, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵ Education Director's report for Executive Committee Meeting, 22 May 2000, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶ The Forum was held from the 26-28 January 2000.

examining the moral, ethical and historical dimensions of the Holocaust, aims to instil a spirit of tolerance and a determination to combat all forms of racism and prejudice.”⁷ Osrin argued that the “lessons of the Holocaust” were particularly relevant for South Africa. But South Africans would not be able to grasp this relevance if Holocaust education didn’t “relate to the South African Experience.” However, the differences between the Holocaust and South Africa’s recent past had to be stressed, not only for the sake of historical accuracy but in order to demonstrate what can happen, and did happen, when race prejudice and inter- group hatred are allowed to run rampant.”⁸

Osrin’s construction of the rationale for Holocaust education indicated a narrow understanding of the impact apartheid had on the majority of South Africans, whose very lives were a demonstration of what happened “when race prejudice and inter- group hatred are allowed to run rampant.” Osrin formulated the justification for Holocaust education in South Africa as a way to deal with the challenges of the “new” South Africa, which included the project of reconciliation.⁹ In short, Osrin outlined Holocaust education as relevant because it could assist the “new” South Africa to develop. But, according to Osrin’s formulation, Holocaust education could not shed light on the “old” South Africa of segregation and apartheid, or assist the “old” South

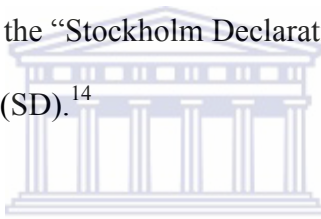
⁷ Myra Osrin, Presentation: Workshop 2 on Education, "Teaching in the Contemporary Context", 27 January 2000, Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, accessed 4 June 2015, <http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Affinity/SIF/DATA/2000/page1062.html> .

⁸ All the quoted phrases in this paragraph are taken from Osrin’s presentation at Workshop 2 on Education, "Teaching in the Contemporary Context", 27 January 2000, Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, accessed 4 June 2015, <http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Affinity/SIF/DATA/2000/page1062.html>.

⁹ All the quoted phrases in this paragraph are taken from Osrin’s presentation at the Workshop 2 on Education, "Teaching in the Contemporary Context", 27 January 2000, Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust. <http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Affinity/SIF/DATA/2000/page1062.html>. Accessed 4 June 2015.

Africans to understand their positions of privilege and the way that experience shaped their places in the “fledgling democracy.”¹⁰

The Stockholm Forum, attended by representatives of 46 countries, was an outcome of the establishment of the Task Force for Intergovernmental Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF) in May 1998.¹¹ The Stockholm Declaration’s position was that the “unprecedented character of the Holocaust, and the terrible suffering of the countless millions of Nazi victims, will always hold universal meaning which transcends race and religion.”¹² This supported Osrin’s framing of the CTHC’s educational mission as relevant to all in post-apartheid South Africa.¹³ After two days of plenaries, workshops and panel discussions, the Forum issued the “Stockholm Declaration on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research” (SD).¹⁴



WESTERN CAPE

The responses of visitors to the CTHC suggested a broad acceptance of the CTHC’s framing of the history of the Holocaust as having “universal” meaning relevant to

¹⁰ All the quoted phrases in this paragraph are taken from Osrin’s presentation at the Workshop 2 on Education, “Teaching in the Contemporary Context”, 27 January 2000, Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust. <http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Affinity/SIF/DATA/2000/page1062.html>. Accessed 4 June 2015.

¹¹ See <http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Affinity/SIF/DATA/2000/page879.html> and <https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/about-us/history-ihra> (accessed 10 February 2015) for further background to the establishment and aims of the Task Team. See also Andy Pierce for a history of the establishment of the ITF, and the subsequent “road to Stockholm”, *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain* (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 138-139. In December 2012, the IFT changed its name to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). IHRA is an intergovernmental body. Any democratic country may become a member, as long as it commits to the Stockholm Declaration and implements policies and programmes in support of Holocaust education, remembrance and research.

¹² Stockholm Declaration on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research. Stockholm: January 2000, accessed 10 February 2015, <http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Affinity/SIF/DATA/2000/page1192.html>.

¹³ Myra Osrin, Presentation given at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, Workshop 2 on Education.

¹⁴ See <http://www.d.dccam.org/Projects/Affinity/SIF/DATA/2000/page1192.html> for the entire Declaration. Accessed 4 June 2015. The CTHC had a connection to the SD in that it was drafted by Yehuda Bauer, Academic Advisor to ITF, and CTHC trustee, Stephen Smith. Smith’s relationship to the Centre had no bearing on the drafting of the Declaration, however.

everyone, everywhere because it protected everyone from a dastardly future.¹⁵ This was also expressed in articles by Chivers and journalist Mike Morris and in the evaluation forms completed by high school students and participants in the adult education programmes. Supporting such a view of the Holocaust were statements like that by Chivers, that the Holocaust was so powerful a symbol or moral touchstone simply visiting the CTHC became an act of resistance.

The Holocaust and the South African Parliament

On 26 May 2000, a few months after the Stockholm Declaration (SD), ANC MP Andrew Feinstein, the son of a Holocaust survivor, made an impassioned speech to the National Assembly of the South African Parliament, in defence of his motion that the SD be adopted, urging Parliament to “ensure that the Holocaust will always hold universal meaning which transcends race, religion or nationality.”¹⁶

Feinstein’s address and the responses to it marked the first time in South African history that the Holocaust was discussed in Parliament. What was of even greater significance for the Cape Town Holocaust Centre was the fact that its role was singled out in Parliament as “excellent,”¹⁷ “important and commendable,”¹⁸ and “remarkable.”¹⁹ The motion went on to call for a resolution “to support the work of those seeking to keep alive the memory of the victims and heroes of the

¹⁵ Mike Morris, “Pilgrimage Sows Seeds of Hope”, Cape Argus, 20 April 2000. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Evaluation forms have been collected by the Centre since its opening, and are kept in the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁶ Parliament of the Republic of South Africa National Assembly Order Paper No 39-2000 Second Session, Second Parliament, Friday 26 May 2000.

¹⁷ Andrew Feinstein, (Member of Parliament: ANC) Parliament of the Republic of South Africa National Assembly Order Paper No 39-2000 Second Session, Second Parliament, Friday 26 May 2000.

¹⁸ Ruth Rabinowitz (Member of Parliament: Inkhata Freedom Party), Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. Hansard NA 2605000. Date published: 26 May 2000; National Assembly; Document # 95501, 133, accessed 15 May 2014,

http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=119&fYear=2000&fMonth=5 .

¹⁹ Cassie Aucamp, (Member of Parliament: Afrikaner Eenheidsbeweging Party), Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. Hansard NA 2605000. Date published: 26 May 2000. National Assembly. Document # 95501: 152, accessed 15 May 2014,

http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=119&fYear=2000&fMonth=5 .

Holocaust....”²⁰ While Feinstein drew on the wording of the SD for his speech, it is instructive to examine the way in which Feinstein’s motion differed from the SD, as it revealed an understanding of the nature of the relation between the commemoration of the history of the Holocaust and South Africa’s history of apartheid, and what the CTHC’s role should be.

Feinstein’s motion portrayed the Holocaust as a history relevant to all South Africans. He did so in a number of ways. While using the SD’s description that the Holocaust was “unprecedented,” Feinstein omitted the SD’s reference to the Holocaust as having “challenged the foundations of civilization.”²¹ In so doing, Feinstein protected the motion from the accusation that it ignored or minimised the impact of European colonialism and the Slave Trade on Africa’s civilisations, or of positioning the Holocaust at the top of a hierarchy of suffering. Furthermore, whereas the SD gave as rationale for Holocaust commemoration and education, the “magnitude of the Holocaust,”²² Feinstein’s motion justified the resolution to “support the work of those seeking to keep alive the memory of the victims and heroes of the Holocaust”²³ through connecting the protection of the interests of the “young democracy”²⁴ of South Africa to the development of Holocaust education. The full text of the motion asked that parliament:

... resolves to support the work of those seeking to keep alive the memory of the victims and heroes of the Holocaust, believing that such education will -

(a) communicate an important message about the need to remember our own tragic past, in order to build a just and tolerant future;

²⁰ Parliament of the Republic of South Africa National Assembly Order Paper No 39-2000 Second Session, Second Parliament, Friday 26 May 2000.

²¹ "Stockholm Declaration on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research." January 2000.

²² "Stockholm Declaration on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research." January 2000.

²³ Parliament of the Republic of South Africa National Assembly Order Paper No 39-2000 Second Session, Second Parliament, Friday 26 May 2000. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

²⁴ Parliament of the Republic of South Africa National Assembly Order Paper No 39-2000 Second Session, Second Parliament, Friday 26 May 2000. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

- (b) strengthen the fight against continuing racism, ethnocentrism, prejudice, anti-semitism (sic), xenophobia and intolerance from whatever quarter in our young democracy; and
- (c) reaffirm our commitment to plant the seeds of a better future amidst the soil of a bitter past²⁵ in our country, our continent of Africa and the world.

Feinstein's integration of Holocaust education and South African history was clearest in the final point, clarifying that the "bitter soil" of the past included segregationist and apartheid South Africa as well as war-torn Europe. In so doing Feinstein echoed Tutu's words to the CTHC, that the Holocaust taught humanity.²⁶

Feinstein's strategically framed motion positioned the CTHC as the planter of the "seeds of a better future," and provided an understanding of the relationship between the commemoration of the Holocaust and that of apartheid. So too did the responses of the political parties to the motion.²⁷ Like Feinstein, the responses revealed how the individual's sense of identity, constructed in terms of their experience of South African history, was reinforced and shaped by what they saw when they turned their gaze to the spectre of the Holocaust. Simultaneously, what was understood to comprise the "Holocaust" was shaped by the individual's understanding of their own history as South Africans, their place in South Africa's history, and their understanding of apartheid.

The responses also illustrated the tension around questions of heritage and reconciliation. Whose past was "bitter"? Who was the "victim", and were all

²⁵ The Stockholm Declaration ends at this point.

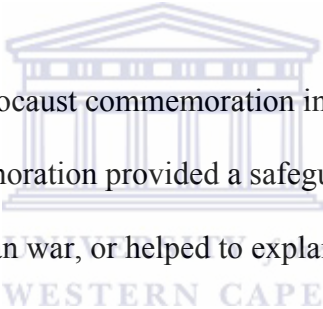
²⁶ Archbishop Desmond Tutu, message for opening of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, August 1999.

²⁷ The following responded: T. Leon (party leader) of the official opposition party, the Democratic Party (DP); R Rabinowitz (MP) Inkhata Freedom Party; B.L. Geldenhuys (MP) New National Party; S Abram (MP) ANC; Ms C Dudley (MP) African Christian Democratic Party: ACDP; C.P. Mulder (party leader) Freedom Front (FF); I.S. Mfundisi (MP) United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP); S.E.M. Phoko (party president) Pan Africanist Congress (PAC); S Rajbally (MP) Minority Front (MF); C Aucamp (party leader) Afrikaner Eenheidsbeweging (AEB); MA Mangena (party president) Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO).

“victims” equal?²⁸ Who was the “we” who had suffered, who was the “we” who should not forget, and who was the “they” whose suffering should not be forgotten?

Whose job was it to “plant the seeds”? What were these “seeds”?

What the MPs viewed as the “root cause” of the Holocaust, determined the remedy they considered. However, the respondents’ articulation of the choice of cause and remedy for the Holocaust revealed what respondents understood the roots of apartheid to be, and the implications for those who had benefitted from apartheid. Thus, for example, if the Holocaust was framed as being caused by a majority oppressing a minority, then a minority within the “new” South Africa could claim potential victim status, and obscure the role that the minority in power had played during apartheid.



All the MPs affirmed that Holocaust commemoration in South Africa was important. For many, Holocaust commemoration provided a safeguard against racism. For some, a reminder of the South African war, or helped to explain why genocide happened. For others, Holocaust commemoration reminded South Africans of the magnitude of the Holocaust, for others, Holocaust commemoration could serve to remind South Africans of the magnitude of apartheid. The PAC argued that it was important that all genocides be commemorated and not only the Holocaust. Sunklavathy Rajbally of the Minority Front posited that commemoration allowed Holocaust survivors a voice into perpetuity. For the PAC, commemoration was justified because it supported the call for justice for *all* victims of oppression.

Some MPs said Holocaust commemoration could encourage activism. What that activism entailed reflected the parties’ manifesto. Pieter Mulder, for example,

²⁸ See for example, the impassioned speech delivered by AZAPO leader, Mr M A Mangena, Parliament of the Republic of South African. Hansard NA 2605000. Date published: 26 May 2000. National Assembly; Document # 95501: 156-158, accessed 15 May 2014 http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=119&fYear=2000&fMonth=5 .

suggested that the past suffering of the Jewish minority was a reminder of what happened when a minority was scapegoated.²⁹ He connected the suffering of the Jewish minority under the Nazis to the suffering inflicted by the British on the Afrikaners in their “quest for freedom.”³⁰ For Mulder and his party, the Freedom Front, Holocaust commemoration was a vehicle for protecting the rights of minorities. Such a framing of Holocaust commemoration allowed minorities the status of vulnerability, obscuring the possibility that a minority could (as was the case during apartheid) perpetrate violence on a “majority”.³¹

African Christian Democratic Party MP Cheryllyn Dudley reinforced the identity of the CTHC as a space of reconciliation, but in this instance, reconciliation between Christians and Jews. Afrikaner Eenheidsbeweging MP Cassie Aucamp drew a different conclusion about the CTHC’s identity as a facilitator of reconciliation and expressed concern about the conclusions the CTHC was drawing from the history of the Holocaust.

Aucamp had visited the CTHC the day before Feinstein’s motion was tabled, and began his reply by saying how moved he had been by the experience. However, he voiced his concern about “one aspect of the exhibition” which he felt was repeated in the motion and the speeches made in response.³² For Aucamp, the CTHC failed to

²⁹ Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. Hansard NA 2605000. Date published: 26 May 2000. National Assembly. Document # 95501, 143, accessed 15 May 2014, http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=119&fYear=2000&fMonth=5 .

³⁰ Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. Hansard NA 2605000. Date published: 26 May 2000. National Assembly. Document # 95501, 144, accessed 15 May 2014, http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=119&fYear=2000&fMonth=5 .

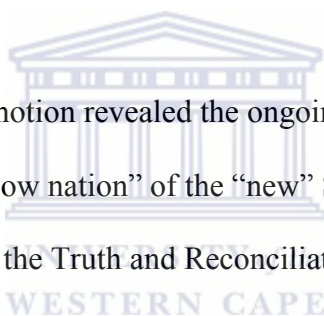
³¹ See Bill Nasson’s article, “Commemorating the Anglo-Boer War in Post-Apartheid South Africa,” *Radical History Review* 78 (2000): 149-165. Nasson discusses how responses to the commemoration of the Anglo-Boer war reveal a consciousness of the impact of heritage in recasting a past identity to lay claim to a new identity within the post-apartheid state.

³² Parliament of the Republic of South African. Hansard NA 2605000. Date published: 26 May 2000. National Assembly. Document # 95501, 152, accessed 15 May 2014, http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=119&fYear=2000&fMonth=5 .

show the differences between Afrikaner nationalism and apartheid, on the one hand, and Nazism and the Holocaust, on the other. In so doing, he suggested, there was the danger in creating the perception that Afrikaner nationalism was responsible for the Holocaust. Aucamp concluded that the CTHC did not facilitate reconciliation. He argued that,

[i]f we want to come to terms with our past ... then we cannot apply selective morality. And, surely, we have to abide by the demands of a true and honest view on our history. The point of departure of the Holocaust exhibition and the context of this motion and some speeches gives a distorted picture of the complex and specific nature of our own past. This is not the soil for the seed of true reconciliation.³³

The motion was passed, with the one objection being that of Aucamp's party, the AEB.³⁴



The responses to Feinstein's motion revealed the ongoing tension between the narrative of the "miracle rainbow nation" of the "new" South Africa as a nation successfully reconciling since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of the mid-1990s and leading the African Renaissance, and a narrative that described South Africa as a country still encumbered by its unjust and oppressive past and divided into "two nations."³⁵ What was even clearer from parliamentarians' responses was the perception of the CTHC as a space in which identities could be claimed, affirmed and

³³ Parliament of the Republic of South African. Hansard NA 2605000. Date published: 26 May 2000. National Assembly. Document # 95501, 155-156, accessed 15 May 2014, http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=119&fYear=2000&fMonth=5 .

³⁴ Parliament of the Republic of South African. Hansard NA 2605000. Date published: 26 May 2000. National Assembly. Document # 95501, 158, accessed 15 May 2014, http://www.parliament.gov.za/live/content.php?Category_ID=119&fYear=2000&fMonth=5 .

³⁵ See Gary Baines, "The Rainbow Nation? Identity and Nation Building in Post-apartheid South Africa," *Mots pluriels* 7 (1998), accessed 29 August 2015, <http://motspluriels.arts.uwa.edu.au/MP798gb.html> ; Adam Habib, "South Africa-The Rainbow Nation and Prospects for Consolidating Democracy," *African Journal of Political Science/Revue Africaine de Science Politique* (1997): 15-37; Jo Beall, Stephen Gelb and Shireen Hassim, "Fragile Stability: State and Society in Democratic South Africa" *Journal of Southern African Studies* 31, no. 4 (2005): 681-700; Kogila Moodley and Adam Heribert, "Race and Nation in Post-Apartheid South Africa," *Current Sociology* 48, no. 3 (July 2000): 51-69; Noëleen Murray, Nick Shepard and Martin Hall, eds., *Desire Lines: Space, Memory and Identity in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (New York and London: Routledge, 2007).

managed for the “new” South Africa. At the Parliamentary sitting where the motion was passed, Feinstein had distributed a letter to every MP inviting them to visit the CTHC. The CTHC was literally placed “within” the heart of the establishment.

The double sigh: seeing ‘apartheid’

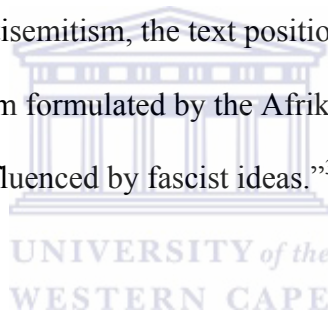
How did other adults respond to the CTHC? As discussed in the previous chapter, the founders of the CTHC had been at pains to “contextualise” the Holocaust for South African visitors by making reference to apartheid in the exhibition and its education programmes. How this “contextualising” was to be achieved was a contentious issue, but there was no dispute about how to represent apartheid. “Contextualising” was simply about “where to place” apartheid.

What was the undisputed view of apartheid held by the founders of the CTHC? I would argue that where “apartheid” was finally placed in the exhibition reveals what the CTHC understood “apartheid” and the “Holocaust” to mean. The final design of the exhibition placed the apartheid panels near the beginning of the exhibition, following panels illustrating antisemitism in the world, and specifically in South Africa. The series of panels representing apartheid began with a photograph of Verwoerd, and a text that identified him as the “architect of apartheid.” Following the “Verwoerd panel” was a collage of images that illustrated several apartheid laws being enacted or policed.³⁶ In the centre of the panels was a list of apartheid laws, labelled as “some of the building bricks of apartheid.” There was no mention of apartheid ideology or segregation. There were no images of resistance to apartheid. The only “contextualisation” of apartheid appeared in the following text:

³⁶ The laws that appeared on the panels were the Pass Laws, Group Areas Act, Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and the Separate Amenities Act.

Among those Afrikaners wishing to curtail the influx and rights of Jews in the 1930s and early 1940s were intellectuals who formulated the apartheid system as a way of safeguarding Afrikaner identity and racial purity. Many of them had studied in Germany where they were influenced by fascist ideas, including an exclusivist or ‘pure’ form of nationalism.³⁷

This contextualisation said little about the complexities of apartheid, or explained why the panel appeared “out of time” in the exhibition. The contextualisation did however suggest an aspect of the identity of South African Jewry. The paragraph pointed to a connection between the proponents of antisemitism and “Afrikaners.” This obscured the support shown for apartheid and the National Party government by other interest groups in South Africa. Furthermore, in suggesting continuity between Afrikaner nationalism and antisemitism, the text positioned Jewish South Africans as victims of the apartheid system formulated by the Afrikaners, “who had studied in Germany where they were influenced by fascist ideas.”³⁸



The exhibition continued its construction of apartheid beyond the panels dedicated to apartheid in the final section of the exhibition in the text accompanying a “gallery” of portraits taken in 1989 of Holocaust survivors who had come to settle in Cape Town. The captions under each photograph gave the person’s name and brief history of their experience of the Holocaust and concluded by stating when they came to Cape Town. The general text “framing” the gallery read as follows:

Their lives had been irrevocably changed by the loss of all that was precious in their past; but with courage and optimism, they forged a new life for themselves.

This text, along with the absence of any information about the reasons for the survivors coming to South Africa, or their experience of life in apartheid South

³⁷ Cape Town Holocaust Centre exhibition text, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

³⁸ Cape Town Holocaust Centre exhibition text, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Africa, encouraged a representation of apartheid as a place where, “with courage and optimism,” survivors of the horrors of genocide, were able build a “new” life. That the survivors were enabled to do so mostly because they were classified as “white” in a system that privileged “white” people was not included in the text.³⁹

What did visitors see when they saw “apartheid” in the exhibition? One of the concerns expressed by some of the founders of the CTHC was that visitors would conflate the history of apartheid with the history of the Holocaust, and that the Holocaust history, would be diminished. From anecdotal evidence, and the occasional comment in the visitors’ book, the inclusion of the references to apartheid in the exhibition definitely affected visitors. But there is evidence that instead of conflating the two histories, some South African visitors were able to hold the two histories as both separate and connected.



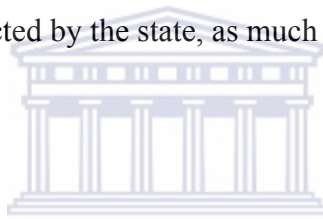
An example of this way of “seeing” the exhibition was articulated by senior history teacher Haido Mteta who had been seconded to the CTHC by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to work with schools where most students spoke isi-Xhosa as a home language.⁴⁰ In the first few weeks of his working at the CTHC, Mteta described his experience of visiting the exhibition and working with the CTHC’s education material as being made up of “double sighs”. He said that he sighed for the pain he saw being visited on victims by the Nazis and those who supported Nazi policy, and simultaneously, sighed for the painful memory these

³⁹ This is not to dismiss the considerable role played by the Jewish community to assist refugees and survivors who came to South Africa, and or to diminish the individual response of the survivor.

⁴⁰ After having worked at the CTHC for a year, Mteta was appointed principal of a school and left the CTHC.

images evoked of his own suffering and that of his community by the apartheid state.⁴¹

Mteta's was not the only "double sigh." Some South Africans appeared to respond particularly strongly to the examples of Nazi indoctrination, as a way to explain their responses to the apartheid government. For some, there was an over-identification with the Hitler Youth and the Nazi control of schooling. The "double sigh" held in it the potential of recognition of a common humanity and suffering, and recognition of the processes by which a racial state constructed their sense of identity and place in the apartheid hierarchy. For adult visitors who had grown up in a racial state, the idea that identity could be constructed by the state, as much as by individuals and groups, was radical.



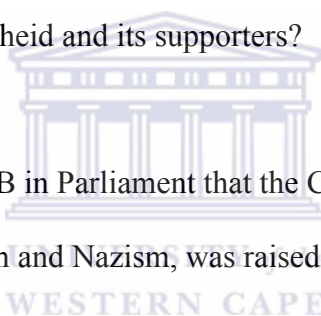
The exhibition's display of signage from apartheid South Africa and Nazi Germany appeared to give some South African adults a sense that their pain was as valid and as legitimate as the victims of the Holocaust. However, there were others who compared the two histories and concluded that their suffering under apartheid was not as bad as the genocide in Europe.⁴² There is an argument to be made that this response allowed the victim of apartheid to escape from perceiving themselves as a perpetual victim of a unique calamity, thus giving themselves agency. I would argue, however, that the response diminished the crime against humanity that was apartheid.

This diminishing of the impact of apartheid policy found support from those South Africans possibly troubled by their complicity in a morally bankrupt past. If the

⁴¹ Haido Mteta, personal communication with author. Mteta's response illustrated Rothberg's concept of multidirectional memory. See Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*.

⁴² These observations are based on my experience working at the CTHC.

Holocaust was “worse” than apartheid, then the Nazis and those who benefitted from or supported Nazism, were worse than the beneficiaries or supporters of apartheid. In her description of the responses of the members of the South African Police Services (SAPS) to the educational programme and the exhibition, Silbert recounted how participants had been “almost relieved” by the history of the Holocaust because it was so terrible.⁴³ Silbert argued that this moment of relief allowed members to speak about their experiences because “nothing compared to the actions of the Nazis.” Silbert’s account of the responses of the participants raised a further conundrum faced by the CTHC. Would the CTHC not compromise its goal as reconciler if it reminded participants that the history of the Holocaust did NOT discount or diminish the havoc wreaked upon people by apartheid and its supporters?



The concern raised by the AEB in Parliament that the CTHC had drawn a connection between Afrikaner nationalism and Nazism, was raised again in 2005 by Leopold Scholtz, Deputy Editor of the daily Afrikaans newspaper, *Die Burger*. Scholtz had taken issue less with the exhibition, than with a four-day teacher seminar, “Understanding Race, Eugenics and Human Rights,” led by a guest of the CTHC, Stephen Feinberg.⁴⁴ Feinberg was the USHMM’s Education Division’s Director of the National Outreach. Scholtz had not attended the seminar, but newspaper articles on the seminar concerned him enough to write an opinion piece. Scholtz objected to the attitude ascribed by the newspapers to Feinberg and Osrin that “apartheid en die Nazisme eintlik maar een en dieselfde ding is.” (“apartheid and Nazism are actually one and the same thing”).⁴⁵ On the same day that Scholtz’s article appeared, the *Cape*

⁴³ Marlene Silbert, personal communication with author, 20 September 2012, Cape Town.

⁴⁴ Curriculum advisors, subject specialists from seven of the nine provincial departments of education attended, as well as lead teachers from the Western Cape.

⁴⁵ Leopold Scholtz “Vergeet Nazisme om Apartheid te Verklaar,” *Die Burger*, 5 August 2005, 14. Scholtz appears to have been referring to an article in the *Cape Times* by Dominique Herman “Cape Conference Shows Links of Nazism with Apartheid,” *Cape Times*, 3 August 2005.

Times published a letter from South African historian, Hermann Giliomee who criticized Feinberg's conclusions, but not the CTHC.⁴⁶ Osrin's response followed a week later in the form of a letter to *Die Burger*. Osrin said that Scholtz was correct to question the connection made between Nazism and the apartheid laws, explaining that the *Cape Times* article had failed to capture the complexity of the seminar, had misquoted her, and misrepresented her opinion and that of the CTHC. Osrin's letter appeared to do enough to appease Scholtz and Giliomee, as no further correspondence appeared.⁴⁷

In the CTHC's visitors' books, comments relating directly to the Holocaust far outweighed those related to apartheid. Most of the comments relating to the Holocaust referred to the brutality of the history, or as an example of prejudice and antisemitism. A few comments made reference to the creation of the state of Israel. Others pledged support for the "Jewish people." A large number of the comments expressed in some form or another, the call for "never again." Some of the comments referred to the design of the exhibition. The number of written comments that could be described as critical was negligible. Comments that were critical of the exhibition or the CTHC referred to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and took the form either of asking why the CTHC didn't address the issue, or else why an experience of suffering had not translated into more humane behaviour.

The responses of visitors and the speeches of the MPs revealed how the "lessons" that the CTHC wished to teach through the history of the Holocaust, could be all things to all people. The CTHC assumed that the "lessons for Humanity" that Holocaust history

⁴⁶ Herman Giliomee "US was Model," *Cape Times*, 5 August 2005.

⁴⁷ Myra Osrin, "Nie Apartheidsvoorloper," *Die Burger*, 11 August 2005.

taught were obvious and finite.⁴⁸ However, occasionally the responses of the public to the CTHC challenged this assumption. The assumptions made within the CTHC about the conclusions that would be drawn from visiting the exhibition and attending its education programme were only systematically reviewed after 1997.

Volunteering at the CTHC

The engagement of a corps of volunteers, enabled the CTHC to manage large groups of high school students.⁴⁹ Despite initial recommendations from the Planning Committee that the volunteers be drawn from as wide a field as possible, the vast majority came from the Jewish community. Because the volunteers did not receive any remuneration, not even the cost of their travel to the CTHC, they tended to come from a similar class and age profile, namely middle class retirees.⁵⁰ Apart from the shared experience of being “white” and the benefits that classification bestowed, all those volunteers who were Jewish were members of either the Women’s International Zionist Organisation (WIZO) or the Western Cape Zionist Federation. This suggested a particular understanding of their Jewish identity. Some were prominent members of the SAJBD, while others were third or fourth generation South Africans with no direct connection to the Holocaust.

The volunteers saw their service at the CTHC as an act of commemoration. Their work was a way of expressing their identity as Jews, and as a contribution to the broader South African Jewish community. Many volunteers perceived their roles as walking illustrations of what it meant to be “Jewish.” The Holocaust was integral to

⁴⁸ The name given to the educational material developed by the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.

⁴⁹ The volunteers assisted with adult programmes as well, but the majority of education programmes were school programmes, and the largest groups were school groups (60 students was the average size of a school group. Adult groups were generally smaller).

⁵⁰ A handful of the volunteers had come to South Africa from either the then Belgian Congo, or the then Rhodesia, as adults – but all had lived in South Africa for at least 15 years before 1999 when the Centre opened.

this identity.⁵¹ Many of the volunteers saw their volunteering as outreach, a counter to antisemitism that they felt would arise as much out of ignorance about the Holocaust, as about Judaism. Some volunteers explained their motive for volunteering as a way to prevent racism and discrimination generally.⁵² Apart from one volunteer guide who had fled Berlin in 1938 (at the age of seven) with her family to Uruguay, the volunteers were secondary witnesses to the Holocaust and primary witnesses to apartheid. Whilst not called upon to provide a primary narrative for the apartheid section, a number of volunteers chose to use their experiences of apartheid as the narrative to accompany the apartheid panels.

The perception of the CTHC as a space of reconciliation and redemption was illustrated by the story of one of the volunteers. Gordon Brookbanks had been a member of the Security Police of the apartheid government. In the late 1980s the apartheid government had sent Brookbanks to London to head its European spy network. He had been posted back to the Western Cape after the ANC was unbanned. In 1995 he became the provincial commander of intelligence coordination and was a member of the provincial intelligence coordinating committee. In 2002 he commanded a division of the National Intelligence Agency.⁵³ Brookbanks had resigned from his position when he approached Silbert in order to volunteer. Silbert recalled that Brookbanks had expressed his deep shame at his past actions and thoughts, and that this motivated his desire to volunteer at the Centre. He told Silbert

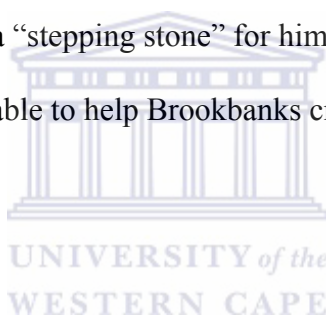
⁵¹ See for example, the reflections of volunteers in Lloyd Pollak, *A Place of Memory, A Place of Learning* (Cape Town: Hands-on-Media, 2008).

⁵² Volunteers expressed great anxiety when questions concerning the Palestinian-Israeli crises arose. The volunteers perceived criticism of Israel as evidence of antisemitism. These observations are based on a series of conversations with volunteers over the period of nine years, from 2005-2014, and writing collected by author from monthly development workshops with volunteers. CTHC Collection.

⁵³ See Terry Bell and Dumisa Buhle Ntsebeza, 225-226, for more detail about Brookbanks's career during apartheid and in the decade following the end of apartheid. Terry Bell and Dumisa Buhle Ntsebeza, *Unfinished Business: South Africa, Apartheid and Truth* (New York and London: Verso, 2003) 226. See also, Raymond Suttner, *Inside Apartheid's Prison: Notes and Letters of Struggle*, (Scottsville, University of Natal Press, 2001) 130.

that, “the Centre was doing such incredible work and teaching about the Holocaust, using it as a tool to teach and make connections with apartheid.” Silbert remembered Brookbanks saying that, “[a]t least it is something I can do.”⁵⁴

When I asked Silbert how she had judged Brookbanks’ sincerity in his request to find redemption through volunteering, she referred to the way he had spoken to her, and “how he spoke about wanting to teach about the evils of apartheid.” The fact that Brookbanks had “been reading up about the Holocaust before” and that he shadowed Silbert a number of times as she took the groups through the exhibition, also persuaded Silbert that Brookbanks was sincere. Silbert remembered Brookbanks saying that volunteering was a “stepping stone” for him. Silbert concluded that the volunteering experience was able to help Brookbanks cross the river towards reconciliation.⁵⁵



Brookbanks assisted Silbert with some of the SAPS programmes. Despite the programme’s aim of “sensitising” the participants through a reflection on the Holocaust of the “importance of mutual respect and understanding and the individual’s role and responsibility in society,” Brookbanks did not reveal his position during apartheid to the participants.⁵⁶ Instead, Brookbanks was presented as a blank slate, a decontextualized assistant. The pedagogy of the workshops and the education programme exemplified the programme’s inability to incorporate Brookbanks’s

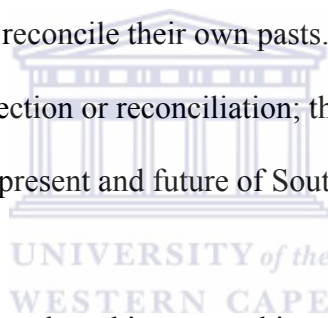
⁵⁴ All quotations are taken from the author’s interview with Marlene Silbert on the 15 June 2015, New York.

⁵⁵ All quotations are taken from the author’s interview with Marlene Silbert on the 15 June 2015, New York. Brookbanks had indicated that he would be happy to be interviewed, but subsequently made no contact. I have thus been unable to interview him. Brookbanks is now a senior history teacher at a prestigious school. For the last decade he has taken his history students to visit the death camps in Poland as part of their Holocaust education module.

⁵⁶ The quotations are from the “Fact paper: Diversity and Sensitivity Training Seminars for SAPS West Metropole, 2002,” included with the Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 15 May 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

experience into the reflection on the Holocaust, despite his incorporation being possible because of emerging out of his past.

The fact that there was no discussion between Silbert and Brookbanks about how to include and reflect on his apartheid past was a reflection on the challenges facing a one-person education team. There was no analysis that might have allowed an examination of what to “do” with the differing degrees of culpability of the facilitators and guides in their experiences of apartheid and no one with whom Silbert could consult. Instead, the silence from the facilitators about their identities during apartheid, and the focus only on participants’ reflection on their identities, enabled the facilitators to avoid having to reconcile their own pasts. They were able to imagine that their pasts needed no reflection or reconciliation; their focus was strictly on the past of the Holocaust and the present and future of South Africa.



The inadequacies of knowledge about history teaching methodology made the volunteer guides tend to hold a view of the Education Director as the “expert” and holder of all knowledge, who “instilled” the knowledge into the “empty vessels,” the volunteer guides. The role of the guides was clearly defined: they were to assist by helping with the logistics of managing a large group and by guiding the learners through the exhibition and mediating the CTHC’s messages of remembrance and reconciliation. The guides were not involved in the process of selecting which parts of the exhibition schools would visit, nor the methodology for engaging with students.⁵⁷

This lack of discussion meant that guides did not develop an understanding of the process of history-making. Instead they developed an understanding of the exhibition

⁵⁷ The first training programmes for the volunteers took place in early 1999. The volunteer training entailed attending a series of lectures on the Holocaust, given by Silbert, Shain, Wolfswinkel, and observing Silbert as she took students through the exhibition. Silbert then observed the volunteers, after which she decided whether they were suitable or not.

as the space that had everything there was to tell about the Holocaust and that time was the enemy that prevented them teaching students “everything” about the Holocaust. Ill-equipped to understand that the exhibition was not the proxy for “everything” that had happened during the Holocaust, the volunteers developed a deficit understanding of their role.

Compounding the situation was the fact that until the Holocaust was made a mandatory part of the curriculum in 2007, many students who visited the CTHC before then had not been taught about the Holocaust. Thus the tension developed among the guides, to “tell the students as much as they could” as it was the first, and possibly, the last time that the students were going to learn about the Holocaust. The volunteers developed a perception of the exhibition and their role in it, as being the only counter to the void of ignorance from which the students allegedly came and to which they would return. Consequently, the guides tried to squeeze as much as they could into the 90 minutes they were allocated inside the exhibition. The methodology the guides had been taught meant that they spoke almost all of the time, and that the questions they asked were either closed or rhetorical. Students were allowed to sit at only one point in the exhibition. Not surprisingly, a repeated complaint from students was that they found the exhibition visit exhausting.⁵⁸

The Centre had tried to “personalise the victims of the Holocaust” by including survivors in some of their programmes and through a gallery of photographs at the end of the exhibition. However, both attempts froze the identity of the survivors as

⁵⁸ It must also be noted that the design of the exhibition made it difficult to have school groups seated, as the passages inside the exhibition were not very wide, and there were not chairs or benches on which to rest apart from the chairs placed in the screening alcove right at the end of the exhibition. By 2005, the visit to the exhibition was shortened by 20 minutes for Grade 9s, but remained 90 minutes for the Grade 11s.

products of the Holocaust, untouched by their experiences of living in South Africa during apartheid.⁵⁹ A few of the Holocaust survivors joined the volunteer corps but did not guide the students through the exhibition. Instead, they were incorporated into the programme in a dedicated slot for “survivor testimony”. Silbert explained that she did not meet with the survivors as a group. Instead she met with each survivor before the programme to outline what she wanted him or her to say about his or her experience, and assisted him or her with time keeping.⁶⁰

The way in which the survivors were presented to the students, suggests that the survivors served as an extension of the exhibition. Just as the students were kept at a distance from the exhibition by not being encouraged to engage independently with the exhibit, similarly the survivors were placed in the front of, and apart from the students. Furthermore, because students had not been given an opportunity to prepare for meeting the survivor, they responded to the survivor’s testimony most often with silence, borne out of a sense of shock and being overwhelmed by the narrative, and not wishing to hurt the survivor.⁶¹ Silbert explained that not all survivors were able to tell their stories “appropriately” and so she selected three survivors for the task, whose “stories were interesting enough” or told well enough. After having had more than one experience that they found distressing, the survivors requested to speak only

⁵⁹ The photographs provided no explanation of why the survivors had chosen to come to South Africa, or any indication of their experience of living in the apartheid state. The survivors who spoke to groups, were asked to talk only about their experiences of the Holocaust, and not to reflect on what it meant to become a South Africa citizen under the apartheid government, or subsequently, to live in a democratic South Africa. The participants, who were listening to the survivors, were not helped in finding ways to engage with the survivor. Instead, the survivor was presented as a “sacred icon” of the past, and for all intents and purposes, could have been sitting inside a glass box, untouchable and untouched by the present reality.

⁶⁰ Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015. New York.

⁶¹ These were the responses the students gave me when I asked them later why they had not asked questions.

to “special” schools and adults groups. They asked that Silbert identify “suitable” schools and groups.⁶²

The survivors, Ella Blumenthal and Miriam Lichterman, gave two reasons to Silbert why they found the encounters with the students distressing.⁶³ The first reason was widely documented in the literature that examined the impact of survivors re-telling of their stories.⁶⁴ Holocaust survivor Charlotte Delbo’s writing is instructive in this regard:

Auschwitz is so deeply etched in my memory that I cannot forget one moment of it. – So you are living with Auschwitz? – No I live next to it. Auschwitz is there, unalterable, precise, but enveloped in the skin of memory, an impermeable skin that isolates it from my present self. Unlike the snake’s skin, the skin of memory does not renew itself. Oh, it may harden further... Alas, I often fear lest it grow thin, crack, and the camp get hold of me again. Thinking about it makes me tremble with apprehension.

In this underlying memory sensations remain intact.⁶⁵ Both Lichterman and Blumenthal spoke of how they struggled to sleep the night before they were to talk to groups, and how very difficult they found the days after having spoken to the groups. Nonetheless, they both concluded that the historical imperative to tell their story was more important than their discomfort.⁶⁶

⁶² Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015. New York.

⁶³ Personal communication with Silbert, c 2007. Pinchus Gutter, the third survivor chosen by Silbert, subsequently emigrated to Canada and no longer visited South Africa.

⁶⁴ See for example, Felman and Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing*; Laura E Finkelstein and Becca R. Levy, "Disclosure of Holocaust Experiences: Reasons, Attributions, and Health Implications," *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 25, no. 1 (2006): 117-140, and Rachel N. Baum, “Never to Forget: Pedagogical Memory and Second-Generation Witness” in *Between Hope & Despair: Pedagogy and the Remembrance of Historical Trauma*, eds. Roger I. Simon, Sharon Rosenberg and Claudia Eppert (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 91-115.

⁶⁵ Charlotte Delbo, *Days and Memory* (Evanston: Northwestern University, 2001), 2, 3.

⁶⁶ Over the course of five years, both Blumenthal and Lichterman shared with me how difficult they found speaking to groups.

The CTHC as Holocaust and genocide educator

The growing numbers of schools requesting participation in the CTHC's programmes reinforced its role as emerging education resource. The perception of the CTHC as a venue for public education was entrenched through a series of public lectures given by visiting Holocaust scholars, an annual Anniversary Lecture and the hosting of exhibitions such as the Theresienstadt Children's Art exhibition.⁶⁷

In February 2001, the CTHC organised a conference together with the newly formed Institute of Justice and Reconciliation (IJR).⁶⁸ The conference, "Genocide and the Rwandan Experience: A South African-Rwandan dialogue," aimed to "give priority to survivors' voices and views" of challenges faced in the aftermath of genocide, such as "establishing justice and seeking out reconciliation."⁶⁹ The 120 delegates came from within and beyond South Africa and included academics, educators, religious leaders, representatives from human rights organisations and conflict resolution specialists. A large delegation from Rwanda that included the Minister of Justice and Institutional Relations, Jean de Dieu Mucyo, and the Prosecutor General, Gerald Gahima also attended. An exhibition created by Stephen and James Smith, called "100 Nights: Genocide in Rwanda" was opened at the conference.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ The Theresienstadt Children's Art was given to the Centre on permanent loan by the Czech Embassy and comprised high resolution copies of the originals drawn by the children imprisoned in Theresienstadt ghetto. The historians who visited the CTHC in the period 2000 – 2005 included Hubert Locke, Michael Berenbaum, Michael Marrus, Christopher Browning, Steven T Katz, Ze'ev Mankowitz, and Stephen Feinberg.

⁶⁸ Myra Osrin, interview with author, 19 April 2015, Cape Town. Stephen Smith, letter to Osrin, 10 July 2000. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁹ Cape Town Holocaust Centre Newsletter, July/August 2001. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. The annual newsletters, begun in 2001, played an important role in documenting the work of the Centre, and the events held at the Centre. The newsletter also served to remind the public of its position within the new South Africa and its place in the international field as a Human Rights organisation, as much as a space of Holocaust commemoration and education. Thus, for example, the travelling exhibition developed by the Centre for the NGO forum at the WCAR, is described as depicting "the Centre's significant role in human rights education," CTHC Newsletter, (January/February 2002), 7.

⁷⁰ As shown in Chapter Two, Stephen Smith had been very involved in the development of the CTHC.

Over 200 people attended the opening public event. Following the positive response, the chairperson of the CTHC Board of Trustees concluded that the conference was important because it had established the “status of the Holocaust centre in civil society.”⁷¹ The conference was significant because it illustrated the ability of the Centre to form strategic alliances with other human rights organisations, to provide a venue for discussion of issues outside its direct realm of expertise. Secondly, the Centre’s legitimacy and relevance to the “new South Africa” was underlined by its association with the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation (IJR). The CTHC’s relationship with the IJR reinforced its identity as a vehicle for reconciliation. Furthermore, the conference enabled the CTHC to claim a space beyond the Cape Town Jewish community, beyond South Africa and beyond the history of the Holocaust.⁷²



While the original concept for the CTHC exhibition had been that it would include panels on genocides that preceded and followed the Holocaust, the final design did not do so. The educational resource material that was developed made scant reference to other genocides.⁷³ The opening session at the “Genocide and the Rwandan Experience: A South African-Rwandan dialogue” conference was “Genocide: its Unique and Common Identity.” This title captured the debate about where to place the history of the Holocaust in relation to other genocides, and a development in the “Holocaust as unique” argument.

⁷¹ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 13 February 2001, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁷² In 2004, in association with the Rwandan Embassy, the CTHC partnered again with the IJR in hosting a public meeting, followed by a closed Symposium, “Remember Rwanda”, to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda. The chair of the Symposium was the Director of the IJR, Dr Charles Villa-Vicencio. Keynote speakers included Ambassador Patrick Mazimhaka, vice-chair of the African Union Commission.

⁷³ The only reference to the genocide in Rwanda and Bosnia in the *Learner’s Interactive Workbook* are two small photographs showing scenes from the genocide in Rwanda, and one photograph showing prisoners in a camp in Bosnia.

By 2001, historians such as Bauer had begun to refer to the “unprecedented nature of the Holocaust.”⁷⁴ While acknowledging other genocides, and the fact that the Holocaust was an example of genocide, this framing still suggested that the Holocaust was a “special” genocide. The educational materials developed by the CTHC reflected this approach. The *Learner’s Interactive Resource Book* referred to the Holocaust as a “matchless example of genocide.”⁷⁵ Despite the CTHC's support of efforts to commemorate the genocide in Rwanda, the education programmes did not locate Holocaust history within the broader history of genocide until after 2005. I discuss this development in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

Building Holocaust education: challenges and opportunities

The partnership established with the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) flourished in 2000. On 30 March, the WCED appointed the CTHC an official partner at a meeting attended by 114 subject advisors. The teacher support material that was developed was itself a product of the collaboration between CTHC and the Western Cape Education Department personnel, and work done with teachers. A part of its commitment to assist Gail Weldon in the development of a knowledge base on the history of the Holocaust, and to nurture its relationship with the WCED, the Cape Town Holocaust Centre facilitated Weldon’s attendance at the Yad Vashem Winter Institute at the end of 2000.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

⁷⁵ Marlene Silbert and Dylan Wray, *Learner’s Interactive Resource Book* (Cape Town: Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 2006) 7.

⁷⁶ Minutes of meeting of CTHC Board of Trustees, 31 October 2000, Cape Town. CTHC collection, Cape Town. Weldon had continued in her capacity as Chair of the Centre’s education sub-committee after 1999. However, by 2005 all subcommittees had disappeared. The demise of the subcommittees came about as a result either of chairs no longer being available to co-ordinate the subcommittee e.g. Rev. Chivers of the Interfaith subcommittee moved to England; or else because there appeared no longer a need for the subcommittee – for example, introduction of mandatory Holocaust education in the new curriculum in 2005 made the education subcommittee redundant. Whilst the sub-committees no longer existed, in most instances the relationships developed through the sub-committees, continued to exist and assisted the CTHC over the next decade.

The end of 2000 was not an easy time to be visiting Jerusalem. The Second Intifada which had begun in September had showed little sign of abating. Weldon's report to the Board after her visit to Yad Vashem was the first mention in the CTHC archive of the unfolding Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Weldon wrote that the "intifada was a constant dark thread weaving its way through the four weeks of the seminar."⁷⁷ Although the Second Intifada continued to rage into 2001 and beyond, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict appeared to have had little impact on the CTHC's education programmes if one were to go by the attendance of the Teacher Seminar held at the CTHC on 7-8 February 2001.

Approximately 150 teachers from 60 schools participated in the workshop. The aim of the workshop was "to develop material for anti-racist-multicultural education".⁷⁸ The aim and the content of the seminar presented the CTHC as not only an educational resource for the teaching of the Holocaust, but also as a space where one could learn about the genocide in Rwanda and the history of apartheid.⁷⁹ The seminar brought to the CTHC a wide range of facilitators, such as Wilhelm Verwoerd, the grandson of apartheid ideologue Hendrik Verwoerd who presented a session on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Nuremberg Trials. A panel discussion, "exploring the issues of Human Rights and Anti-racist-multiculturalism" was led by Gail Weldon and included participation by Trevor van Louw (WCED); Crain Soudien (UCT), Vernon Titus (a History teacher from Grassy Park Secondary School), June

⁷⁷ Weldon, Report to the CTHC Board of Trustees on the Winter Seminar at Yad Vashem, tabled 24 April 2001. The Second Intifada (also known as the Al Aqsa Intifada) began in September 2000. The ending date is contested: whilst the conflict was formally ended at the Sharm el-Sheikh Summit in February 2005, some argue that the intifada lost momentum with Yasser Arafat's death in November 2004, whilst some see Israel's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip by August 2005 as marking the end of the intifada.

⁷⁸ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 13 February 2001, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁷⁹ The first session of the Conference was entitled, "Voices of victims and survivors: The Holocaust, the Rwandan Genocide and Apartheid."

Williams (British Columbia Teacher's Federation) and Vincent Wiese (Street Law Project). The Seminar concluded with teachers in focus groups developing material resources for schools.⁸⁰

However, the potential impact that the on-going Palestinian-Israeli crises had on the CTHC could not be forgotten. At the CTHC Board of Trustees' meeting on 13 February 2001, Rabbi Harris warned Silbert and Osrin that there could be "some difficult issues" at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance that was to be held later in the year in Durban.⁸¹ Osrin and Silbert had prepared a special traveling exhibition highlighting the work of the Centre to take to the UN NGO Forum preceding the World Conference. The Conference and in particular, the NGO Forum, proved to be highly contentious. Two issues that caused great consternation were the debates around slavery and reparations, and the issue of the crisis in the Middle East. For the CTHC delegation, the latter was of greatest concern. "It was terrible," Silbert recalled.⁸² Although the events at the Durban Conference were overshadowed in the press by the 9/11 attacks in the US that took place three days after the conference ended, for the CTHC the distress of the "difficult issues" Rabbi Harris had spoken of, were much harder to forget.⁸³ However, shortly after the Durban Conference, Silbert received notice of a development that would have ameliorated the distress from the conference.

⁸⁰ The focus groups were: Culture and Identity; Constitution and Citizenship; Institutional personal and national memory, prejudice and stereotyping, communication and propaganda, practical strategies. The leaders of each focus group included teachers, museum practitioners and Western Cape Education Department personnel.

⁸¹ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 13 February 2001, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. The Conference was held from the 31 August–1 September 2001.

⁸² Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015, New York.

⁸³ Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015, New York.

The National Education Department, in the process of developing a new national curriculum, had decided that Holocaust studies would be included in the Grade 9 Social Studies History Curriculum.⁸⁴ This would mean, in effect, that every South African high school student attending government schools would learn about the Holocaust. For the first time, the Holocaust would be mandatory study in South Africa. The Curriculum would roll out for Grade 9s in 2007. This decision had a significant impact on the education programmes of the Centre.

Although this decision was a very positive development for the CTHC, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict also left its mark on the education programmes. In the Education Report tabled at the CTHC Board of Trustees meeting on 8 October 2001, Silbert noted that “occasionally there was some hostility in pupils’ questions – increasing references were made to the Palestinian conflict, mainly from Muslims,” and that “the Muslim schools which had visited the Centre in 2000, had not done so in 2001.”⁸⁵ The Board encouraged Silbert to meet with the schools informally, but from the minutes this appeared not to have happened, or if the meetings took place, they had little effect. At the end of 2001, Silbert reported that there appeared to be a “stay-away” policy from “Muslim religious” schools.⁸⁶

However, this worrisome situation was tempered by an invitation from the CEO of the South African History Project (SAHP) June Bam to Silbert to accompany a national group of senior history teachers to a training seminar at Facing History and Ourselves in Boston in May/June 2002. Furthermore, Bam had requested that Silbert

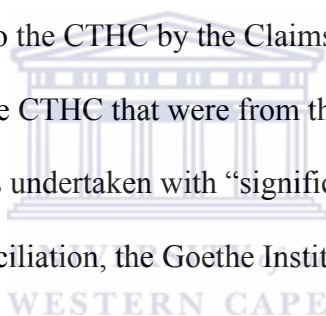
⁸⁴ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 8 October and 5 December 2001, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Marlene Silbert, email correspondence with Jan Darsa, 20 September 2001. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸⁵ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 8 October 2001, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸⁶ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 5 December 2001, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

conduct teacher training workshops for teachers across South Africa. These workshops were to be preceded by a national conference of senior history teachers.⁸⁷

Osrin saw this invitation as one of the reasons she believed that the aims and objectives of the CTHC had been “realised beyond expectations.”⁸⁸ The approach from the SAHP a few months after it was established, requesting a partnership with the CTHC to assist with a national programme of teacher education was evidence of the CTHC’s growing profile as a significant national educational resource. Osrin added that the CTHC’s work was also being recognised by international institutions. This was evident in the USHMM’s selection of Silbert as a 2002 Mandel Fellow, as well as in the grant awarded to the CTHC by the Claims Conference.⁸⁹ Osrin pointed to the number of visitors to the CTHC that were from the “non-Jewish public” and the partnerships and joint projects undertaken with “significant institutions such as the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation, the Goethe Institute and the Czech and Polish Embassies”.⁹⁰



⁸⁷ Marlene Silbert, email correspondence with June Bam, 12 December 2001. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. In 2000, the Working Group on Values Education and Democracy led by Professor Wilmot James, presented their report to Education Minister Kader Asmal. Following the Report’s recommendation, the SAHP was established in August 2001, and was dedicated to “addressing the challenges of revitalising the teaching and learning of history.” Shamil Jeppie, *Toward New Histories for South Africa: on the Place of the Past in our Present* (Lansdowne: Juta Gariep Publishers, 2004), xii. Jeppie provides a detailed account of the SAHP in his book, *Toward New Histories*.

⁸⁸ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 5 December, 2011, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸⁹ The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany is commonly known as “the Claims Conference”. The Claims Conference “negotiates for compensation payments and aid to victims of Nazi persecution and for the return of and restitution for Jewish-owned property; administers individual compensation programs for Nazi victims; fund social services that assist elderly, needy Nazi victims, and allocate limited funds to support Holocaust education, documentation and research.” Excerpt from <http://www.claimscon.org/what-we-do/> (accessed 20 December 2013).

⁹⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 5 December 2001, Cape Town, CTHC Collection.

Police, prisons and gangs

The Centre's profile as a space of progressive education centre was given a further boost by its work with members of the South African Police Services (SAPS).

Beginning in January 2002, Silbert conducted a series of workshops called "Human Rights and Diversity" with SAPS members of West Metropole. The programme aimed to "sensitise participants" through the "prism" of the Holocaust to the "universal issues" of:

prejudice, racism, intolerance, discrimination, xenophobia, violence, abuse of power, consequences of human rights violations, the results of remaining silent; (sic) apathetic and indifferent; the human capacity for both good and evil; the importance of mutual respect and understanding and the individual's role and responsibility in society.⁹¹

While the initial workshop had been optional, the West Metropole, based on the feedback, decided to make subsequent programmes compulsory.⁹²

As a result of the SAPS programme, the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR), an independent research unit then associated with UCT, approached the CTHC to conduct a combined programme for senior management of the Pollsmoor Prison Complex.⁹³ So successful was the July 2002 pilot programme that a workshop was run once a month for the remainder of the year for the rest of the staff of the prison, as well as for staff from other prisons from around the Western Cape.⁹⁴

The Commissioner of the Manenberg Police Station, Senior Superintendent Harri Kishor also contacted Silbert to conduct a workshop for gang leadership on 18

⁹¹ "Fact paper: Diversity and Sensitivity Training Seminars for SAPS West Metropole, 2002." CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 15 May 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹² Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 14 February 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹³ Education report to the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 14 February 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Cape Town Holocaust Centre newsletter, February/March 2003, CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Chris Giffard, email correspondence with author, 15 July 2015. Giffard was the former Senior Researcher at CCR and the CCR's Prisons Transformation Unit.

⁹⁴ Chris Giffard, email correspondence with author, 15 July 2015.

February 2002. In an interview with the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper, Kishor explained that the visit to the Cape Town Holocaust Centre was the result of “wide-ranging negotiations with the gangs, local community leaders and others.” The same article explains that there was “no policing strategy to deal with gang-related crime and that the gang unit was “strapped for resources”⁹⁵

It was estimated that there were more than 137 gangs and over 100 000 members on the Cape Peninsula in 2002, and that between 40 and 60 per cent of all violent crime on the Peninsula was gang-related. By May of 2002, the rate of gang-related violence had escalated to such an extent that the Army was called in to attempt to quell the violence.⁹⁶ Kishor stated that it was in this context that he realized he had to take responsibility as Station Commander.

The workshop was held on the 18th February 2002. Kishor’s letter of thanks to Silbert on the 11 March, is a glowing endorsement of the day-long programme, stating that as a result of the workshop, three meetings with gang representatives had been held, and that since the workshop, “nobody has died or had been injured in inter gang violence.” Kishor concludes, that although the “process we have started with your support is by no means a solution to the gang problem in Manenberg ... what we have taken form this experience is that we as human beings should treat each other as human beings. That begin the “label” of every person, is a human being with a soul and a mind. When we afford each other respect and dignity, we can find strength in our diversity.”⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Marianne Merten, “A Brotherhood Sealed in Blood,” *Mail and Guardian* 5 August 2002, accessed 1 July 2015. <http://mg.co.za/article/2002-08-05-a-brotherhood-sealed-in-blood> .

⁹⁶ See Christina Steenkamp, *Violence and Post-war Reconstruction: Managing Insecurity in the Aftermath of Peace Accords* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2009), 61, for an analysis of the gang violence prevalent during 2000 and 2001.

⁹⁷ Harri Kishor, letter to Marlene Silbert, 11 March 2002. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Four months following the gang workshop, a day-long seminar was held at the CTHC for a group of Hanover Park gangsters. Hanover Park Police Captain Gavin Sheldon, community members and conflict mediators, accompanied the group. Sheldon explained that the CTHC provided a space in which the gang members “didn’t speak like gangsters but from their heart.”⁹⁸ Both Sheldon and Kishor perceived the workshop at the CTHC as a significant factor in bringing an end to gang violence.⁹⁹

Although the Second Intifada had appeared to impact only slightly on the CTHC’s programmes in 2001, its presence was felt in the subsequent developments of the CTHC’s work with SAPS in 2002. On 26 February 2002, Area Commissioner Strydom of West Metropole had sent a letter thanking the CTHC for the “Human Rights and Diversity” programme held at the CTHC on the 30 January 2002. Strydom described the programme as “one which was long overdue,” and a “necessity for all members of SAPS to attend.” He stated that he was “privileged to visit” the CTHC, and expressed his hope that the CTHC’s “involvement with the SAPS in Area West Metropole be fruitful and blessed.” Finally he explained that, “the feedback from members thus far is positive” and concluded that, “there is a great need and desire amongst members of SAPS for such a course.”¹⁰⁰

However, just less than two months later, on 24 April, Silbert received a letter from Area Commissioner Strydom informing her that the CTHC’s “Human Rights and Diversity” programme developed for the SAPS members had been terminated, following a letter of complaint that had been sent to a senior Police Commissioner

⁹⁸ Marianne Merten, “A Brotherhood Sealed in Blood,” *Mail and Guardian* 5 August 2002, accessed 1 July 2015. <http://mg.co.za/article/2002-08-05-a-brotherhood-sealed-in-blood>.

⁹⁹ Marianne Merten, “A Brotherhood Sealed in Blood,” *Mail and Guardian* 5 August 2002, Accessed 1 July 2015. <http://mg.co.za/article/2002-08-05-a-brotherhood-sealed-in-blood>.

¹⁰⁰ Strydom, J.R. Letter to Silbert, 26 February 2002. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

accusing Strydom's office of bias.¹⁰¹ A request by the chairperson of the CTHC's Board of Trustees David Susman to meet with Commissioner Strydom received no reply. Illustrative of the close relationship with the SAJBD, the CTHC's Board of Trustees had considered whether to "take the matter to the Board of Deputies".¹⁰²

Despite the Police Commissioner's silence, within three months of the "termination notification", the programmes were resumed after the Deputy Commissioner, Sharon Jeftha, informed Silbert that she was delighted with the programme and requested programmes for the following year. Not only did the programmes resume, but the CTHC was also approached by the Department of Correctional Services to conduct programmes with its personnel.¹⁰³

Just as was the case with the SAPS' programmes, the CTHC conducted the workshops in partnership with the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR). At the end of 2003, the SAPS decided to introduce a 3-day Diversity "programme" in which the CTHC ran the first day, the District Six Museum the second and the SAPS the third.¹⁰⁴ The focus of the CTHC's programme was, "the role of the police within the context of Nazism as a social-political order during the time of the Holocaust and the role of the police in contemporary South Africa."¹⁰⁵ The SAPS programme and the Correctional Services programmes continued through into 2004.

¹⁰¹ By the time the programme was cancelled, 540 members of the SAPS had attended the programme. Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees Meeting, 15 May 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Strydom, J.R. Letter to Silbert, 24 April 2002. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰² Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees Meeting, 15 May 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰³ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 25 September 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 3 December 2003, 1 March 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Outline of the Training Programme for SAPS, CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015, New York.

¹⁰⁵ Outline of the Training Programme for SAPS. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

By the end of August 2004, 2000 members of the SAP Area West Metropole had been trained, and the request was made to the CTHC by the Area Head for the programme to continue in 2005.¹⁰⁶ However, less than a month later, Silbert received notification from Superintendent Arendse that in response to complaints by some of the SAPS members, Commissioner Petros had decided that it would be divisive to continue with the programme, and had therefore temporarily suspended the SAPS programme at the CTHC.

Silbert responded to the notification by recommending an intervention facilitated by an independent mediator, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, UCT Psychology Professor and former TRC Commissioner. When asked why she chose Gobodo-Madikizela, Silbert explained that Gobodo-Madikizela had always been very supportive of the CTHC's work.¹⁰⁷ Despite Gobodo-Madikizela's mediation, the SAPS programmes did not continue. Reflecting on the outcome in an interview in 2015, Silbert ascribed the ending of the SAPS programme to the Israeli-Palestinian crises, but added that in her opinion, the turmoil within SAPS had also played a part.¹⁰⁸

It was not only through the SAPS workshops that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict affected the work of the CTHC. The visit organised by the SAHP to Boston for teachers was cancelled as well.¹⁰⁹ Silbert reported to the CTHC Board of Trustees that despite the success of the joint seminars for students from the three local universities, there were "problems in dealing with the Israel/Palestinian issues" which were being

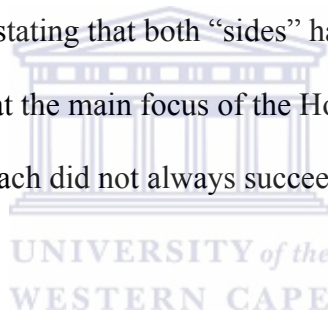
¹⁰⁶ A. Rogers, letter to Marlene Silbert on the presentation of the diversity course to the members of Area West Metropole, 25 August 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰⁷ Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015, New York.

¹⁰⁸ Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015, New York.

¹⁰⁹ Board of Trustees meeting 25 September 2002. FHAO subsequently invited Weldon and Silbert to Boston to discuss how FHAO could be involved in South Africa. Minutes of the meetings of Board of Trustees 15 May and 25 September 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

raised “on an increasing basis”.¹¹⁰ At the CTHC Board of Trustees meeting in December 2001 Silbert had explained that she responded to the “Israel/Palestinian issues” by “stressing that the Centre teaches about the Holocaust and its universal lessons and is not about the Middle East”.¹¹¹ However, at the CTHC Board of Trustee meeting five months later, Silbert stated that “the issue could no longer be avoided, “ and that “a strategy should be developed on how to handle these issues”.¹¹² The CTHC Board of Trustees asked Milton Shain, the Chairman of the Academic Advisory Committee, to convene a meeting of people who could advise, on a strategy. The advisory meeting was never convened.¹¹³ Silbert explained that although a meeting with Shain did not materialise, she developed a response that began with a “short history” of the region, stating that both “sides” had made mistakes, and concluded by emphasising that the main focus of the Holocaust Centre was the history of the Holocaust.” This approach did not always succeed and some schools did not return to the Centre.¹¹⁴



¹¹⁰ Minutes of the meeting of the CTHC Board of Trustees, 15 May 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹¹¹ Minutes of the meeting of the CTHC Board of Trustees, 5 December 2001, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹¹² Minutes of the meeting of the CTHC Board of Trustees, 15 May 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹¹³ Minutes of the meeting of the CTHC Board of Trustees, 25 September 2002, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹¹⁴ Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015, New York.

A Centre for the engagement with “human rights issues”

In order to respond to accusations of bias towards the Israeli state, the CTHC adopted two strategies to claim neutrality. The CTHC stressed its role as a teacher of a specific historical period, and emphasised the discontinuity between the history it taught and the contemporary conflict in the Middle East.

The second strategy adopted by the CTHC was to identify itself as an advocate of human rights issues. This image of the Centre was enhanced by Silbert’s involvement in planning a symposium called *South African Museums of Conscience: Celebrating Diversity*. The symposium was a collaboration of the CTHC and the co-ordinator of the District Six’s Heritage Ambassador, Dammon Rice, the CCR, UCT’s Centre for Intercultural Communication and Diversity Studies, the Robben Island Museum and the Direct Action Centre for Memory and Peace. The aim of the symposium was to establish an association of South African Museums of Conscience. This association hoped to “address needs of South African Museums dealing with issues of human rights, intercultural communication and diversity” and “to raise awareness and promote dialogue and training opportunities in these areas for museums professionals.”¹¹⁵

Although the symposium failed to take place as scheduled in June 2003, Silbert’s involvement as one of the organisers was significant in reinforcing the public identity of the CTHC as a progressive heritage institution. The positive response to the

¹¹⁵ “Invitation to attend planning meeting,” CTHC Collection, Cape Town. The Planning Committee eventually comprised Mbulelo Ntlabati (UCT), Juanura Pastor-Makhurane (Robben Island), Nkululeko Booysen (Direct Action Centre for Peace and Memory), Heidi Grunebaum (UWC), Melissa Steyn (UCT), Dammon Rice (District 6), Luvuyo Ndzuzo (Robben Island), Vivienne Carelse and Themba Nzimande.

initiative was also a reminder that the CTHC's developing identity took place alongside and was affected by the developments in other heritage institutions.¹¹⁶

A partnership between the US-based educational organisation, Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO), and the CTHC further entrenched the identity of the CTHC as being connected to the teaching of human rights–related issues. The relationship with FHAO pre-dated the establishment of the CTHC.¹¹⁷ Although the planned workshop with South African teachers at the FHAO head office in Boston did not take place, FHAO was very keen to establish ties with South Africa, and brought Silbert and Weldon to Boston to discuss the options. At the beginning of 2003, Silbert and Weldon, together with Darsa and Jennifer Clarke of FHAO, facilitated a seminar for managers and curriculum advisors from the WCED. The seminar, held at the CTHC titled “Identity, Human Rights and Responsibility”, proved very successful.¹¹⁸

In March 2003, Marc Skversky, FHAO’s Director of Outreach Programmes, and Karen Murphy, FHAO Senior Programme Associate, visited the CTHC. Following their visit, FHAO and CTHC drew up a Memorandum of Understanding for a joint Pilot Project, with the involvement of the WCED. The Pilot Project, called “Facing the Past” (FtP), aimed to promote the use of the FHAO educational material and approach, adapted to the needs of the South African educational landscape. FtP was to assist with the introduction of the new Grade 9 curriculum in the Western Cape by

¹¹⁶ The CTHC was not the only “new” kid on the heritage “block” building an identity: the District Six Museum, less than one kilometer away from the CTHC had opened its doors in 1994. Iziko, the umbrella for the state museums was also in the process of translating what its stable of museums needed to do, in order to transform into museums that reflected the diversity of South Africa.

¹¹⁷ Jan Darsa had been a teaching fellow at Herzlia Middle School, a Jewish day school in Cape Town, in 1991.

¹¹⁸ The seminar was held from the 29-31 January 2003. Silbert and Weldon, Letter to Senior Curriculum Planners, Education Managers and Curriculum Advisors, 26 November 2002. CTHC Collection, Cape Town Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 10 April 2003, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

providing a teacher development programme, teacher support material and on-line and classroom support.¹¹⁹ The Pilot would run from July 2003 to July 2004 with the possibility of it being extended should both parties so wish. FtP was funded in part by FHAO, and in part by the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.¹²⁰ A history teacher, Dylan Wray, was appointed Project Co-ordinator, and together with Weldon, attended a FHAO course in Boston in June 2003. Wray began his work at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre the following month.¹²¹

Twelve schools participated in an Introductory Seminar in 9-12 December 2003, which was followed by a workshop on 26 February 2004. Teachers received Holocaust education material developed by the CTHC, FHAO and apartheid teaching resources from WCED. At the CTHC Board of Trustees meeting on the 1st March 2004, Silbert reported that the teachers had responded “very positively.”¹²²

FtP was extended for a further 18 months. FHAO were eager to continue the relationship and contributed 50% of Wray’s salary.¹²³ A large delegation of FHAO Board members from Boston visited the Cape Town Holocaust Centre in April 2005.¹²⁴ Not long thereafter, Wray and Weldon, formed an NGO called the *Centre for Human Rights and Democracy Education*, with FtP as its core project.¹²⁵ The NGO

¹¹⁹ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 10 April 2003, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Memorandum of Understanding Cape Town Holocaust Centre/Facing History and Ourselves Pilot Project, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²⁰ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 10 April 2003, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²¹ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 8 October 2003, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²² Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 1 March 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²³ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 12 July 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²⁴ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 30 November 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²⁵ The Centre for Human Rights and Democracy Education was legally formed on the 12 February 2005. Facing the Past progress report, 21 February 2005. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Minutes of

was renamed *Shikaya* a few months later. A year later the Cape Town Holocaust Centre ended its relationship with *Shikaya*, and FHAO.¹²⁶ Murphy and Silbert differed in their explanations for the ending of the relationship. Murphy recalled that Silbert and the Centre were more interested in telling the teachers about the Centre, then in the FHAO programme.¹²⁷ Silbert explained that the CTHC had grown increasingly concerned that the history of the Holocaust was getting lost by focusing too much on broader human rights issues.¹²⁸ Furthermore, Silbert felt that the partnership was not respectful of the contribution the Centre wished to make.¹²⁹

Maintaining and developing partnerships

The CTHC's relationship to the Jewish community remained strong as is evident in the good attendance at the Centre's public education programmes – lectures, film screenings and temporary exhibitions. In 2003, a temporary exhibition called *Seeking Refuge* was opened. It was the first exhibition designed by the CTHC since the Centre had opened.¹³⁰ It used the testimonies of 36 Jewish German Holocaust survivors as the basis of the exhibition. These survivors had managed to escape Nazi brutality and eventually settled in the Cape. The exhibition also included a section that examined

the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 20 July 2005, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. The CTHC no longer provided financial support to FtP after June 2005. However, the National Lottery Board, which awarded FtP R180 000 (R60 000 p.a. over three years) stipulated that the CTHC administer the funds. The CTHC agreed to meet the stipulation.

¹²⁶ Facing the Past progress report, 21 February 2005. CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees meeting, 20 July 2005, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹²⁷ Karen Murphy, Email correspondence with author, 7 July 2015.

¹²⁸ Silbert's concern was voiced by a number of historians such as Bauer in his address to the Seventh Yad Vashem International Conference (2011) in which he argued that "if you want to teach the Holocaust you have to start from the core, from the text before you can approach the context." He concludes, "but you have to do both". Yehuda Bauer, "Reflections about Text and Context," presented at the Seventh International Conference on Holocaust Education, Yad Vashem (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2011). *How* to "do both" was one of the main tensions that revealed themselves in the relationship with FtP.

¹²⁹ Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 15 June 2015, New York.

¹³⁰ The exhibition team comprised Osrin (project director), Millie Pimstone (research and text writer), and Linda Coetzee (exhibition designer) and Rhona Dubow (events coordinator).

“how Germany is facing its past – through museums, educational projects and statements of reconciliation.”¹³¹ The exhibition travelled to Johannesburg and Durban.

In curating, development or mounting of temporary exhibitions, the CTHC developed a number of partnerships with organisations from outside the Jewish community. The co-operative nature of the relationship between the CTHC, the SAJBD and the WPZC was reinforced.¹³²

The CTHC's role as partner in the WCED's in-service teacher training was confirmed by the new Director of Curriculum in the Western Cape, Jenny Rault-Smith in 2005.

Rault-Smith approved a four-day programme developed by the CTHC for key personnel responsible for the implementation of the new curriculum.¹³³ The partnership with the WCED also facilitated a relationship with the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), and the newly established Apartheid Museum.¹³⁴

Through Gail Weldon, Osrin met Rae Davids, the Senior Curriculum Planner for History at the GDE, and discussed the CTHC poster series and student activity book. At Davids's request, the poster series was displayed at the Apartheid Museum during a five-day history teachers' seminar being run by the Apartheid Museum and the GDE. Osrin reported back to the CTHC Trustees that the teachers had responded

¹³¹ Minutes of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees Meeting 10 April 2003, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹³² Not only did temporary exhibitions developed by the CTHC create the possibilities for partnerships or collaborations but also the permanent exhibition offered opportunities for the CTHC to work with organisations outside the Jewish community. An early example of this was the collaboration with the South African Air Force Museum in bringing Allan Williams, the Head of Digitisation of the Aerial Reconnaissance Archives at Keele University, UK to present a lecture on the aerial photographs of Auschwitz-Birkenau on the 25 August 2004. Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 12 July 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹³³ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 28 September 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹³⁴ The Apartheid Museum opened in 2001. See Philip Bonner's discussion of the history of the construction of the museum in "History Teaching and the Apartheid Museum," in *Toward New Histories for South Africa*, ed. Shamil Jeppie (Cape Town: Juta Gariep, 2004), 140-147.

“very positive[ly]” to the posters.¹³⁵ Following Davids’s suggestion that the CTHC collaborate with the Apartheid Museum, Osrin met with Christopher Till, the Apartheid Museum’s Director. The CTHC's relationship with the Apartheid Museum continued beyond 2004.

As part of her five-year development plan for the CTHC, Osrin had commissioned an internal audit of the Centre, as well as an external revue to gauge the perceptions of the Centre.¹³⁶ The external audit revealed a general endorsement of the Centre and its activities.¹³⁷ In her report to the CTHC Board of Trustees, Sue Brophy-Smith recommended that, “some observations were worthy of serious attention.”¹³⁸ These “observations” were the “complex issue of the Middle East which is often conflated with the Holocaust in popular perception”, the call for a “more representative board” and the “need to adjust the Centre’s methodology for some of its education programmes which would require the services of an independent professional facilitator.”¹³⁹ Only the issue of the Middle East was addressed by the CTHC Board.

¹³⁵ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 1 March 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹³⁶ The internal audit appears to have been lost. Rationale for the external audit, 13 September 2004, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹³⁷ Sue Brophy-Smith, “Cape Town Holocaust Centre Study of external perceptions, November 2004”, CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 28 September 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. 28 interviews were conducted with individuals identified by the CTHC Trustees and staff. Human Rights Commission, the Prisons Transformation Project of the Centre for Conflict Resolution, the Institute for Healing of Memories and the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation. Personnel from the Iziko Museums, the District Six Museum and the Apartheid Museum were also surveyed. Academics from the Universities of Cape Town and the Western Cape and personnel from the Western Cape Education Department were interviewed, as were members of religious groups. High-profile individuals with a national or international perspective, some of whom were office bearers within Jewish community structures, and younger members of the Jewish community, were asked their opinion of the CTHC.

¹³⁸ Brophy-Smith, “Cape Town Holocaust Centre Study, 10. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹³⁹ Minutes of the meeting of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Board of Trustees, 30 November 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Brophy-Smith, “Cape Town Holocaust Centre Study, 11. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

The Audit concluded rather cryptically that in order for the CTHC to remain relevant it “should continue to manage its politics well”.¹⁴⁰ What were the Centre’s “politics”? Some clue is given in Silbert’s description of the strategy developed as a response to questions pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: “we decided to be as brief as possible and not hijack the programme. So we all agreed that we would give a very brief response explaining how complex the conflict was....”¹⁴¹ The CTHC had to appear as neutral as it could. Neutrality, in relation to the “Middle East” question, required that the CTHC distance itself from being seen as a Zionist organisation. This was not a simple task, as doing so ran the risk of alienating a large portion of the Jewish community who had invested emotionally and financially in the CTHC, and for whom the relationship between Zionism and the Holocaust was assumed.¹⁴² How then did the CTHC manage to achieve this goal, and how successful was it in its attempt?



Osrin explained that the question of Israel’s presence in the exhibition was a matter that the HMC and Exhibition Committee had “considered at great length.” Ultimately, “the event fell outside of our time frame. We were, for example, not including the establishment of the UN and Human Rights Declaration.” However, Osrin added a revealing caveat to her explanation: “We did however, *intentionally*, include the photograph of survivors aboard a boat/ship en route to British Mandate Palestine with the blue and white flag with the Star of David.”¹⁴³ Osrin’s caveat indicated that there was no debate about whether Israel should be included in the exhibition or not, but rather a matter of where and how. The size of the reference to Israel in the exhibition,

¹⁴⁰ Brophy-Smith, “Cape Town Holocaust Centre Study, 13. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁴¹ Marlene Silbert, interview by author, 17 June 2015, New York.

¹⁴² Israel as the form of rebirth after the destruction of the Holocaust was a theme repeated regularly in the annual Yom Hashoah ceremony. See Chapter one for further analysis.

¹⁴³ My emphasis. Myra Osrin, email to author, 24 May 2015.

was in fact not a reflection of the CTHC's distance from a Zionist narrative of the Holocaust after all, but rather an insistence that there be a reference included, even if it fell outside the “time frame.”

The photograph of the boat and survivors was placed very low down on the panel, making it easily overlooked. There was no suggestion in the exhibition of a direct line between the Holocaust and the founding of the state of Israel. Instead, through its inclusion of the contemporary portraits of Holocaust survivors who had come to Cape Town, and Archbishop Tutu's words, the visitor could conclude that the Palestine was but one of a number of potential homes for survivors of the Holocaust.

Considering the close ties to Zionism of the mainstream Jewish community in South Africa, how did the CTHC *not* fall foul of the members of the community in its attempts to portray itself as neutral?¹⁴⁴ The corps of volunteers were significant in reassuring the community that the Centre had not strayed too far. Silbert told volunteers that they were not responsible for answering questions relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and should desist from so doing, as she would address the questions in a plenary. In the plenary Silbert articulated the position taken by the Centre that “the situation in the Middle East” was “complex” and that “human rights abuses had been perpetrated on both sides”. Silbert gave a “short history” of the region, but stressed that the focus of the Holocaust Centre was the Holocaust. Silbert portrayed the Middle East crises as the fault of “both sides” who were both “perpetrators”. Taking such a position that “all are guilty” begs its corollary “no one is guilty.”¹⁴⁵ This strategy assured the volunteers that the Centre was not about to

¹⁴⁴ “Zionism was, for the Jews of South Africa, both an integral expression of the Jewish religion and a normative mode of highly positive ethnic identification.” Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, 209-210.

¹⁴⁵ Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1970), 75. The complete quote is “Where all are guilty no one is; confessions of collective guilt are the best possible safeguard

denounce Israel. The on-going support of the volunteer corps also signalled to the rest of the mainstream community that the Centre had not abandoned its connections to the Jewish community. The funding granted by the United Communal Fund (UCF) and the Israel United Appeal (IUA) for the Centre's programmes provides further evidence of the perception of the Centre's place being firmly entrenched within the broader Jewish community.¹⁴⁶

The politics of memory

The other "politics" in which the Centre was engaging, could be described as the "politics of memory". Tonka Kostadinova, in writing about the post-conflict reconstruction of cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina, described the "politics of memory" as dealing with "institutionalised efforts to recast the past and embed its constructed symbols and significance into the public remembering of the society."¹⁴⁷ This raised questions about how and why the Centre attempted to "recast the past", whether it did so deliberately or not, and how was this "recasting" encouraged? Equally important to consider was the question of which past the Centre was "recasting". There is no evidence that the Centre's directors, staff or Trustees were conscious of "doing" more than wishing to present the Centre as relevant to all, Jewish or not Jewish and as a place of memory, learning and healing. However, the design and content of the education programmes revealed the assumptions the CTHC had about the Holocaust and apartheid, and why either should be remembered.

against the discovery of culprits, and the very magnitude of the crime the best excuse for doing nothing."

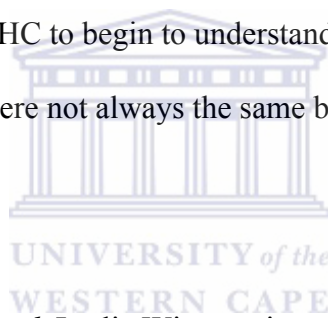
¹⁴⁶ In 1988 the IUA had merged with the United Communal Fund. The UCF funded local communal needs, whilst the IUA raised funds for projects in Israel. Prior to the merging, the Zionist Federation had overseen the IUA.

¹⁴⁷ Tonka Kostadinova, "The Politics of Memory and the Post-conflict Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage: the Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina," *CAS Sofia Working Paper Series* 6 (2014): 5.

At the beginning of the decade, Osrin had described the CTHC as a place that would help South Africans reconcile, as a builder of “bridges of mutual understanding and respect”, intended to help citizens understand “the essential nature of democracy”. This narrative of the identity of the CTHC was sustained and presented through its newsletters, its programmes and the partnerships with progressive institutions. However, the Centre did not examine the complexities involved in the process of reconciliation and nation building. Thus for example, there is no evidence that the CTHC considered that “reconciling” and “reconciliation” might mean different things to different South Africans or that the road to “mutual understanding and respect” was not simply achieved through feeling sorry for victims of the past, or that “the past” meant different things to different people at different times. While the CTHC certainly provided opportunities through its public programmes for discussion to take place around the issue of what was meant by reconciliation, justice, forgiveness, complicity, democracy and citizenship, the exhibition did not encourage an appreciation of the complexities of responses to the creation and maintenance of identity as a process engaged in by both the state and the subject of the state.

The exhibitions of the CTHC, like its education programme, did not encourage or facilitate an appreciation of the relationship between Europe’s history, its colonial programme in Africa, or South Africa’s past and the present. The “bridge” connected The Past (an uncomplicated place in terms of the presentation of Europe) to The Future (also an uncomplicated place) without the visitor having to “wet” their feet or get “swept away” by the currents and undercurrents of their lived reality. The strength of the “bridge” depended on the visitor’s commitment to remember the CTHC’s representation of the Holocaust.

Haido Mteta's explanation of the "double sigh" suggested that visitors to the CTHC saw their personal past in the exhibition, whether it was reflected in the panels or not. It is not only the curator of the exhibition or museum who selected what was to be "seen" and understood, but the visitor as well. Kostadinova argued that museums engaged both in creating public memory and public forgetting, and that visitors to these spaces contributed to those acts by agreeing to accept what was presented and "to forget" what had been left out.¹⁴⁸ Building on Kostadinova's argument, I would suggest that the selection made by the curator, evident in as much as what appeared in the exhibition as what was left out, did not necessarily preclude the visitor selecting from their personal memory archive to add to the "empty spaces" left by the curator. It took a few years for the CTHC to begin to understand that the bridges people constructed for themselves, were not always the same bridge the CTHC had hoped to build.



In his book, *Apartheid's Festival*, Leslie Witz cautioned against "sidelining the relations of the power of representation."¹⁴⁹ While the CTHC may not have been in control of what visitors thought, it designed and "set the stage" to which the visitor responded. Museums, as Murray suggested "influence the historical consciousness of those audiences that view the displayed exhibits...."¹⁵⁰

Key to the construction of identity and the maintenance of such an identity is the development of an historical consciousness, an awareness of the influence of the past

¹⁴⁸ Kostadinova, "The Politics of Memory", 6. Some museums have encouraged the visitors to remember, and, in some instances to add literally to the exhibition. The District Six Museum is such an example, as it attempts to be responsive to the visitor/witness and encouraging of the visitor to add their memories to the space. See for example, Elizabeth Crooke, "Museums and Community." See also Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis eds., *Recalling Community in South Africa: Creating and Curating the District Six Museum* (Cape Town: District Six Museum, 2001).

¹⁴⁹ Lesley Witz, *Apartheid's Festival* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 8.

¹⁵⁰ Martin J. Murray, *Commemorating and Forgetting: Challenges for the New South Africa* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 22.

on the present. In what way did the CTHC influence the construction of the identity of the individual visitor and a national identity? The responses of the participants in the programmes suggested that the CTHC encouraged the development of a South African identity as a defender of human rights, as a fighter for justice and as a people “united in their desire to “never forget.” Murray argued that the “commemorative culture that has taken root in (post-apartheid) South Africa has ... generated an uplifting narrative that interprets the transition from white minority rule to non-racial parliamentary democracy in a particular way.”¹⁵¹ While the Cape Town Holocaust Centre’s representation of apartheid occupied a much smaller space in the exhibition, its “pedagogical justification of remembrance”,¹⁵² its representation of the history of the Holocaust in the exhibition and in the education programmes, underwritten by the “redemption imperative” to “never forget”, served to encourage an “uplifting narrative” for the history of the Holocaust.¹⁵³ Judging from the responses to the exhibition and the education programmes I suggest that there appeared to be a desire to accept an “uplifting narrative” as a way of avoiding the more complex realities of transition from apartheid to democracy within which South Africans found themselves.

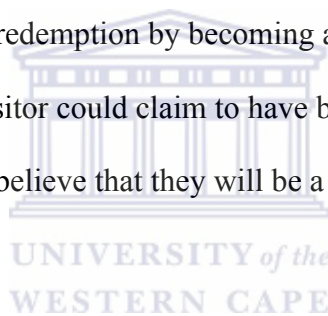
One of the consequences of the CTHC’s presentation of the Holocaust as the only genocide, and disconnected from history, was to allow visitors to develop a sense of

¹⁵¹ Murray, *Commemorating and Forgetting*, ix.

¹⁵² Roger I. Simon et al. describe the “pedagogy of remembrance” as suggesting that learning from history will prevent a repetition of the “mistakes of the past”. See *Between Hope and Despair*, 2.

¹⁵³ The first thing a visitor sees when they enter the Centre is the Centre’s logo of barbed wire morphing into a leafed branch, and a memorial candelabra inscribed with the Hebrew word, *Zachor*. *Zachor* is both an imperative and an obligation. Simon explains that *Zachor* implies not only a remembering the past but also finding a way to integrate that memory into “the marrow of one’s life.” See, Roger I. Simon, “The Paradoxical Practice of *Zachor*” in *Between Hope and Despair*, 11. The message of remembering in order to build a better future is repeated explicitly within the exhibition, in the first and the last panels in the exhibition. The CTHC education programme reinforces this message.

self in opposition to that of “The Nazi”.¹⁵⁴ This encouraged visitors to frame their view of the Holocaust as a moral warning and “lesson”: do not be like the people were in the past. Some of the written responses in the visitors’ book and evaluation forms completed by students indicated that some visitors forgot that the exhibition was a representation of the past. These visitors said that they felt as if “they were there” in the killing fields.¹⁵⁵ If they were “there”, then what would they have “done” and who would they have been? It would appear that the Centre was a space that allowed the visitor to project their fantasy of self as heroic character onto the Holocaust and develop a narrative as follows: “In the land of the Holocaust, I would’ve been a Good Person: a better person than those Nazis.”¹⁵⁶ Through the Centre, the visitor could find redemption by becoming an imagined person in an imagined past. Thus, if the visitor could claim to have been a “better person” than the Nazis, then they could easily believe that they will be a better person in the future.



The Centre did little to challenge the assumption that “believing” was the same as “being”. Thus it was possible that visitors could leave the Centre feeling sad, but also filled with self-righteousness, and a sense that they had actually “done” something. In 2001, shortly after Osrin returned to Cape Town from Stockholm, an article appeared in the *Cape Times* by Rev. Chris Chivers, Canon and Precenter Bishop at St George’s Cathedral. Chivers articulated an assumption about the CTHC that was to run through

¹⁵⁴ In the same way that European Jewry was cast by the Museum as a homogenous “people”, so the identity of The Nazi is not shown to be complex.

¹⁵⁵ Whilst the exhibition and the volunteers were overt in reminding the visitor that they were not “over there”: that the Warsaw Ghetto, or the killings at the Litikus Garage or the ramp in Auschwitz Birkenau presented in the exhibition were not the real thing, more than one participant responded in their evaluations, that they felt like they were “there”, at the actual site of killing or injustice. Younger students wrote that they felt scared. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁵⁶ See Tim Cole’s discussion of the consequences of dehistoricising Anne Frank in his book, *Selling the Holocaust*, 46.

its education programmes for the next decade, namely that the act of visiting the CTHC was itself an act of resistance of prejudice.¹⁵⁷

The visit to the Centre was cathartic insofar as it encouraged an empathic reaction to what was being presented and could impact on a sense of identity, but without necessarily encouraging any need for the visitor to grapple with the present reality of a society still far from being “reconciled” or “healed”. The visit to the Centre encouraged the visitor to forget their present responsibility by encouraging a particular remembrance of a past event and an imagined utopian future.

Kostadinova argued that the “acts of selection” undertaken by curator and visitor were political insofar as they are a response to the “considerations of the present”.¹⁵⁸ For the founders of the Centre, the “considerations of the present” meant achieving an acceptance by the broader South African community of the history of the Holocaust as legitimate and not only a minority community affair. However, the responses to the Centre suggest that the overwhelming majority of visitors saw the Centre’s representation of the Holocaust as a “bridge” to a better future, as a source of comfort or hope. This response points to a more broadly shared view of the “considerations of the present”, namely, how conflicting memories of and positions held during apartheid could be managed. The responses of the parliamentarians in 2000, the gangsters in 2002, the police, the school children and thousands of other visitors to the CTHC, might suggest that the promise of a future gained through Holocaust commemoration that was more humane.¹⁵⁹ This promise was perhaps

¹⁵⁷ Chris Chivers, “Lessons of the Holocaust,” *Cape Times*, 3 February 2000. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Following the article, Chivers was appointed the Chair of the Interfaith Committee of the CTHC.

¹⁵⁸ Kostadinova, “The Politics of Memory”, 6.

¹⁵⁹ The excerpt taken from Tutu’s speech at the opening of the Centre, and placed at the end of the exhibition in 2002 reads: “We learn about the Holocaust so that we can become more human, more

easier to contemplate than having to acknowledge the difficulties of living in a society where the wounds inflicted by the actions or inaction of fellow citizens were still very raw, where the shame of culpability floated on the edges of the mention of apartheid, and where the matters of justice and restitution were not yet addressed. Perhaps, as James E. Young suggested the Centre through its representations of the Holocaust and apartheid might have "relieve[ed] viewers of their own personal burdens of remembrance", allowing the viewer to gaze instead to an imaginary future.¹⁶⁰

John R. Gillis described "national identity" as being dependent on the "creation of a sense of sameness",¹⁶¹ the creation of a "we", or in Benedict Anderson's words, an "imagined community."¹⁶² The Centre can be seen to be contributing to the creation of a sense of sameness by offering the identity of the "new" South African as someone who chooses a "better future" by learning about the Holocaust. This "imagined community" is one to which all South Africans, regardless of their experience of the apartheid and segregationist past, could belong. Furthermore, the promise suggested by the CTHC was that remembering the "the past" would bring about a better future. The CTHC's founders wished to provide a representation of the past: the Holocaust. What they had not intended doing was to create a space in which a second object of remembrance, viz. apartheid and its segregationist foundations, would be constructed.

Consciously or not, the Centre was engaged in the process of building a common memory; a public memory but not only of the Holocaust. Edward Casey suggested

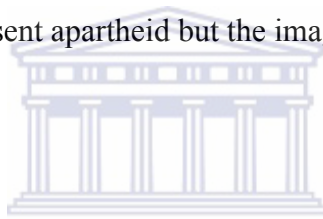
gentle, more compassionate, valuing every person as being infinite worth so precious that we know such atrocities will never happen again and the world will be a more humane place."

¹⁶⁰ James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory*, 113.

¹⁶¹ John R. Gillis ed., *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton University Press, 1996), 3.

¹⁶² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006).

that the process of building public memory was simultaneously about a past event, and the promise of a future in which that event is remembered.¹⁶³ The CTHC was developed to call for the remembrance of the Holocaust, and not the remembrance of apartheid or its segregationist foundations. However, the responses of visitors to the Centre very soon illustrated that they heard in Tutu's statement, an echo of Mandela's call in his inaugural speech of "never, never and never again...", and thus that learning about the Holocaust was part of learning not to forget apartheid.¹⁶⁴ For many South African visitors, what they remembered when they remembered the Holocaust would be tied to what they had seen at the Centre, whereas what they remembered as constituting "apartheid" was far more personal, and connected not only to the images chosen by the CTHC to represent apartheid but the images representing the Holocaust.¹⁶⁵



The founders of the Centre thought they could control how visitors would "contextualise" the Holocaust in relation to South Africa's past by placing the "apartheid panels" away from the main passage of the exhibition that contained the panels on the Holocaust. What the founders did not consider was that South African visitors would bring with them to the Centre and the exhibition, a "deep" memory of apartheid, which they would carry into the exhibition, and beyond the apartheid panels, into the remainder of the exhibition.¹⁶⁶ Just as Langer refers to "deep

¹⁶³ Edward S. Casey, "Public Memory in Place and Time," *Framing Public Memory* (2004): 17-44.

¹⁶⁴ Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, "Address to the Nation at the Inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President of the Republic of South Africa, Union Buildings, Pretoria, 10 May 1994." The excerpt to which I refer is "Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world." For a transcript of Mandela's speech see, *Nelson Mandela in his Own Words*, eds. Kader Asmal, David Chidester and Wimot James, (London: Abacus, 2004). 68-70. The extract is on page 70.

¹⁶⁵ The research is limited to the responses captured either in the written evaluations after programmes, or the visitors' book, or through personal observation and conversations with the author.

¹⁶⁶ Charlotte Delbo, in her book, *Days and Memory*, used the term "common memory" as opposed to "deep" memory to distinguish between "the part of her that was able to speak about her Auschwitz experience as if they were over and the part of her that lived always with Auschwitz." See Rachel N. Baum, "Never to Forget: Pedagogical Memory and Second-Generation Witness" in *Between Hope &*

memory” as that which “reminds us that the Auschwitz past is not really past and never will be,” so the Founders needed to consider the implications of a “deep memory” of apartheid.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, the Centre was a site for the public history of apartheid, and not only the Holocaust.

Through its exhibition, the CTHC was also engaged in creating another “we”. The Centre’s portrayal of the Holocaust created a “sense of sameness” between the victims of apartheid and the victims of Nazism and their proxy: the South African Jewish community (represented by the guides at the Centre). The placing of the panels about antisemitism in South Africa in the 1930s before the introduction of apartheid suggested a common experience of victimhood of Jewish people and “black” people. The exhibition also suggested that Jewish South Africans were absent from apartheid South Africa, other than in the role of anti-apartheid activists. In the collage of images depicting apartheid in the exhibition, there were four “white” people: one was a policeman checking the pass of a “black” man; one was of a child being looked after by two domestic workers; one was of a commuter oblivious of the “whites –only” signage; and one was of a lawyer Rowley Arenstein, representing two people charged under the Immorality Act. Arenstein was the only person named in the captions of the photographs.

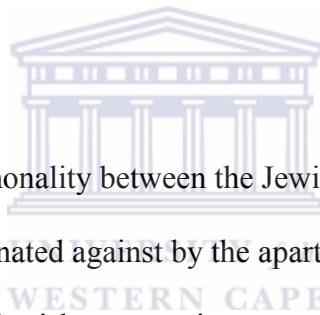
Furthermore, the exhibition and the education programme presented a view of a homogenous “Jewish nation” to which all Jewish people, across time and space, belonged. By extension of this presentation of Jewry, the exhibition guides came to be

Despair: Pedagogy and the Remembrance of Historical Trauma, eds. Roger I. Simon, Sharon Rosenberg and Claudia Eppert (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 96.

¹⁶⁷ Lawrence Langer, *Admitting the Holocaust: Collected Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), ix.

seen by some visitors as the proxies of the Jewish peoples victimised by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust.

The location of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre within the walled “campus” containing the Cape Town Synagogue, the South African Jewish Museum and the Gitlin Library, and opposite the building housing most of Cape Town’s Jewish community organisations including the SAJBD, created a spatial connection between the history of South African Jewry represented in the SAJM, and the history of European Jewry represented in the Cape Town Holocaust Centre. This encouraged the conclusion that there existed a connection between the two histories and the people in each.¹⁶⁸



The CTHC suggested a commonality between the Jewish community of South Africa, and the communities discriminated against by the apartheid state. At the same time the exhibition positioned the Jewish community as one step ahead of those emerging from the apartheid conflict. The South African Jewish community, the CTHC suggested, could show the way to a better future because they knew the bitter past of discrimination embodied in the Holocaust. Apart from the projection onto the guides of the identity of Holocaust survivors, the particular pedagogical style adopted by the guides positioned them as “experts” on the Holocaust. Thus the guides were seen to be either the holders of “mythic memory” to which Saul Friedlander (2000) referred in describing the memory of those with direct experience of the Holocaust, or else being the “experts”. South African Jewry was presented as the carriers of the history of the Holocaust and the facilitators of the rights enshrined in new constitution.

¹⁶⁸ For a further discussion of the spatial signalling of community, see Oren Baruch Stier, "South Africa's Jewish Complex," *Jewish Social Studies* 10.3 (2004): 123-142.

By 2005, the Centre's profile had grown considerably, and its reach extended beyond Cape Town. Two consecutive provincial Ministers of Education had visited the Centre, and the National Minister of Education Kader Asmal had endorsed its work.¹⁶⁹ Holocaust history had been placed in the newly revised national curriculum, and from 2007, all Grade 9 students had to study the Holocaust. The education departments of two provinces had endorsed the CTHC's education materials. These materials were officially launched at an evening honouring the Centre's Patron, Archbishop Tutu. Two teachers were added to the Centre's education team, to manage the expanding demands on the CTHC.

Nonetheless, the profile of the Centre and its Board of Trustees remained predominantly reflective of a Jewish community organisation. Despite the recommendation of the Audit, there was no evidence in the minutes of a discussion of or interest in the issue of diversifying the Board or the staff. There was some diversity among the Patrons. Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and Kader Asmal had accepted the invitation to become Patrons.¹⁷⁰ The choices of Patrons offered a link between the Jewish community (through Chief Rabbi Goldstein) and the "new" South Africa through Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela and Kader Asmal.

At the beginning of 2005, the Centre drew up a Fundraising Strategy that concluded that funders would find the CTHC's education programmes and its identity as human rights organisation attractive.¹⁷¹ The Centre's profile as a human rights education

¹⁶⁹ Provincial ministers of education Helen Zille had visited in 2001 and Cameron Dugmore in August 2004.

¹⁷⁰ Rev. Beyers Naudé had died on 7 September 2004, and Chief Rabbi Harris on the 13 September 2005.

¹⁷¹ Fundraising Strategy February 2005. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

centre had grown since it had opened. The Centre had formed partnerships with other organisations or institutions engaged in human rights work, such as the IJR and the CCR. This fundraising strategy emphasised the value of such collaborations and the importance of approaching funders who were not connected to Holocaust education or Jewish community concerns. Accordingly, CTHC applications for funding foregrounded the CTHC's education programmes and framed the Holocaust as a "case study" or a "springboard" or "prism" from which contemporary issues were examined, as opposed to the education programmes being solely about the Holocaust.

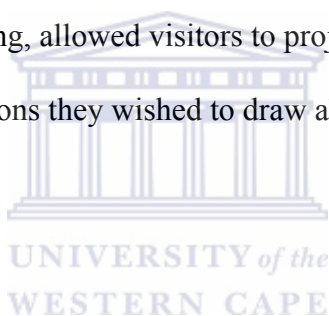
By the end of 2005, a Foundation had been set up to be headed by Osrin.¹⁷² The establishment of the Foundation also marked Osrin's response to the question of succession. In July 2005, Richard Freedman, principal of a Jewish primary school, was appointed Osrin's successor and assumed duties in January 2006. Osrin remained involved in the Centre's affairs in her position as Trustee, Head of the Foundation and Freedman's mentor.

A range of tensions were evident in the Centre's first five years of existence: how to "manage its politics," its messages of anti-prejudice, of reconciliation and of commemoration; its relationship to the Jewish community that had sponsored it; its response to the on-going Israeli-Palestinian crisis; its identity as an educational institution engaged in human rights education and Holocaust education. Managing these tensions continued to shape the Centre beyond 2005. By 2005, however, the Centre arguably also became of collective memory. This chapter has attempted to show evidence of how the Centre had come to hold a "symbolic importance", as a place to "authenticate and legitimate selective stories about the past, and thereby

¹⁷² The Foundation was to be the fundraising arm of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre.

construct a [shared] identity in the present” an identity paradoxically based on a longing for a “better” future.¹⁷³

The chapter has argued that despite the Centre’s attempt to control how the exhibition and programmes were read, visitors made their own meaning of the histories, projecting onto the exhibition and the Centre a neutrality that it did not hold. In the first five years of the Centre’s existence, there was little contestation about its representation of the Holocaust and apartheid. This I would argue, was partly because the Centre did not identify itself as an “apartheid museum”, and that its apartheid section was very small. In addition, it did not make overt references to Palestine/Israel, and in so doing, allowed visitors to project onto the exhibition and the Centre, whatever conclusions they wished to draw about apartheid or the Middle East.



¹⁷³ Karen E. Till, “Reimagining National Identity: ‘Chapters of Life’ at the German Historical Museum in Berlin,” in *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies* eds. Paul C. Adams, Steven D. Hoelscher and Karen E. Till (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 273.

CHAPTER SIX

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION AFTER APARTHEID

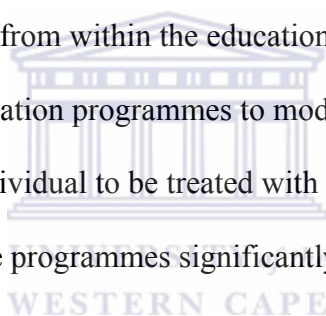
Introduction: mainstreaming, changes and sidestepping

The transition from apartheid to democracy saw the history of the Holocaust moved from its former position in the South African school curriculum as a sentence or two in a chapter on World War II, to occupying an entire term of the academic year. From being a minority community-driven project, Holocaust education in post-apartheid South Africa became a mandatory and significant part of the national curriculum, perceived by the state as an allied arena in the building of a democratic society based on a Bill of Rights contained in the Constitution. This chapter examines the factors that brought about this change in the status of Holocaust education, and explores the consequences that ‘mainstreaming’ Holocaust history had for Holocaust education in South Africa, and specifically for the CTHC.

Curriculum change was good news for the CTHC as the curriculum declared to make Holocaust education legitimate. The CTHC adjusted its programmes to align with the new curriculum, but it also accepted the boundaries set by the Curriculum. This choice came with consequences for genocide study. While there was a brief moment when Holocaust education could include an examination of the genocide in Rwanda, because it was in the curriculum, a subsequent change in curriculum that cut out the genocide in Rwanda, meant that the CTHC narrowed the focus of their education programmes, reducing their time examining other genocides, or the human rights abuses of South Africa.

The curriculum developers framed the Holocaust as an important element in understanding the history of human rights.¹ This position reinforced the CTHC's presentation of the Holocaust as a locus for the teaching of moral lessons. However, the process of mainstreaming Holocaust education as a part of the History curriculum, put pressure on the CTHC to change its "lesson-centric" approach.² Furthermore, the newly appointed staff members saw the methodology that had been employed since the CTHC had opened, as running run counter to best practice in History teaching.

This methodology was also seen to undermine the CTHC's support of the curriculum's call to foster an understanding of the value of human rights. From 2006, there was increasing pressure from within the education team, supported by the new director, for the CTHC's education programmes to model an approach that recognised the inherent right of every individual to be treated with dignity. As a result, changes were instituted that altered the programmes significantly.



However, despite attempts by the education team of the CTHC to be responsive to the context of the teachers and students, and there being a greater awareness of the fluidity of the identities of teachers and students, the issue of the identity and context of the facilitators was not considered by the CTHC in any systematic way, nor did such a consideration change the shape of the programmes by the education team. I argue that without this "interior work", the CTHC education programmes failed to challenge the apartheid system's construction of identity and ethnic groups. Instead, it reinforced the view of Jewish South Africans as "special", as "other": the holders of the memory, acting as proxy victims of the Nazis, and as such, like "black" South

¹ Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town.

² This is Andy Pearce's term to describe a particular style of Holocaust teaching. See *Holocaust Consciousness in Contemporary Britain*.

Africans, victims of an oppressive system. The programmes sidestepped questions of complicity and justice, developing the Holocaust as a “screen memory” instead to the uncomfortable memories of apartheid.

The chapter concludes with an examination of the impact of the education programmes on the attitudes of participants towards human rights and apartheid history. While the CTHC has assembled written evaluations completed by all high school students and teachers immediately after they had participated in the programme, a decade after the CTHC’s opening, no research has been conducted on the impact of the programme and its longevity. This chapter examines the outcomes of two research projects conducted after 2009 to gauge the perceptions of high school students and teachers on what Holocaust education had meant to them.

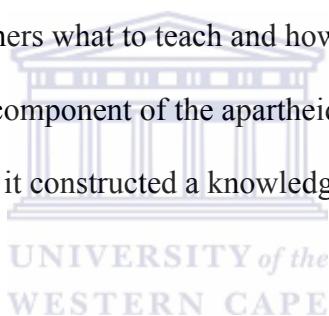
Holocaust education in the apartheid state

The shape, place and pedagogy of Holocaust education in South Africa shifted dramatically in the wake of changes in the country’s political dispensation. Apartheid had fractured South Africa in a myriad of ways. This splintering was also reflected in its education policies: by 1990, there were 19 separate education departments, with separate and different curricula, funding and resources. Indeed, in its approach to education, the National Party “cemented racialised schooling”.³

³ Jonathan Jansen, “The Race for Education Policy after Apartheid,” in *Implementing Education Policies: the South African Experience* eds. Yusuf Sayed and Jonathan Jansen (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2001), 13. See also Aslam Fataar, “Education Policy Reform in Post-apartheid South Africa: Constraints and Possibilities,” in *The Education of Diverse Student Populations: A Global Perspective* ed. Guofang Wan (Dordrecht: Springer Science & Business Media, 2008), especially 98. The state instituted ‘Christian National Education’ for children classified as “white” and, in 1953, “Bantu Education” for children classified as “African”. In 1963, the Coloured Person's Education Act placed control of “coloured” education under the Department of Coloured Affairs and in 1965 the Indian Education Act placed “Indian” education under the Department of Indian Affairs.

The differences in the funding allocation for schooling in the various racialised departments was vast, and clearly intended to realise the official attitude that children classified as ‘African’ or ‘coloured’ or ‘Indian’ were unequal and thus not in need of the same education as children classified ‘white’. The education system supported the development of the apartheid state’s ‘racial’ hierarchy that defined different groups, and ensured not only that they were separated and treated unequally, but that each group member might learn their place in the hierarchy and accept it as “natural”.

The curricula were structured to implement and support apartheid ideology, and they entrenched prejudice, stigmatisation, and stereotyping. Textbooks reinforced this version of history telling teachers what to teach and how they should teach it.⁴ The education system was a vital component of the apartheid state’s creation of a racial state, and national identity, as it constructed a knowledge that justified apartheid ideology.⁵



Students and teachers responded in a number of ways to the particular racist and sexist lenses of the curricula and the textbooks filled as they were with stereotypes and historical inaccuracies, and not only with blind acquiescence.⁶ There are numerous accounts of strategies that were adopted by teachers, students and other

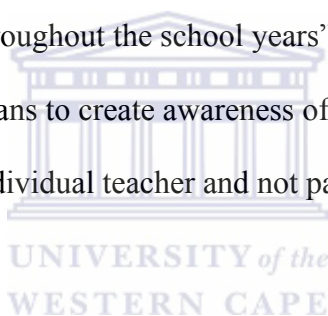
⁴ Both curricula and textbooks “denigrated black people’s history, culture, and identity ... [and] promoted myths and racial stereotypes. African people and communities were portrayed as traditional, rural, and unchanging... Bantu education treated blacks as perpetual children in need of parental supervision by whites.” Ken Hartshorne, *Crisis and Challenge: Black Education 1910-1990* (Cape Town and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

⁵ Peter Kallaway, ed., *The History of Education under Apartheid, 1948-1994: the Doors of Learning and Culture shall be Opened* (Cape Town: Pearson South Africa, 2002); Peter Kallaway, ed., *Apartheid and Education: The Education of Black South Africans* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1984). See also Pam Christie, *The Right to Learn* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985).

⁶ Frans E. Auerbach, *The Power of Prejudice in South African Education* (Cape Town: Gothic Printing, 1965); J. M. Du Preez, *Africana Afrikaner: Meestersimbole in Suid-Afrikaanse Skoolhandboeke* (Albertyn: Librarius Felicitas, 1983).

members of communities to counter the officially constructed knowledge.⁷ In some instances, schools became battlegrounds and were identified as ‘areas of unrest’ during the State of Emergency of 1985, which was renewed annually until 1989.

Under these conditions of contested apartheid schooling and before the period of political transition in South Africa in the 1990s, Holocaust education was driven by Jewish community organisations and Jewish day schools. At Jewish Day Schools, Holocaust education was incorporated into the Jewish Studies programme which covered a broad history of Jewry from ancient times until the present. Moreover, the “informal curriculum of Holocaust education, that included the annual Yom HaShoah commemoration, extended throughout the school years”.⁸ In some instances, the Holocaust was taught as a means to create awareness of apartheid but this was through the initiative of an individual teacher and not part of the curriculum or policy.⁹



Apart from an exhibition held in 1985 to mark the 40th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the Jewish community’s education programmes did not place the

⁷ Some teachers provided alternative texts as supplements or correctives to the official texts. Communities including parents, teachers and academics joined forces to develop an alternative to apartheid education: for example, at the first consultative conference on education held on the 28-29 December 1985, at the University of the Witwatersrand, the Soweto Parents’ Crises Committee defined People’s Education as that which “enables the oppressed to understand the evils of apartheid and prepares them, for participation in a non-racial, democratic system; [and which] eliminates capitalist norms of competition and individualism... and encourages collective input and participation by all, as well as stimulating critical thinking”. The National Education Crises Committee was formed at this meeting, and developed People’s Education that gave guidelines for a post-apartheid education system. Students formed resistance organisations e.g. Congress of South African Students (COSAS), the South African National Students Congress (SANSCO) and Western Cape Student’s Congress. On 6 October 1990, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) was launched. It brought together a range of teacher organisations into a unitary structure with a progressive vision. SADTU “challenged the legitimacy of ethnic education departments and made an important contribution to the struggle for non-racialism in South Africa”. (<http://www.sadtu.org.za/show.php?id=2448>, accessed 23 March 2013.)

⁸ Richard Freedman, conversation with author, 25 March 2013. Cape Town.

⁹ See for example, Marlene Silbert’s account of her teaching about the Holocaust in a Jewish Day School in Marlene Silbert, “The Holocaust and Apartheid: A South African Experience” in *Working to Make a Difference*, ed. Samuel Totten (Lanham: Lexington Press, 2003), 173-190; Ronnie Mink, interview with author, 4 July 2013, Cape Town.

history of the Holocaust in any local context, and presented it as disconnected from the time and country in which it was exhibited. Holocaust education before 1994 could be characterized as being disconnected from the broader classroom, and reflected an understanding of the Holocaust as something ‘unique’ and in no way similar or comparable to any other moment in history, and certainly not in any way connected to the reality of South Africans living under apartheid. This was not surprising, as should a teacher suggest that the racial ideology informing National Party policy was in any way similar to Nazi racial ideology, or that the strategies employed by the National Party in imposing its worldview, and in constructing a racial state in many ways mirrored Nazi policy, they could find themselves vulnerable to disciplinary action.¹⁰



In state schools, the curriculum required teachers to do no more than briefly describe the persecution of Jews. There was no need to mention the genocidal policies embarked upon after 1939. The term, *Holocaust*, did not appear in school textbooks until the early 1990s and the historical period was tucked into a small corner as part of Nazi internal policy, with usually no more than a passing reference. No mention was made of the racial theories on which the Nazis built their state, or of the comparisons between the racial laws passed by the Nazis and those of the National Party. Its absence from most textbooks meant that unless teachers had a personal connection to the history, and/or financial means to access alternative teaching resources, or had attended courses in Holocaust history, any manifestation of Holocaust education was indeed very circumscribed. There was little chance it would undermine in any way the racial state that the National Party was successfully constructing nor challenge the construction of identity along racial and ethnic lines.

¹⁰ See for example, Linda Chisholm, "The Democratization of Schools and the Politics of Teachers' Work in South Africa," *Compare* 29, no. 2 (1999): 115.

Connections between the history of National Socialism's racism and the racism of the National Party had been made in other public spaces such as synagogues, churches, and the media even as World War II ended. While anti-apartheid activists continued to reference the Holocaust in their critique of apartheid, other public spaces did so less regularly after 1948, if at all.¹¹

Political change and curriculum reform

One of the key pillars of the apartheid system to be dismantled after 1994 was the education system, and the various curricula on which the system had rested. The advent of democracy in 1994 brought with it the consolidation of the 19 departments into one National Education Department with nine provincial departments.¹² Much has been written about the process of curriculum reform, and the impact of political change on the shape of curricula.¹³ Tracking of curriculum reform during the first three decades of democracy in South Africa reveals an increasingly prescriptive approach taken by the Department of Education on matters of content and methodology. The first post-apartheid curriculum saw the yoke of authoritarian

¹¹ See for example, Gilbert, "Jews and the Racial State,"; Sally Frankental and Milton Shain, "Accommodation, Apathy and Activism: Jewish Political Behaviour in South Africa," *Jewish Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (1993): 5-12; Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*.

¹² Although curriculum reform began after the 1994 elections, the state education system had been moving towards integration as early as 1990. See Jansen, "Race for Education Policy," 12, for a discussion of the "policy race" in the early 1990s in "anticipating the formal and legal termination of apartheid." In 2009 the National Department of Education was divided into the Department of Basic Education (primary and secondary schooling) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (tertiary study).

¹³ See for example Jansen, "Race for Education Policy"; Noel Chabani Manganyi, "Public Policy and the Transformation of Education in South Africa," in Sayed and Jansen eds. *Implementing Education Policies*, 25-37; Nazir Carrim, "Democratic Participation, Decentralisation and Educational Reform," in Sayed and Jansen eds. *Implementing Education Policies*, 98-109; John Welton, "Building Capacity to Deliver Education in South Africa?" in Sayed and Jansen eds. *Implementing Education Policies*, 174-187; Yusuf Sayed, "Post-apartheid Educational Transformation: Policy Concerns and Approaches," in Sayed and Jansen eds. *Implementing Education Policies*, 250-270; Cliff Malcolm, "Implementation of Outcomes-based Approaches to Education in Australia and South Africa: a Comparative Study," in Sayed and Jansen eds. *Implementing Education Policies*, 200-239; Gail Weldon, "Memory, Identity and the Politics of Curriculum Construction in Transition Societies: Rwanda and South Africa," *Perspectives in Education* 27, no. 2 (June 2009): 177-189; Linda Chisholm's paper, "The Politics of Curriculum Review and Revision in South Africa," presented at the Oxford International Conference on Education and Development, at the session on Culture, Context and the Quality of Education, 9-11 September 2003; Fataar, "Education Policy Reform."

apartheid education thrown of an approach that drew on Freirian pedagogy being embraced. This approach was learner-centred and provided teachers with much greater freedom to develop a curriculum to be taught.¹⁴ However, this curriculum was criticised for leapfrogging over the reality of the situation in which many teachers found themselves in 1994, and was itself replaced by two successive curricula that prescribed both the content to be taught and the manner in which the content was to be taught and evaluated.¹⁵

Weldon posits that the shape that curricular reform took was a product of the nature of the political transition, arguing that the “first period of policy making was characterised by the politics of compromise in the interests of a peaceful transfer of power and of national reconciliation.”¹⁶ Sayed characterised the first period of policy development as “essentially a period of ‘accommodation and adaptation’....”¹⁷

Chisholm described the curriculum changes after the 1994 elections as taking place in three “waves”. The first “wave” took place shortly after the 1994 elections and entailed a purging of racism or sexism evident in the curriculum. Following this was the second “wave” launched by Education Minister Bengu in 1997, in the form of Curriculum 2005 (C2005), named for the year by which the new curriculum would have been implemented in all grades. C2005 looked very different from the curricula that had preceded it in a number of ways.¹⁸ Gone was the closely prescribed content,

¹⁴ Malcolm describes a learner-centred curriculum as a “curriculum that is matched to the experiences and context of learners in a particular school and location.” See Malcolm, “Implementation of Outcomes-based Approaches”, 211.

¹⁵ Sayed, “Post-apartheid Educational Transformation,” and Malcolm, “Implementation of Outcomes-based Approaches”.

¹⁶ See Weldon “Memory, identity and politics of curriculum construction”, 180. See also Fataar, “Education Policy Reform”, 641-659.

¹⁷ Sayed, “Post-apartheid Educational Transformation”, 189.

¹⁸ Chisholm, “The Politics of Curriculum Review”. For an analysis of C2005 and the curriculum changes that followed see for example, Weldon “Memory, identity and politics of curriculum

and in its place, came new terminology reflective of the paradigmatic shift in the methodological approach teachers were to embrace.¹⁹ History no longer existed as a discreet subject and became incorporated into a subject called “Arts and Humanities”.

The response of teachers to C2005 suggested that they felt either swamped by this second “wave”, or else dumped by the wave onto an unfamiliar and hostile island, a wave and island they had not been consulted about, leaving them feeling “uninformed and unprepared.”²⁰ Teachers by and large responded with distress to C2005, either because they felt intimidated by a Curriculum that allowed the teachers great choice or because they felt overwhelmed by the political changes. The Curriculum came to symbolise all that was “wrong” and anxiety-provoking. Outcomes-based Education or OBE became a dirty expression for many. The education department failed to help teachers understand or navigate the Curriculum. The Curriculum created a vacuum, and as a result, by and large, teachers continued to do what they had always done, with content and methodology.

construction”; Peter Kallaway, "History in Senior Secondary School CAPS 2012 and Beyond: A comment." *Yesterday and Today* 7 (2012): 23-62; and Sayed and Jansen eds. *Implementing Education Policies*.

¹⁹ See Welton, “Building Capacity to Deliver”, 176-177 and Malcolm, “Implementation of Outcomes-based Approaches”, 209-238.

²⁰ See Weldon “Memory, Identity and Politics of Curriculum Construction”, 10; Welton, “Building Capacity to Deliver”, 180-183; Carrim, “Democratic Participation, Decentralisation and Educational Reform”, 107. See also, Gatian Lungu, “The Educational Policy Process in Post-apartheid South Africa. An Analysis of Structures,” in *Implementing Education Policies: The South African Experience*, eds. Yusuf Sayed and Jonathan Jansen (Cape Town: UCT Press), 92-97. Malcolm points out that “no significant attempts were made to explore teacher’s existing beliefs and practices, interest and hopes, as bases for the reforms.” (“Implementation of Outcomes-based Approaches”, 223). Jonathan Jansen concurs and explains that while teachers were invited to become involved in the “elaboration and implementation of OBE”, the “policy framework” had already been decided upon. (“Explaining non-change in education reform after apartheid: political symbolism and the problem of policy implementation,” in *Implementing Education Policies: The South African Experience*, eds. Yusuf Sayed and Jonathan Jansen (Cape Town: UCT Press), 279). Sayed concludes that the “insufficient attention [was] paid to issues of implementation.” (Sayed, “Post-apartheid Educational Transformation”, 189).

The third wave of curriculum change brought history back into the curriculum.²¹

Based on the recommendations of the Ministerial Review Committee the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) replaced C2005, becoming policy in 2002.

According to Gail Weldon, “[t]he RNCS departed from C2005 in a number of key ways but what remained the same was the methodology of teaching: from an emphasis on rote learning, teachers were now to teach in such a way that developed students’ critical thinking.”²²

The Holocaust and the national History curriculum

The National Department of Education of South Africa incorporated Holocaust history into the RNCS for Grade 9 Social Sciences (History) and into the National Curriculum Statement for Grade 11 history.²³ At a meeting of the CTHC Board of Trustees in December 2001, Gail Weldon in her capacity as Chair of the CTHC’s education committee was asked to explain what had led to Holocaust history being included in the new curriculum. Weldon was well placed to answer the Board’s request, as she was also a member of the national working group responsible for the new curriculum. According to the minutes, Weldon cited the impact that visiting the CTHC had had on teachers as one of the main factors that influenced the inclusion of the history of the Holocaust in the curriculum. Weldon explained to the Board that

²¹ History returned to the curriculum albeit sharing with Geography, the subject called “Social Sciences”.

²² Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town. See also Mark Mason “Outcomes-based Education in South African Curricular Reform: A Response to Jonathan Jansen,” *Cambridge Journal of Education* 29, no. 1 (1999): 137-143.

²³ The NCS was introduced to Grade 10 in 2006, and Grade 11 in 2007. Siebörger considers a ‘signal achievement of the NCS’ to be its “continuity with the RNCS.” See Rob Siebörger, “A Reply to Peter Kallaway: ‘History in High School 2012: A Comment. Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement. History Grades 10-12’”, Seminar at School of Education, University of Cape Town (9 May 2012), 2. Accessed 3 September 2015, http://www.education.uct.ac.za/sites/default/files/image_tool/images/104/replytopeterkallaway.pdf

teachers had felt that learning about the Holocaust had “assisted them in dealing with sensitive issues from South Africa’s recent past.”²⁴

Although she did not repeat this as a reason when asked the same question in an interview with the author in 2015, Weldon recalled that the inclusion of the Holocaust in the Curriculum was “was fairly much a given,” considering its importance as an historical event.²⁵ Weldon pointed out that the Curriculum Committee was mindful that including the Holocaust in the curriculum would reflect school curricula around the world, which also came to include Holocaust history. Furthermore, the Curriculum Committee considered the Holocaust’s significance in post-war thinking around human rights issues. This was important “given that the National Curriculum was meant to be a Human Rights Curriculum.”²⁶ The Committee felt that Holocaust history was valuable “in looking at what could’ve happened, particularly in the South African context if the while notion of segregation and race-based divisions was taken to its ultimate.”²⁷ The Committee concluded that it needed to pull the history of the Holocaust out from within a general history of World War II because of its impact on “defining the concept of genocide and Human Rights.”²⁸

Weldon explained that the Curriculum Committee had been worried that Grade 9 students were too young to learn about the Holocaust. However, because Grade 9 was

²⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees, 5 December 2001. Cape Town. CTHC Collection.

²⁵ Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town. Despite Weldon’s description of the inclusion of Holocaust history in the curriculum as being “a given”, her explanation of the reason for the inclusion of the history of the genocide in Rwanda in the curriculum points to there not being the same consensus on the place of Holocaust history in the curriculum, beyond the Curriculum Committee. Weldon explained that the history of the genocide in Rwanda was included as a reminder that the Holocaust “was not a unique condition of human kind and also to see that there is a balance, that there were other issues, that this hasn’t been something that happened once and wasn’t going to happen again...if we’re going to learn from the past ... you have to understand that it’s in all of us and it can happen elsewhere.”

²⁶ Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town.

²⁷ Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town.

²⁸ Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town.

the last year of compulsory schooling and the last year where all subjects were mandatory, the curriculum developers decided to include the Holocaust in Grade 9, as they were determined that all the students learn about the Holocaust.²⁹ The time allocated for teaching about the Holocaust indicated its importance.³⁰ The Holocaust also formed a significant part of the Grade 11 History curriculum.³¹ The prominence of the Holocaust was also reflected in textbooks.³²

The RNCS for Grade 9 followed a chronological approach to the history of the Holocaust but also required that students consider the “choices made by people” during the Holocaust. The module began in 1919, with a study of the rise of the Nazi party, and the fall of Weimar. The module ended in 1945, with a brief section on the Nuremberg Trials. In Grade 11, the Holocaust was framed as a case study of the impact of Social Darwinism, pseudo-scientific theories of race and Eugenics. Although the curriculum developers cited Holocaust history and apartheid as case studies of human rights violations, the RNCS did not make any other explicit connections between the two histories.

²⁹ Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town.

³⁰ The module on the Holocaust was second only to the history of apartheid in terms of the amount of time prescribed for the teacher to teach the section. The teacher is instructed to spend at least 15 lessons on the Holocaust – this works out to one out of the four terms in the school year.

³¹ History is an elective area of study in Grade 11.

³² For a discussion of the representation of the Holocaust in textbooks, see Peter Carrier, Eckhardt Fuchs, and Torben Messinger, *The International Status of Education about the Holocaust: a Global Mapping of Textbooks and Curricula*, (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2015), and Zehavit Gross and E. Doyle Stevick, eds. *As the Witnesses Fall Silent: 21st Century Holocaust Education in Curriculum, Policy and Practice*. (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2015). Both texts include references to South Africa. The “South African experience” is based on an analysis of five History textbooks. The rationale for choosing those particular textbooks is not given, and thus one does not know whether the textbooks are widely used or not. Unfortunately, the analysis does not consider key variables such as which textbooks teachers choose to use and what influences their choice – if they have a choice in the matter; how teachers use the textbooks; what access teachers and students have to textbooks – an issue that remains a fraught one in certain parts of South Africa; and the perceptions history teachers and their students across South Africa have of the value and usefulness of textbooks. Gross and Stevick, conclude that textbooks understate the “historical specificity of the Holocaust,” 141.

By 2007, when the RNCS was implemented for Grade 9, the CTHC had for all intents and purposes become the main service provider of Holocaust education training for teachers in South Africa, providing teacher training workshops in seven of the nine provinces. The CTHC was also the main NGO providing Holocaust education programmes for high school students. The only other NGO providing Holocaust education programmes was Shikaya, which had been established by Dylan Wray and Weldon. The CTHC and Shikaya differed vastly in the reach and focus of their Holocaust education work.³³

The South African National Department of Education (DOE) framed the Holocaust education as transformatory, as a way of bringing about a more humane society, where the human rights enshrined in the country's constitution were protected. Holocaust history was cast as a teacher of 'lessons for humanity', and a vehicle for human rights.³⁴ This was very similar to the way in which Archbishop Tutu had framed Holocaust education at the opening of the CTHC in 1999, and the way in which the CTHC identified itself.³⁵

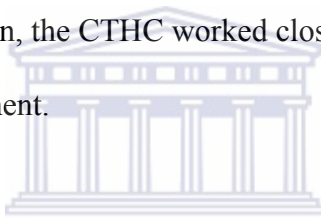
³³ Whereas all the programmes of the CTHC have the Holocaust as their focus, only a quarter of Shikaya's programmes include Holocaust education. The reach of the CTHC is substantially greater than that of Shikaya's. By 2010, staff of the CTHC, had facilitated workshops in seven of the nine provinces of South Africa, and had reached two thousand teachers, whereas in the same time period, Shikaya's Holocaust education programmes were conducted in the Western Cape province and had reached approximately 350 teachers.

³⁴ The National Department of Education described History as "promoting human rights" and making a "crucial contribution to transforming society..." (National Department of Education: Learning Programme Guidelines, January 2008, accessed 3 May 2012, <http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=x8iXsnJdqNU=>.) In the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, the DOE describes the study of History supporting citizenship within a democracy by inter alia, "promoting human rights and peace by challenging prejudices involving race, class, gender, ethnicity and xenophobia..." See the "Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Social Sciences Grades 7-9", (Pretoria: Government Printing Works, 2011), 9.

³⁵ The excerpt quoted from Archbishop Tutu's letter to the Centre on the occasion of its opening in August 1999, is as follows: "We learn about the Holocaust so that we can become more human, more gentle, more caring, more compassionate, valuing every person as being of infinite worth so precious that we know such atrocities will never happen again and the world will be a more humane place." The quote appears as the final panel in the Centre's exhibition, and is repeated in the educational materials developed by the Centre and used in the education programmes for teachers and students. The educational materials developed by the CTHC are called "Lessons for Humanity."

The framing of Holocaust education as part of a human rights project had implications for what was taught, and equally how it was taught.

The teacher training programmes of the CTHC evolved over a number of years, adapting to the changing needs of teachers attending the programmes, the changing in the demands of the curriculum, and a growing call from certain staff within the education team for the programmes to be considered critically in the light of relevant research. The CTHC's teacher training curriculum was informed by programmes of other main centres such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), as well as its relationship with the Western Cape Provincial Education Department. From its inception, the CTHC worked closely with the Western Cape Provincial Education Department.



The education programmes of the CTHC assumed that an understanding of the relevance of the Holocaust would prevent the legacies of prejudice of the past playing themselves out over again. The programmes assumed that the only path to understanding the relevance of the Holocaust was to provide content about it.

Consequently, the first generation of teacher training programmes from 1999-2007 was content-heavy. The main premise presented to the teachers during the period 1999–2007 was that learning about the Holocaust would bring about reconciliation and a better future. A variety of audio-visual resources were used to illustrate the content. The dominant approach taken by the programme could be described as “look, listen and learn”, or less generously as “shock and awe”. Whilst participants were encouraged through the use of case studies of contemporary human rights abuses, to draw connections between contemporary human rights abuses and those committed during the Holocaust, the feedback process remained “facilitator-centred.” The

facilitator summarised and reframed the feedback from the small group discussions to fit the basic premise on which the workshops were based. The participants were shown the educational resources produced by the CTHC, but as there was no funding available at that time to provide educators with the resources, they were obliged to purchase the resources if they wanted to take them back to their classroom.

Many teachers had very little knowledge of the Holocaust when the roll-out of the RNCS began. The teacher programmes responded to the teacher's need for content and support in teaching an unfamiliar and emotionally taxing section of the curriculum. The programme was also an expression of the emphasis that had characterised the CTHC's development, on displaying or relaying content, so that all ills would be cured. Furthermore, the National Education Department was struggling to provide adequate support to teachers, resulting in a steadily declining morale.³⁶

The teachers responded to the programmes provided by the CTHC with great enthusiasm, and more than a small measure of relief, as expressed during the programme and in comments in evaluations.³⁷ These comments suggested that part of the relief expressed arose from experiencing a methodology that was familiar and reassuring. This was a lecturing style where the teacher, in this instance, the CTHC staff member, held all the knowledge and the students, in this instance, the teachers, were grateful, empty and respectful vessels. Moments of dissatisfaction with this casting of roles when voiced, were few and far between, and remained quiet murmurs expressed in the evaluation forms completed by teachers.³⁸

³⁶ Kimberley Porteus et al., *Values, Education and Democracy. School-based Research Report: Opening Pathways for Dialogue*. Pretoria: Department of Education. 2002.

³⁷ CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

³⁸ These responses were not included in the reports sent to the Education Department. The critical voices did add weight however, to the decision taken by the education team to adjust the programmes. The expressions of discontent came from a handful of teachers who were younger and teaching at

One should be cautious about concluding that the positive response was due merely to the comfort found in a familiar methodology, however. Many of the teachers expressed their gratitude at having had the opportunity to talk about their experiences of prejudice or of having been witnesses to prejudice during apartheid. Despite the feedback from the group discussions being “facilitator controlled”, the small group discussions allowed teachers who would not have had much reason to talk to one another a handful of years before, to do so. The conversations that teachers commented on in their evaluations of the programme were not about the methodology of history teaching, or the content of the history. Rather these were conversations that had allowed them an opportunity to air their opinions and their experiences of their past, and to do so publicly in their small groups in front of teachers whom the apartheid system had classified as “different” to them. Teachers’ responses suggested that they found the ground levelled in the small groups, allowing them to share their “primary narratives” of apartheid, and make others listen to them. In the small groups, teachers said that they felt like they had been heard.

In other words, an assessment of the value of the first generation programmes must include an acknowledgement of work the programmes did. They appeared to fill a void that the Education Department was not addressing. How one teaches about a traumatic past when one has direct experience of a different traumatic past, was not an issue that the National Department had the resources to look at in any sustained and extensive way. The conversations in the small groups were not about the Holocaust, or how to teach it, but about what it meant to be a teacher in the new dispensation;

schools that could be regarded as the elite of the government schools in Cape Town. However, the effusive praise came from teachers of all ages, all of whom had had the experience of apartheid schooling.

what it meant to be a teacher who had lived through the apartheid. And the opportunity to talk about this was clearly what teachers wanted to do.³⁹

The positive responses of teachers to the “lecturing, facilitator-centred” approach of the programmes complicated the process of redesigning the programmes. However, a number of factors caused the methodology of the teacher programmes to be changed. The appointment of new staff with different teaching approaches and more recent experience in the classroom gave rise to increasing pressure from within to re-structure the programme. The new staff argued that the CTHC’s methodology undermined the Curriculum’s required pedagogy as well as the aim of the CTHC to support the building of a human rights culture. Feedback from curriculum advisors and teachers and the partnership with FHAO through Facing the Past (FtP) resulted in the call being heeded that providing educators and students with content alone would not suffice.⁴⁰ Programmes had to provide a methodology congruent with that methodology expected of teachers by the National Department.

³⁹ The South African teacher carried a large part of the burden of responsibility for social transformation. However, what appears to have been overlooked by the South African National Department of Education and often by teachers themselves, is the other burden South African teachers bear: the memory of their experience of having lived in a racial state, and how this experience shaped and shapes their identity even today. It is in the History classroom in particular, that the teacher feels the weight of these burdens. Without teachers having access to appropriate spaces outside the classroom to examine their past, the classroom becomes potentially the site for the teacher to express their pain - with students ill-prepared - understandably - to contain the teacher’s emotions.

⁴⁰ Some of the language used by the workshops showed the influence of the partnership with FHAO, as teachers were taught about “bystanders”, “upstanders”, “resistors”, “rescuers”, “victims”, “perpetrators”, and the idea of a continuum of behaviour and responses to events. However, this aspect of the workshop became increasingly contentious for the various facilitators, with the Cape Town facilitation team eventually calling for the terms to be replaced as they were encouraging teachers to label an individual as a bystander or resistor, without understanding either the complexity of responses or the possibility that someone could display bystander behaviour, but could also change that behaviour and display resistance. The term “perpetrator” and “victim” proved equally problematic as teachers tended to want to freeze individuals into those categories, and failed to understand that behaviour was not fixed to an individual but the product of a process of the person’s assessment of the situation: an assessment that could change and was not merely determined by past experiences, class or degree of privilege.

The second generation of programmes, increasingly referred to as teacher “workshops” moved away from a “show and tell” presentation of the history of the Holocaust, to a programme that reflected an appreciation of the importance of how teachers taught. When funding became available in 2008 to provide workshop participants with the CTHC’s educational resources for them to take back to their classrooms, it became possible to develop activities that would equip teachers to use the resources as effective teaching tools.

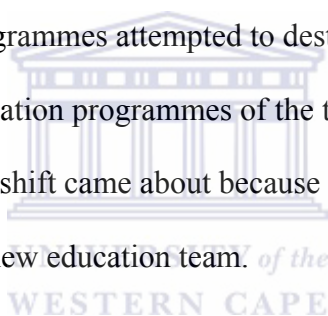
The facilitators’ modelling of best practice and the acknowledgement of teachers’ knowledge were two of the most profound shifts in the methodology of the workshops for teachers. Instead of describing to teachers what they “should” teach, as had been the case in the first generation programmes, the facilitators allowed teachers to experience the teaching strategies through seeing them in action being modelled by the facilitators, and participating in the activities. The second shift was to begin each session with ways of including the knowledge teachers brought with them of the subject, thereby acknowledging that teachers were not a-contextual, or *tabulae rasa*.

The experience of working with teachers in KwaZulu Natal in 2006 and Bloemfontein in 2007 and the partnership with the apartheid museum proved influential in moving the education team to integrate references to apartheid history into the programmes in such a way that it was not diminished as being a “lesser evil”. The second generation workshops challenged teachers to consider the history of the Holocaust through identity construction and the relationship between individual prejudice and institutionalised discrimination. The programmes encouraged teachers to reflect on the dynamics involved in the process of the construction of their identities within the context of a racial state, and within the changed landscape of South Africa after 1994.

Various strategies such as writing in “journals” or placing questions or comments onto newsprint which could be responded to at agreed upon moments during the programme, were introduced to allow teachers the space to engage actively throughout the programme, and not only during the designated “case study” session of the programme.

While teachers were being encouraged to examine their personal and professional identities, the second generation teacher programmes encouraged education team facilitators to signal their “positions” as “collegial” – as opposed to the omnipotent senior “experts” or Subject authorities - by referring to their experience as teachers.

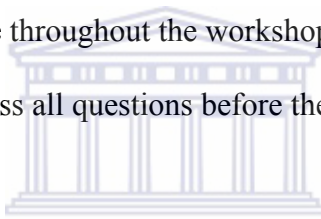
The second generation of programmes attempted to destabilise the identities presented by the first generation of education programmes of the teachers as passive and the facilitators as the actors. This shift came about because of the response of teachers as much as the influence of the new education team.



It became clear to the facilitators that their positioning of themselves as “neutral narrators” of the history of the Holocaust and apartheid as well was a problem. And the question of the relationship between the Holocaust, the state of Israel and Palestine, was an “elephant in the room”. An intervention from one of the teachers attending the first teacher workshop in Bloemfontein in 2006 questioned the facilitator’s explanation of race as a social construct and conclusion that “race did not exist”, and complained that images shown of the genocide in Rwanda, “exploited black bodies”. This moment was a reminder to the facilitators that they could not assume a position of neutrality as not only had they, like the teacher participants, lived through apartheid, but they were also seen by the participants through lenses

shaped by apartheid. However, this incident was not shared with other members of the CTHC.

Questions about Israel and Palestine were by and large voiced in written evaluations. A teaching strategy subsequently used in teacher workshops, called the “bus stop” served as a “parking bay” for the “elephant” question of the relationship between the facilitators, Israel’s policies concerning Palestine and the Holocaust. The “bus stop” was a piece of newsprint onto which participants were invited to write any questions or issues they wanted to have addressed during the course of the workshop. The strategy appeared to assure teachers that their question was being taken seriously, as the questions remained visible throughout the workshop, and the facilitators made explicit their promise to address all questions before the end of the workshop.



The eruption of xenophobic violence in May 2008 affected the development of the second generation of programmes. A section on the South African Bill of Rights was included, and the case studies removed. The xenophobic violence was a haunting indicator to Nates, Petersen, Cohen and me, as the education team, of the shortcoming of the assumption that a rejection of the violence meted out by the Nazis seventy odd years before was also an indication of an ability to reject similar violence meted out in one’s backyard.

The response to the new programmes was overwhelmingly positive from both the teachers and the Department personnel who attended and to a certain extent, this reassured both the Director of the SAHGF Richard Freedman, and Marlene Silbert, who had viewed the restructured programmes with some scepticism.

A number of assumptions linked the two generations of programmes. The programmes assumed that teaching the history of the Holocaust would bring about social transformation.⁴¹ It was assumed that teachers would be agents of change and would in turn, teach their students to be change agents. The third assumption related to what teachers knew about human rights. The fourth assumption was that all teachers accepted of the importance and value of developing a human rights culture.⁴² The fifth assumption was that teachers were skilled enough to teach critical thinking, and, finally, that they viewed the development of critical thinking as an important objective.

The first basic assumption was that learning about the Holocaust would lead to positive behaviour. James Young asks of Holocaust education, “To what end are people moved? To what historical conclusions, to what understanding or actions in their own lives?”⁴³ The CTHC’s answer was that people would learn from the Holocaust important ethical and moral lessons. Armed with this information, they would be moved to become active citizens in a democracy, responding with compassion and respect for the dignity of others.

⁴¹ In papers delivered at the Inaugural Conference of the Federation of International Human Rights Museums (FIHRM) at Liverpool, in 2010, both the education director and the Director of the SAHGF reiterated this view of teachers held by the SAHGF. See Tracey Petersen, “Holocaust Education in Post-apartheid South Africa – Impetus for Social Activism or a Short-lived Catharsis?” and Richard Freedman, “Creating a Voice for Human Rights: the Work of the South African Holocaust Foundation in Holocaust Education in South Africa.” This notion was in line with the National Department of Education’s rationale for the inclusion of the history of the Holocaust as mandatory for all Grade 9 students, and part of the Grade 11 History syllabus. Furthermore, both the SAHGF and the Department of Education viewed teachers as purveyors or facilitators of the process of transformation, as “agents of change”. In a paragraph headed, “The kind of teacher that is envisaged”, the Department stated that, “[a]ll teachers and other educators are key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa.” (Policy Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools) Overview, Gazette No.: 23406, Vol. 443, (May 2002), 9. Furthermore, the CAPS document cites “Social Transformation” as the first in a list of principles on which the National Curriculum is based. Thus, the teacher is identified as crucial in the bringing about of social transformation. (the “Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, Grades 10-12, History”, (Pretoria: Department of Education, 2011).

⁴² Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town.

⁴³ Young, *The Texture of Memory*, 13.

There were a number of challenges to this basic assumption, however. The first question was whether feelings of anguish and indignation were enough to galvanise and sustain social activism. Studying the Holocaust might support and build a human rights culture, but it did not automatically follow that knowledge of the Holocaust was enough to bring about positive attitudinal change or behavioural change. Annegret Ehmann sounded a critical warning for Holocaust education:

...no empirical surveys on the direct or long-lasting effects of Holocaust education exist to support the assertion that knowledge about the atrocities suffered by Holocaust victims will guarantee that students make a successful transfer to desirable behaviour in a contemporary context: accepting diversity, respecting cultural differences, taking over responsibility, participating actively in democracy, defending actively human rights when they are violated, helping and caring for the discriminated and persecuted today.⁴⁴

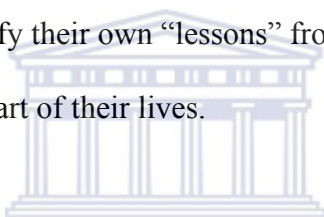
The second generation of teacher training programmes reflected the increasing awareness by some of the members of the education team of Ehmann's caveat. This insight was also supported by Holocaust scholar Tim Cole, who spent time at the CTHC in 2008 as a Visiting Scholar. Members of the education team argued that the CTHC had to look critically at its belief that the Holocaust had lessons to teach, and that these lessons were ethical in nature and morally uplifting, any more so than any other period of history.⁴⁵

Within the team came the call for the SAHF to acknowledge that its despite the liberal aspirations for its education programmes, historical events did not occur in order that future generations could learn to be more human. Put differently, the past could be recruited to teach whatever lessons the teacher wished it to 'teach'. The past could be

⁴⁴ Ehmann, "Learning from History: Seminars on the Nazi Era and the Holocaust for Professionals," 608.

⁴⁵ In October 2007, the CTHC Board of Trustees established the South African Holocaust Foundation to act as a means of managing the Holocaust Centres in Durban and Johannesburg. From this date, the education programmes are presented in the name of the SAHF. In 2010, the SAHF became the SAHGF. However, the staff developing and facilitating the workshops came primarily from the CTHC. For ease of use I will use the term CTHC unless the policies of the CTHC, SAHF and SAHGF differ.

used to teach bigotry and justify human rights abuses. While all the members of the education team agreed that one could find resonance in events of the past, and that this resonance could impact positively on behaviour and attitudes, I and the rest of the education team argued the caveat that teachers should not assume that simply telling students what moral lessons they could learn from the Holocaust, would attain their agreement.⁴⁶ The experiences with teachers amplified the call from within the SAHF team for an assessment of the relevance of this caveat for the SAHGF facilitators, as much as for high school History teachers tasked with teaching Holocaust history. The challenge to Holocaust teachers and, in turn for the trainers of Holocaust teachers, was to allow time for students to reflect and find for themselves the meaning in the history. They needed to identify their own “lessons” from the history, and through that, to make these a central part of their lives.



While the debate about the methodology adopted by the facilitators continued within the SAHGF’s education team, especially around teacher training and the programmes with high school students, there was still an agreement that the teacher’s role in the “new” South Africa was that of the builder of a society in which the values of the Constitution were upheld. Teachers were deemed responsible for “infusing the classroom with a culture of human rights.”⁴⁷ Implicit in this construction was the assumption that educators not only understood which values the Constitution upheld, but that they perceived these values also to be of value to them. Research conducted

⁴⁶ See Tracey Petersen, "Lessons for Humanity: the Museumisation of Intangible Heritage," *South African Museums Association Bulletin* 32 (2006): 29-36; "Moving Beyond the Toolbox: Teaching Human rights through Teaching the Holocaust in Post-apartheid South Africa," *Intercultural Education* 21, no. S1 (2010): S27-S31.

⁴⁷ The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) cites “ten fundamental values of the Constitution” identified by the *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (2001) as being: democracy; social justice and equity; non-racism and non-sexism; ubuntu (human dignity); an open society; accountability (responsibility); respect; the rule of law; and reconciliation. See Policy Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools) Overview, 7. The overview to the RNCS describes as the challenge to the RNCS, the interweaving across the curriculum, of the “goals and values of social justice, equity and democracy”. Policy Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools) Overview, 8.

in 2002 to gauge South African teachers' attitudes about the values they considered important, challenged these assumptions, and in turn influenced the SAHGF's programmes.⁴⁸

The 2002 research contained in *Values, Education and Democracy Report* revealed that many teachers were ambivalent about human rights, as they believed that the lack of discipline among students was the fault of a human rights culture. The research also revealed that many teachers had little knowledge of the general concept of human rights nor of the particulars of the South African Bill of Rights. The findings of this report had serious implications for the SAHF's education programmes, for as long as teachers had an ambivalent attitude towards human rights, any impact the learning about past injustices had on students would be undermined. The SAHF took the position that teachers were a critical factor in determining whether students put into practice their spoken commitment to human rights.⁴⁹ Teachers set the tone for the class: they created an environment in the class that could either nurture the students' commitment to human rights values, or undermine it. Teacher training programmes thus had to make the bridge from an abstract and often inaccurate, understanding of human rights to something that was concrete, relevant and essential.

The 2002 report challenged another assumption on which the goals of the SAHGF and National Department of Education (DoE) were based. This was that because teachers might consider the development of critical thinking skills as a valuable and necessary skill, they would necessarily know how to facilitate the development of

⁴⁸ Kimberley Porteus et al., *Values, Education and Democracy. School-based Research Report: Opening Pathways for Dialogue*. Pretoria: Department of Education. 2002. Silbert, Petersen and Freedman were made aware of the Report in 2009 by Dr Sigamoney Naicker, Chief Curriculum Developer, Western Cape Education Department.

⁴⁹ Petersen, "Holocaust Education in Post-apartheid South Africa."

these skills. The report indicated that teacher support of the idea of developing critical thinking was not enough to have it translated into action in the classroom. The report found that while teachers did not reject the importance of critical thinking, "... they neither engaged with the vision fully, nor believed it was practical in the context of the understanding of teaching and learning."⁵⁰

In my position as newly appointed Education Director of the CTHC, I responded to the findings by arguing that as long as teacher-training programmes treated teachers as automatons for change, as opposed to complex human beings, programmes to encourage teachers to view themselves as agents of social change would falter.

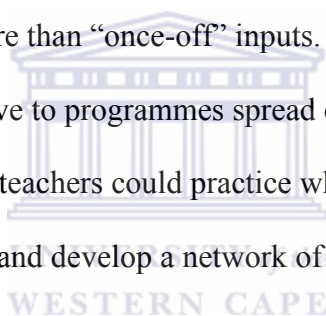
Teacher training programmes had to engage with teachers' contexts.⁵¹ The facilitators needed to employ a methodology congruent with the promotion of human rights education. Informed by the 2002 report, the education team looked at the question of what teacher development programmes should look like in order to facilitate the internalisation of teaching within a human rights framework. Included in the consideration was the idea the programme had to have a session that would help teachers understand what constituted a "human right" and why it mattered. Teachers needed time to reflect on their assumptions and what their responsibilities were in creating a safe learning environment. Thus the facilitators of the second generation teacher programmes began to model teaching and learning that allowed the teacher to experience a safe learning environment, and discover what "critical thinking" entailed, and that it was practical and possible and educationally sound, to encourage critical thinking in their students.

⁵⁰ Porteus et al. *Values, Education and Democracy*, 41.

⁵¹ Petersen, "Lessons for Humanity", "Moving Beyond the toolbox", "Holocaust Education in Post-apartheid South Africa."

As opposed to the earlier generation of programmes that relied heavily on audio-visual resources, the programmes became far more “low-tech”, allowing teachers to replicate and adapt activities for use in their classrooms, regardless of their access to electricity or audio-visual equipment. The “new generation” of teacher training programmes thus acknowledged the circumstances under which most of the teachers worked. Only those resources that educators received were used during the programme. The CTHC’s strategy sought to discourage a response of helplessness and to build the educator’s confidence.

Two developments revealed the SAHGF’s awareness that teacher training programmes needed to be more than “once-off” inputs. The first development was an attempt by the SAHGF to move to programmes spread over a number of sessions. It was hoped that by doing this, teachers could practice what they had experienced, share this with other teachers and develop a network of support and encouragement.⁵²

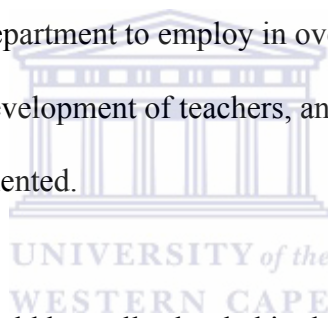


The second involved adopting a new programme of secondment and mentorship of teachers. In 2005 Silbert proposed to the WCED that a teacher be seconded to the CTHC, to work alongside teachers and support their teaching of the part of the Grade 9 curriculum that included the history of the Holocaust.⁵³ A challenge in providing in-

⁵² While the multi-day programmes did take place, a number of factors curtailed the rollout of these programmes in all provinces. A shortage of human resources of the SAHGF made it difficult for staff to be away from the Centres for longer than a day. Secondly, in order to ensure “time on task” was not compromised, certain provinces, in particular the Western Cape and Gauteng would not permit teachers to attend full-day workshops. If a workshop was to be a full day in duration, it had to take place either on the weekend or during school holidays. The SAHGF’s policy was to not work on Saturday, in deference to the wishes of the survivors. The partnerships developed with the Education Departments proved invaluable, as without the overt support of the education departments, teachers were unlikely to attend during their vacation. In the Free State and Mpumalanga teachers were permitted to attend from late morning and in the Eastern Cape, teachers were permitted to have full day workshops over a number of days.

⁵³ The Centre had tried to achieve a closer working relationship with teachers a few years before approaching the Western Cape Education Department with a “Secondment” proposal. Silbert had hoped that Wray would visit teachers at their schools and work with them in that way, but this had not materialised.

service teacher development in South Africa was the deep distrust teachers had of any review within the classroom of the teacher's teaching. The causes of the mistrust were complex and in no small part due to the legacy of the apartheid state's policing of teachers through the system of school inspectors.⁵⁴ The Department had to move very carefully in attempting to institute any system of Quality Assurance that included a review of the teacher's classroom practice through direct observation of the teacher teaching. While teachers would produce activities and tests as proof that the curriculum was being taught, it was difficult to assess to what extent the spirit of the curriculum was being implemented, let alone the methodology the curriculum favoured. A fellow teacher who supported the teacher through "team teaching" might be a useful strategy for the Department to employ in overcoming some of the difficulties in assessing the development of teachers, and the extent to which the curriculum was being implemented.

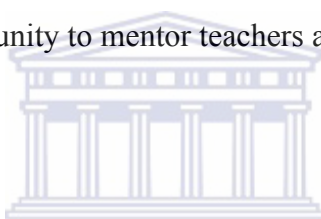


Ideally this fellow teacher would be well schooled in the aims of the Curriculum, and an experienced teacher who would be regarded as a peer, and thus trusted by the teachers with whom she or he would work. A secondment would benefit the CTHC in a number of ways: it would extend the CTHC's education programme to students who were unable to access the CTHC, it would encourage teachers to use the material developed by the CTHC, and it would provide the CTHC with a measure of control over how the material was used and how the history was taught.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Welton, "Building Capacity to Deliver Education," especially 179; Jonathan Jansen, "Autonomy and Accountability in the Regulation of the Teaching Profession: a South African Case Study," *Research Papers in Education* 19, no. 1 (2004): 51; Barath Biputh and Sioux McKenna, "Tensions in the Quality Assurance Processes in Post-apartheid South African Schools," *Compare* 40, no. 3 (2010): especially 281-282 and 288; Chisholm, "Democratisation of Schools," 115; Linda Chisholm et al., *A South African Curriculum for the Twenty-first Century. Report of the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005* (Pretoria: Government Printers, 2000), 10-11.

⁵⁵ Marlene Silbert, personal communication with author, c. October 2005.

The WCED agreed to Silbert's proposal for a seconded teacher. Over the next five years, three teachers were seconded to the CTHC. The "secondment" project was successful insofar as it took the CTHC's educational materials to selected schools as the seconded educators worked with teachers and students at these schools. The seconded educators provided the CTHC and the WCED with a window into the daily schooling taking place. This revealed a distressing story of teacher incompetency, absenteeism and lack of leadership. A lack of clarity from both the WCED and the CTHC about the role of the seconded educator resulted in the secondment "project" having limited success. The seconded educator became in most instances a replacement teacher, as teachers would not appear for class or would leave the class and not return, and the opportunity to mentor teachers and "team teach" did not materialise.⁵⁶



The Holocaust and the national curriculum: the fourth wave of curriculum reform

In 2010 the National Department of Education announced the introduction of the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS).⁵⁷ Described as a means of improving the implementation of the RNCS, CAPS rollout began in 2011, and was completed in 2014.⁵⁸ CAPS was the outcome of the recommendations of a Ministerial Task Team appointed by Education Minister Angie Motshekga in 2009.⁵⁹ The Task Team's Report had recommended that "more explicit direction be given

⁵⁶ Progress reports from Freda Qanya, seconded educator, CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Personal communication with Qanya, c. 2008-2009.

⁵⁷ WCED Circular 49, 2010: "Implementation Plan of the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (Caps) Grades R-12 During The Period 2012-2014." http://wced.school.za/circulars/circulars10/e49_10.html (accessed 22 August 2014)

⁵⁸ See Siebörger, "A reply to Peter Kallaway" for a description of the development of CAPS.

⁵⁹ The National Curriculum Statements Gr R-12 replaced the RNCS and NCS and comprised CAPS GrR-12 for each approved school subject as well as two policy documents namely, the National Policy pertaining to programme and promotion requirements of the NCS Gr R-12 and the National Protocol for Assessment, Gr R-12. Fathima Dada et al., *Report of the Task Team for the Review of the Implementation of the National Curriculum Statement*. October 2009, accessed 20 October 2014, <http://www.education.gov.za/ArchivedDocuments/ArchivedReports/tabid/452/Default.aspx>.

regarding *how to teach*,⁶⁰ concluding inter alia that “[c]ertainty and specificity about what to teach and how to teach it will help to restore confidence and stability in the system”.⁶¹

Illustrating the relationship built up between the SAHGF and members of the education department, the education team was asked in 2012 to give input to the CAPS History curriculum writing group insofar as the section on the Holocaust in Grade 9 and Grade 11. The DoE accepted the recommendations of the SAHGF and were included in the final document for both the General Education and Training (GET) band and the Further Education and Training (FET) band.

CAPS differed from the RNCS in a number of ways.⁶² Of significance to the SAHGF, was the exclusion of the history of the genocide in Rwanda from CAPS Grade 9.⁶³ The only genocide referred to in the Grade 9 Social Sciences (History) and Grade 11 History CAPS, was the Holocaust. Furthermore, the curriculum did not require the teacher to expand on the term “genocide”. Consequently, the term “Holocaust” could become but a synonym for “genocide” and perceived as an aberration of a distant past. By contrast, the SAHGF’s education programmes included a discussion in both the student and teacher training programmes of the term “genocide” and cite the

⁶⁰ Dada, *Report of the Task Team for the Review National Curriculum Statement*, Report writers’ emphasis, 48.

⁶¹ Dada, *Report of the Task Team for the Review National Curriculum Statement*, 61. In 2015, Motshekga described CAPS as specifying “what has to be taught, how it is to be assessed and generally the general approach to the Outcomes Based Education.” Angie Motshekga, speech delivered at the release of NSC Examination Results on Monday, 5 January 2015, accessed 14 September 2015, <http://www.education.gov.za/Newsroom/Speeches/tabid/298/ctl/Details/mid/1749/ItemID/3064/Default.aspx>.

⁶² See Kalloway, “History in Senior Secondary School CAPS,” and Siebörger, “A reply to Peter Kalloway,” for a discussion about the extent to which there was continuity between CAPS and the NCS.

⁶³ This had appeared in a section of the RNCS entitled “Issues of our time”. The SAHGF was not invited to give comment about this section.

genocide in Rwanda and in German South West Africa, as other examples of genocide.⁶⁴

It is ironic that the SAHGF's exhibitions and education programmes have become one of the few public spaces where education about the genocide in Rwanda takes place, considering the ambivalent attitude evident in the founding narrative of the CTHC that downplayed the fact that the Holocaust was an example of genocide.⁶⁵ For the teacher who chooses to teach "beyond the curriculum", the SAHGF has become the key educational resource.⁶⁶

A further excision from the RNCS was a section called "Issues of our time" that had included the "issue" of xenophobia. The SAHGF teacher programmes had incorporated work on xenophobia in the session about Human Rights and the Bill of Rights. However, the SAHGF decided to exclude this session in order to accommodate a new session on history essay writing skills and other further adaptations to the teacher-training programme in order to align with the requirements of CAPS.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ The discrete section in the teacher training programmes on the genocide in Rwanda was removed from the programme in 2013.

⁶⁵ Removing from the exhibition a section that was going to examine other genocides.

⁶⁶ All three Centres have public events that examine the genocide in Rwanda and host annual memorial events commemorating the genocide. Both Durban and Cape Town have a small section in their exhibition that is dedicated to the genocide in Rwanda, and the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre, due for completion in 2017, will include as a major section of its design, the history of the genocide in Rwanda.

⁶⁷ The teacher training programmes do however, still reference the Bill of Rights in an activity designed to examine the Constitution of the Weimar Republic. Similarly, reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the relationship to the South African Constitution and Bill of Rights is made in both school and teacher programmes.

Teaching High School Students about the Holocaust

The factors that affected the shape of the SAHGF's teacher training programmes had a similar impact on the CTHC's programmes developed for high schools. The school programmes developed before 2006 were content-heavy with limited student interaction. The approach of the programmes was determined largely by the fact that very few students had been taught anything about the Holocaust before they arrived at the CTHC.

The CTHC revised the design of the school programmes in response to a number of developments: after Holocaust education had become a feature of the national curriculum, it became less and less the case that schools arrived not having taught their students anything about the Holocaust. Apart from the fact that by 2008, teachers had had a few years of teaching the new curriculum, the CTHC had begun to encourage teachers to see the CTHC as a partner in the process, and not the sole provider of Holocaust education. The new additions to the CTHC education department from 2005 onwards also saw changes in methodology in the high school programmes.

The route to changing the schools programmes was more tortuous than the teacher programmes. This was because the school programmes took place daily and thus there was little time for facilitators or volunteers to adjust to the changes. Secondly, there were far more people invested in the status quo. The people invested in the programmes included the volunteers, many of who were from the first group of volunteers trained when the CTHC opened. The methodology to which they had been exposed was strictly a lecturing style. Many of these volunteers expressed their concern to me that the history of the Holocaust would be neglected if the programme

changed to allocate time for activities where students identified themselves with labels, or took time after visiting the exhibition to do a written debrief. “Debriefing” was seen as an unnecessary waste of time. Monthly meetings were held with the volunteer corps to explain the rationale behind the changes, and to allow volunteers to contribute to the design of the programmes.

From 2006 onwards, the CTHC education team adopted a methodology for the school programmes sensitive to the students and their context, and facilitators began to teach in such a way that modelled a respect for the student, their prior knowledge and their ability to engage critically with the issues raised by the history of the Holocaust.⁶⁸

Simultaneously, the education team began to scrutinise the relationship of the exhibition to the education programme. From 2006, the CTHC introduced a number of activities to facilitate student engagement with the exhibition. Although the volunteers, in particular those who joined after 2008, appeared to understand the value of allowing students the opportunity to engage with the exhibition, the space constraints of the exhibition frustrated attempts at making the exhibition component of the programme more interactive, and students still tended to be “led” through the exhibition being told about the panels by the volunteer guide.⁶⁹

Assessing Holocaust education

The main assessment tool used by the SAHGF to gauge the impact of its programmes was the evaluation form completed by each participant at the end of the programme.

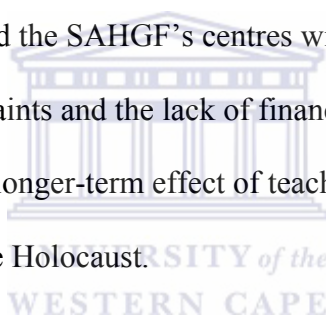
The questions on the evaluation forms were open ended and included questions about what participants found most helpful for them, or what they considered the most important thing they learned from the workshop. Participants were also asked to

⁶⁸ A number of activities were introduced to develop a picture of the students’ “context”, and facilitators were encouraged to adjust the focus of their programme accordingly.

⁶⁹ The Centre’s education team decides the selection of panels that are viewed beforehand.

comment on how they thought the programme might be improved and what they felt was missing from the programme. Time constraints and lack of resources meant that none of the SAHGF's centres had conducted a systematic analysis of the evaluation forms. Anecdotal evidence from teachers concerning the performance of students in formal assessment activities at school was not systematically recorded. An annual writing and art competition begun in 2007 was regarded by the CTHC as another gauge of the impact Holocaust education had on students. However, the response was limited to schools where there were teachers enthusiastic enough to encourage their students to enter.

The evaluation forms provided the SAHGF's centres with a snapshot of the impact of the programmes. Time constraints and the lack of financial and human resources limited the assessment of the longer-term effect of teaching and learning about genocide and in particular, the Holocaust.



Also important, though, is a longer term assessment of the impact of Holocaust education. Since 2009, three research projects began to examine teacher and student responses to Holocaust education. One of these research projects was undertaken by the Joint Educational Trust, commissioned by the Gauteng Department of Education in 2009 to assess the in-service training programme for teachers offered by the partnership between the Apartheid Museum and the SAHGF.⁷⁰

The other two research projects attempted to gauge the perceptions of young South Africans and their teachers of the “longer-term” impact Holocaust education had had

⁷⁰ Aneesha Mayet and Benita Reddi, *Evaluation Report of the Workshops “Understanding Apartheid and the Holocaust” offered by the Apartheid Museum in Conjunction with the Holocaust Centre, in Partnership with the Gauteng Department of Education* (Johannesburg: JET Education Services, 2009).

on them and to discern the meaning teachers and students made of the Holocaust. The motivation for the research projects was to find out what aspect of Holocaust education had “stuck”, and possibly, why.

The research projects differed in scale and subject. One was conducted by an independent research organisation and another by the Education Director of the CTHC. The project conducted by Mthente Research and Consulting Services in 2012 was a national research project of 388 teachers who had participated in in-service training programmes facilitated by the SAHGF from 2007-2011.⁷¹ Whereas the commissioning of the Mthente Report was motivated by the Director’s hope that it would inform funding proposals, the second project was initiated and conducted by me in my capacity as Education Director of the CTHC. Between 2012 and 2013, I conducted a series of focus group interviews with 150 students from Grades 9-12 students from three high schools, and administered questionnaires to 344 Grade 10 High School students from a sample of 14 diverse high schools in and around Cape Town.⁷² Both research projects attempted to probe the lingering impact of encountering Holocaust education, be it in the classroom or at the CTHC.

The Mthente Report found that 98.7% of teachers interviewed said that Holocaust education could build a culture that respected human dignity and human rights. 97.1% of the teachers surveyed said that they had felt motivated to become an “agent of change” after having participated in the teacher training workshops. 93% of the

⁷¹ Eleanor Hazell, *An Evaluation of the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation’s Teacher Training Programme from 2007 to 2011* (Cape Town: Mthente Research and Consulting Services, April 2012).

⁷² The questionnaires comprised a mixture of open-ended and closed questions. The author administered the questionnaires, and remained with the students throughout the period. This allowed her to reassure students of the objectives of the research, and to reassure teachers present that they were not under scrutiny. All ethical considerations were observed for both the facilitation of the focus group interviews and the questionnaires.

teachers felt that Holocaust education could encourage social activism, responsible citizenship, enhance social dialogue at school and 98% felt that following the workshop, they were able to connect human rights abuses of past with present in their teaching about the Holocaust.

A response from one of the teachers was telling of the complexity of responses to Holocaust education:

We would not be human, if it [the history of the Holocaust] did not impact on us, because we can all identify with our history. Our parents and our grandparents in the apartheid era, and now we are living through the democracy. So, we can draw our personal comparisons with their lives ... our experiences are also extended. As much as we are in South Africa, this whole wide world – things did not just go wrong here. Other atrocities occurred and other people suffered. It wasn't just us. So, we are no longer victims.⁷³

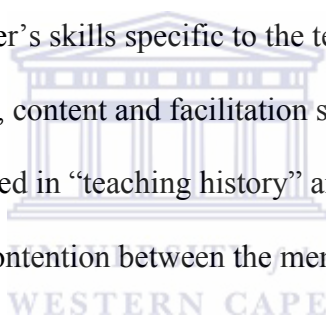
Teachers described having far greater confidence in their ability to teach history after attending the SAHGF's programmes. One of the major developments in the programmes for both teachers and students after 2006 had been to consider Holocaust education as History education, of teaching the Holocaust as history.

The first generation of Holocaust education programmes tended to present Holocaust education as a morality lesson, and gave very little consideration to teaching the Holocaust within a history curriculum. Weldon, in reflecting on her perception of the role played by the CTHC when it first opened, said that she didn't think the CTHC "was ever seen as a place where you went to learn

⁷³ Hazlett, *Evaluation of the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation's Teacher Training Programme*, 40.

how to teach history. You went there to learn more about the Holocaust and the moral stuff.”⁷⁴

The focus of the first generation programmes on the Holocaust as a lesson in morality, was the result of a number of factors. The education director was not a history teacher; there was a need to appeal to and gain as wide an acceptance as possible from the Education Department and thus approaches were made beyond the History Department; there was also an emphasis on cross-curriculum studies in the RNCS. However, the subsequent curriculum developments, and a change in the staff of the CTHC who called for the programmes to develop teacher’s skills specific to the teaching of history, resulted in a shift in emphasis, content and facilitation style in the programmes. What was entailed in “teaching history” and what “history” meant remained a matter of contention between the members of the education team.⁷⁵



The SAHGF has been the only non-governmental organisation offering Holocaust education programmes to high school students.⁷⁶ In the decade and a half since the CTHC opened, over 80 000 high school students had participated in its programmes. In 2012, as Educator Director, I designed a research project that included a series of focus group interviews, and the administering of questionnaires to just fewer than 400

⁷⁴ Gail Weldon, interview by author, 29 April 2015, Cape Town.

⁷⁵ However, the debate remained within the metaphorical walls of the SAHGF, and was not extended to include the voices of historians or methodologists despite there being access to Holocaust historians through the annual visiting scholar programme and regular “public talks”. The lack of dialogue between academics and the Centre staff is revealing of an attitude towards academics that can at best be described as “star struck”, positioning the academic as the “infallible expert” whose role it is to impart knowledge to the grateful Centre. In this hierarchy of expertise, the Centre was then the expert to the less learned below them – the teachers and their students.

⁷⁶ The NPO Shikaya’s Holocaust education programme is limited to teacher training. Shikaya’s high-school student programmes do not include Holocaust education.

high school students from 17 schools in Cape Town.⁷⁷ We had aimed to gauge students' perceptions, their subjective understandings of the impact of Holocaust education, what students remembered and thus what held meaning for them.

The students were asked to say what the word "Holocaust" meant to them. 18% of the students responded that the word suggested genocide or mass murder or ethnic cleansing because of prejudice. 16 % of the students said the word made them think of tragedy and destruction. 26% said that the word meant oppression because of prejudice and discrimination. 12% of the students said that it made them think of "antisemitic segregation". For 8% of the students, the word "Holocaust" meant families being torn apart. 6% mentioned concentration camps and prisoners being worked to death. 5% of the students responded that the "Holocaust" meant the lowest point in human history, and another 3% said that it was the "lowest point of human nature". 3% of the students said that the Holocaust meant the "mass murder of Jewish people". 3% said that the word Holocaust was synonymous with cruelty for them.

A third of the students indicated that "the history" of the Holocaust was most important aspect of learning for them. When asked what was the most important aspect they had learned when they were taught about the Holocaust, two thirds of the students considered learning about why the Holocaust had happened as most significant for them.

⁷⁷ The focus group interviews conducted with twenty-one groups of between five and seven students from Grade 9-12, from three schools. Petersen administered the questionnaires to 344 Grade 10 students who were selected from the systematic sample of 14 schools. All schools had visited the CTHC the year before the research was conducted. In accordance with the National Curriculum, the Grade 10 students at these schools should have been taught about the Holocaust for at least six weeks of the school term in 2012 - the year prior to the research being conducted (i.e. when the students were in Grade 9). Not all the students had necessarily come to the Centre.

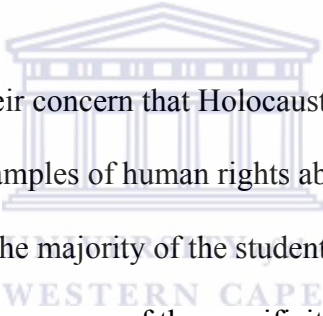
When asked what they remembered about visiting the Holocaust CTHC, 39% of the students spoke about the pictures in the exhibition being the most memorable. Some of the students in the focus group interviews mentioned the moments in the exhibition where individuals were identified either by photograph and caption, or just by name. These findings appeared to support the pedagogical approach of “personalizing the history” by putting faces and names to the history as a way of engaging students with the history of the Holocaust. That students remembered the people in the history was further evident in the fact that a quarter of them recalled the story of victims, survivors and resisters as having most significance for them.

However, while the research provided evidence that approaching histories of trauma through personalising the facts, by combining individual histories and literally giving a name to a face, was successful in building a concern for the history, it suggested a caveat to adopting the “personalising” approach. When asked to explain why they thought the Holocaust had happened, 48% of the students identified Hitler as the sole cause of the Holocaust, and 9% of those students described Hitler in positive terms, either as being “clever”, or a “good leader” or a “good leader who had bad policies”.⁷⁸ The research also indicated neither a recall of historical content, nor an understanding of central issues such as racism, are necessarily supported by adopting the “personalising” approach.

The research revealed that the moral imperative ascribed to Holocaust education, was also adopted by a number of the students. 16% of the students indicated in the questionnaire that learning about the Holocaust had taught them to take action to prevent human rights atrocities from happening again. In the words of one student,

⁷⁸ The remainder 54% is distributed over 16 different responses. 6% of the students named propaganda, 6% ideology and 6% other Germans as the cause of the Holocaust. 6% said they did not know.

“Holocaust is the best thing that you can learn about racism and how to protect democracy.” Of the 16% of students who felt that Holocaust education had called them to action, a quarter said that learning about the Holocaust had made them decide to treat people fairly and not to stereotype; 21% said that people should use the knowledge of the reasons for the Holocaust to prevent and solve other genocides; 17% of the students felt that learning about the Holocaust had taught them not to be prejudiced and another 17% said that they had learnt not to tolerate racism. 8% of the students said that they had learned not to overlook discrimination. 12% of the students said that Holocaust education had taught them to make sure the Holocaust didn’t happen again.



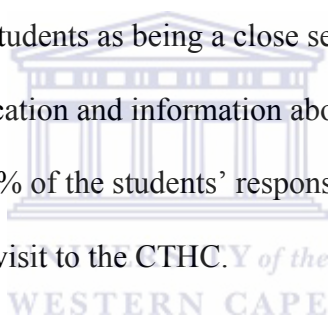
Some scholars have voiced their concern that Holocaust education programmes that include references to other examples of human rights abuses might de-historicise the Holocaust.⁷⁹ The response of the majority of the students refuted this fear, indicating that students were able to retain a sense of the specificity of the Holocaust alongside broader issues of human rights. However, the responses of a few of the students indicated a conflation of Holocaust history and apartheid history. In some instances, students referenced the Holocaust as a way to explain apartheid. One student wrote, “The Nazis were like the whites of South African who only care about themselves.” This comment and a few others have suggested an intriguing construction of “whiteness”, “Jew”, “victim” and “black”.

The research revealed that for some students, learning about the Holocaust helped them to consider the history of apartheid from a different angle, and to view their

⁷⁹ See for example, papers delivered by Michal Marrus, “‘Lessons’ of the Holocaust and the Ceaseless, Discordant Search for Meaning,” and Yehuda Bauer, “Teaching the Holocaust in the 21st Century,” at the 8th International Conference on Holocaust Education, *Telling the Story: Teaching the Core - Holocaust Education in the 21st Century*, 2012, Jerusalem, 18-21 June 2012.

parents and grandparents in a more compassionate light. Many students however, did not perceive Holocaust education as having facilitated an understanding of the history of apartheid. None of the students mentioned apartheid until they were asked directly to consider whether learning about the Holocaust had helped them in any way to learn about apartheid.

While the study indicated where Holocaust education programmes needed to concentrate, on what stayed with students, and what might help teachers in their teaching of the history, the research also gave the CTHC an indication of how students perceived the value of its work in the delivery of Holocaust education. The CTHC was identified by the students as being a close second to their teachers as the most important source of education and information about the Holocaust. The exhibition featured in over 79% of the students' responses to the question about what they remembered about their visit to the CTHC.

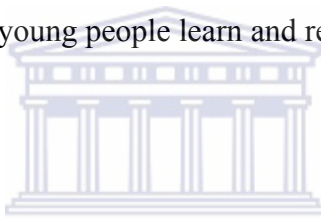


The SAHGF's revisions of the education programmes reflected a growing consciousness on the part of the education team of the challenges involved in teaching a history of atrocity in a society with a recent history of injustice, and in a process of negotiating a present marked by on-going socio-economic hardship.⁸⁰ One of the consequences of the mainstreaming of Holocaust education through its positioning in the national history curriculum was the fact that since 2007 all Grade 9 High School History teachers and their students would have taught and learnt about the Holocaust as an example of gross human rights abuse. The framing of the Holocaust as such holds certain challenges, one being the danger of over-identification with the history of the Holocaust or de-legitimising of one's own history. Holocaust education in

⁸⁰ Evident in the programmes developed and various papers presented by education team members Petersen, Nates and Freedman between 2006 and 2014. CTHC Collection.

South Africa has to negotiate the journey travelled by adult students, from recognition of the commonalities between their own experience of apartheid and certain aspects of the Holocaust, to an understanding of the specifics of Holocaust history, without delegitimising their history, or that of the Holocaust.

Just as teacher training programmes needed to consider the teacher's identity/ies, so too Holocaust education in South Africa needed to avoid decontextualising the student. Holocaust education in South Africa needed to take into consideration the experience children had of growing up with parents who experienced apartheid. The emotional legacy, as well as the socio-economic legacy of apartheid was still very evident, and affected the way young people learn and responded to histories of trauma.

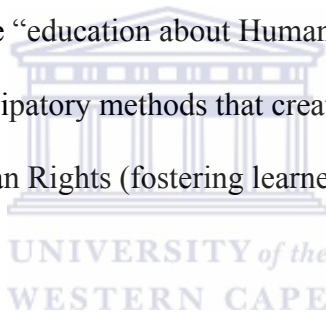


Holocaust education and human rights education of the

Since its founding the CTHC has included in its rationale, its commitment to “creating a more caring and just society in which human rights ... are respected,” and has presented itself as supportive of human rights education (HRE) broadly through its support of the national curriculum.⁸¹ However, there is no evidence of any analysis of the field of human rights education or discourse having been undertaken in the development of the education programmes of the CTHC in the first decade and a half of its existence. Be that as it may, an analysis of the education programmes show that Human Rights Education as defined by scholars of the field, is indeed a feature of the programmes, and not merely a useful and strategic adjective employed cynically without any substance.

⁸¹ See <http://www.etholocaust.co.za/index.htm> (Accessed 14 July 2014). The CTHC's vision and mission has become the SAHGF's vision and mission, and included in the Annual Reviews. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Tibbitts described HRE as an “international movement to promote the awareness about the rights accorded by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) and related rights conventions and procedures that exist for redress.”⁸² She claimed HRE to have both “normative and legal dimensions”.⁸³ Tibbitts explained that HRE included both a “sharing of content about international Human Rights standards”, and a “provision of skills, knowledge and motivation to individuals to transform their lives.”⁸⁴ Expanding on Tibbitts’s analysis in her survey of the literature on HRE Bajaj concluded that, “most scholars agree that HRE must include both content and process related to Human Rights.”⁸⁵ The education programmes of the CTHC and SAHGF came over the course of a decade to include all three “parameters of convergence” referred to by Bajaj. These are “education about Human Rights (cognitive); education through Human Rights (participatory methods that create skills for active citizenry), as well as education for Human Rights (fostering learners’ ability to speak up and act in the face of injustice).”⁸⁶



From the outset, the CTHC framed its Holocaust education programmes as a way to “foster learners’ ability to speak up and act in the face of injustice”, fulfilling Bajaj’s third parameter. Whereas the first generation of education programmes considered “fostering” synonymous with “telling”, from 2006 the activities introduced showed a problematising of such an approach as the education team engaged with the question of how best to “foster” students’ and teachers’ activism. The second generation of teacher and student programmes began to include education about national and international Human Rights legislation and policy (in particular the UDHR and the

⁸² Felisa Tibbitts, “Human Rights Education,” in *Encyclopedia of Peace Education*, ed. Monisha Baja (Charlotte, NC:IAP, 2008): 99-108.

⁸³ Tibbitts, “Human Rights Education,” 103.

⁸⁴ Tibbitts, “Human Rights Education,” 103.

⁸⁵ Monisha Bajaj, “Human Rights Education: Ideology, Location, and Approaches,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 33 (2011): 482.

⁸⁶ Bajaj, “Human Rights Education,” 482.

South African Bill of Rights). This served to expand upon the “Human Rights curriculum” to include the first outcome identified by Bajaj.⁸⁷

The revisions in methodology employed in teacher and student programmes after 2006, discussed earlier in the chapter, indicated a further dimension of Human Rights education being practiced by the CTHC and SAHGF, what Bajaj referred to as “education through Human Rights.”⁸⁸ The methodological approaches employed in the education programmes from 2006 onwards, reflected the pedagogical styles identified by Tibbitts, as being promoted by HRE advocates.⁸⁹

A lack of analysis or awareness of the debates that inform and shape the field of “Human Rights education” could explain why certain shortcomings have gone unrecognised and unchallenged by the SAHGF. One such shortcoming is the emphasis the programmes have placed on individual agency without considering the ways in which institutional discrimination functions and impacts on individual agency.⁹⁰ A second shortcoming relates to the programmes’ focus on notions of “identity” without considering how teaching and learning about identity, be it their own or of historical persons or peoples, might “perpetuate the dominant binary divisions of the world,”⁹¹ and a view of an “essentialised identity.”⁹² This is of particular relevance when considering the centrality of an acceptance of “essentialised

⁸⁷ Bajaj, “Human Rights Education.

⁸⁸ Bajaj, “Human Rights Education.

⁸⁹ Felisa Tibbitts, “Human Rights Education,” 103-104.

⁹⁰ Zvi Bekerman and Michalinos Zembylas, “Some Reflections on the Links between Teacher Education and Peace Education: Interrogating the Ontology of Normative Epistemological Premises,” *Teaching and Teacher Education* 41 (2014): 8. Bekerman and Zembylas challenge the outcomes of teacher education programmes that ignore the “structural, societal disparities and larger political conflicts”. See also Meister for a critique of what he calls the “Global Human Rights Discourse.”

⁹¹ Bekerman and Zembylas, 56.

⁹² Bekerman, and Zembylas, 57.

identity and identities” to the functioning of the apartheid state, and the implications this has for teaching, and learning, in post-apartheid South Africa.

The CTHC facilitators continued to take a position in the programmes as neutral “bridges” connecting the Holocaust, apartheid, racism, prejudice and teachers/students to the “better future”, despite the troubled waters that churned below because of the racialised identities and position of privilege the previous regime apportioned to the facilitators. In his paper, “Pedagogy of Human Rights: a Latin American Perspective” Abraham Magendzo examined the development of human rights education for teachers in Latin America.⁹³ He described as one of the challenges, the fact that teachers “lacked a critical approach to their educational work” and were “not accustomed to questioning the assumptions behind their beliefs, attitudes and behavior.”⁹⁴ Magendzo’s description of teachers in Latin America is useful, I believe, for teachers in post-apartheid South Africa, as well as the facilitators of the teacher training workshops.

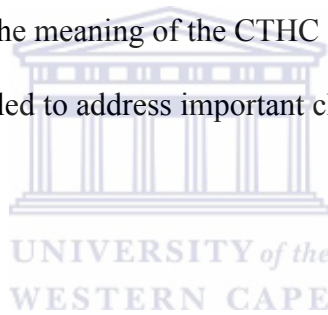
The initial period of consultation with teachers and senior education personnel in the year before the Centre opened fell away as the demands on the CTHC grew. The lack of consultation resulted in a stultifying of methodology and approach. While the footprint of Holocaust education grew exponentially, the Trustees of the SAHGF did not invest in growing the education team, either by adding to the staff or by encouraging consultation with other educational providers within South Africa and in other regions emerging from conflict. The CTHC programmes did not share the characteristics of the human rights programmes developed by Magendzo and others

⁹³ Abraham Magendzo, “Pedagogy of Human Rights Education: a Latin American Perspective”, *Intercultural Education* 16, no. 2 (May 2003): 137-143.

⁹⁴ Magendzo, 141.

that were “built on the basis of important theoretical frameworks and years of discussions, workshops and seminars with activists, teachers and grass- roots’ educators.”⁹⁵ Without the critical insight that a framework and base of consultation provided, the CTHC programmes remained limited in their ability to go beyond repeating the programme that worked best the time before.

In-service teacher training and high school programmes were not the only education programmes developed by the CTHC. Nevertheless, it was these two areas that drew the CTHC into the international arena of Holocaust education, and were seen by the Director of the CTHC and the SAHGF as the “flagship programmes” which were tangible reference points for the meaning of the CTHC and SAHGF. But as I have argued, these programmes failed to address important challenges of human rights education.



⁹⁵ Magendzo, 138.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE EXPANSION OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, 2006-2013

In 2004, to mark the fifth anniversary of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre (CTHC) Desmond M Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus and CTHC patron gave the CTHC the following resounding endorsement:

Through the newsletters and other contact I have had with the Centre over this time I have been wonderfully encouraged at the variety of exhibition, workshops and other programmes in which the Centre has been engaged. It could so easily have become a place of exclusivity where the Jewish community might find a home for their cultural and tradition aspirations. But the doors of the Centre have been flung wide to embrace the diversity of our Rainbow People of our city and for this I thank you. The Cape Town Holocaust Centre is a beacon to remind us that we should never take our freedom for granted. May it continue to bear witness to human rights for many years to come.¹

By describing the CTHC as a memory “beacon” for “us”, Tutu positioned the CTHC as a neutral entity that was embracing of both the Jewish community and the “Rainbow People” whose interests it was safeguarding. The Archbishop’s rhetoric reinforced the idea that the CTHC was a home for all, not only for the Jewish community’s “cultural and traditional aspirations”. Tutu did not explain what these “traditional aspirations” were, and assumed a cultural hegemony for the Jewish community. This was an assumption shared within the Jewish community, one that the Gaza War of 2008 and the growing boycott/divestment and sanctions campaign challenged. In 2004, Archbishop Tutu had lauded the inclusive nature of the CTHC and its role as a reminder of the need to protect “freedom” and human rights. These

¹ Desmond M. Tutu, “Anniversary Messages from our Patrons.” Cape Town Holocaust Centre Anniversary Review 1999-2004. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

two themes, namely inclusivity through neutrality, and being a beacon for a collective conscience, continued to form the contradictory elements of the cloth of perceptions of the CTHC's identity into its second decade.

Chapter Seven tracks the development of the CTHC's institutional identity and memory after 2005 as its scope expanded, and the development of its relationship with the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation (SAHGF), as well as two other Holocaust Centres. The Chapter is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all that was achieved. Instead it intends to show that the impetus for the establishment of the SAHGF was the protection of the CTHC. The creation of the SAHGF has been seen as a means to maintain a degree of control over the Durban Holocaust Centre (DHC) and the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre (JHGC), and ensuring that they operated as satellites of the CTHC. I argue however, that the way that the SAHGF was structured resulted in the CTHC's identity virtually being subsumed and supplanted by the SAHGF, in a way that neither the identity of the DHC nor the JHGC were.

The CTHC Board of Trustees had seen the JCH being a "satellite centre" of the CTHC.² However the unforeseen development of the JHGC challenged the role that had been envisioned for it by the CTHC's Board of Trustees and the Johannesburg Holocaust Committee. The JHGC came to challenge the identity of the SAHGF as the regional authority on Holocaust education. This chapter also explores the CTHC's response to xenophobia, homophobia, and the on-going conflict in the Middle East, in the light of the two characteristics Tutu claimed the CTHC embodied. Through

² Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 8 October 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

examining a particular incident that revealed the competing claims of the meaning of the CTHC, the chapter assesses the CTHC's continued attempts to navigate the complexities of its relationship with the South African Jewish, and wider, community.

The Centre, the Satellites and the Foundation

At a CTHC Board of Trustees' meeting on 12 July 2004, the chairperson, David Susman, suggested that the Cape Town Holocaust Centre change its name to the South African Holocaust Centre. Susman's proposal came in response to a lengthy discussion about how to make benefactors from the Jewish Community in Durban, Johannesburg and elsewhere in South Africa view the Cape Town Holocaust Centre as a national entity, and thus remain willing to support the Centre financially.³

Three years after Susman's proposal, the CTHC Board of Trustees voted to change the name of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre to The Holocaust Centre.⁴ While the assurance of benefactor buy-in was a factor in the decision to change the Centre's name, both the Trustees and the CTHC Director, Richard Freedman, cited the "increasing demand" of the new national curriculum that mandated Holocaust education for Grade 9 students, as the main reason for bringing about the name change.⁵ Another factor that contributed to the decision to change the name of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre was the recommendation of two prominent CEOs. Osrin and Freedman had met with Margie Keeton (CEO of Tshikululu Investment) and Ivan May (CEO of Constitution Hill) for advice concerning fund raising. Both

³ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 12 July 2004. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁴ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 22 March 2007, CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Richard Freedman to CTHC staff, 27 March 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵ A recurring theme voiced by Freedman from the beginning of 2006 at the meeting of the CTHC Board of Trustees, was the challenges the Cape Town Holocaust Centre faced in meeting the demands for Holocaust education.

May and Keeton suggested that the CTHC consider changing its name to reflect its national profile.⁶ The Trustees concluded that the CTHC's name was "problematic as it locate[d] the Centre in Cape Town and [did] not reflect its national activities or that the Centre [had] become a national resource."⁷

However, the CTHC's name change was short-lived. The growing interest in establishing Holocaust Centres in the other two main centres of the South African Jewish community, namely Durban and Johannesburg, brought pressure to bear on the Trustees to consider a structure by which they could control the methodology used and the development of educational materials. The CTHC Board of Trustees voiced their concern that both the Centres in Durban and Johannesburg, "not vary from the educational approach established in the teaching methods, materials and programmes" of the CTHC.⁸ The Board of Trustees indicated that the Johannesburg Holocaust Centre (JHC) should be a "satellite of the CTHC and not a new and separate entity".⁹ Furthermore, a negligible response to a funding drive led Osrin to conclude that the "we have largely exhausted the possibilities of funding from the Cape Town Jewish community."¹⁰ This development combined with the likelihood of other centres being constructed in Durban and Johannesburg meant that the chances of finding donors from beyond the Cape Town Jewish community were no longer guaranteed.

⁶ The opinions of Keegan and May carried weight. Tshikululu Investment described itself as "South Africa's leading Corporate Social Investment (CSI) managers." (see <http://www.tshikululu.org.za/content/page/about>). Its clients include Anglo American, De Beers and First Rand. Ivan May was a well-regarded businessman and philanthropist.

⁷ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 22 March 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 11 July 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 8 October 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. At the Board meeting on 11 July 2007, the Trustees of the CTHC had decided to establish a Johannesburg Committee. This Committee was tasked with the development of a Holocaust Centre. Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 11 July 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁰ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 8 October 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

The Board of Trustees needed a mechanism to protect the CTHC. One way to do so would be to have a communal “pot”, managed by a national finance committee. As its name suggests, the National Finance Committee would “fundraise nationally, approve national and regional budgets, allocate regional fund and ... grow an endowment fund.”¹¹ Donors could contribute to a national project that would benefit all three Holocaust Centres. The sustainability of the CTHC would thus be assured.

Consequently, in October 2007, the CTHC Board of Trustees established the South African Holocaust Foundation (SAHF) that would act as an umbrella for the Holocaust Centres in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. CTHC Director Freedman was appointed Director of the SAHF. Silbert was appointed as the National Education Director. Tali Nates and Mary Kluk, Directors of the Johannesburg and Durban Holocaust Centres respectively, were de-facto deputy directors of the SAHF.¹² A national Board of Trustees was assembled, with representation from all three Centres. Each Centre in turn, had its own Board of Trustees. The formation of the SAHF enabled the CTHC Trustees to manage the distribution of the funding of the Centres in an equitable fashion. This would ensure sustainability and protect the CTHC from losing support to the new regional Centres.¹³ The South African Holocaust Education Foundation (SAHEF), the fundraising arm that Osrin had begun

¹¹ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 8 October 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹² Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 8 October 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Nates was approved as Director of the JHC at the 8 October 2007. I replaced Silbert as the Education Director of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre in January 2008. Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 18 February 2008. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹³ On 28 October 2009, Mervyn Smith, the Chair of the SAHF and CTHC, Gerald Diamond, SAHF and CTHC Trustee, and Freedman, outlined the financial relationship between the three centres and the SAHF. Each centre would have its own set of financial statements, and would contribute to the SAHF. The SAHF Trustees added that the SAHF would have “a separate set of financials,” including the national budget, and would act as a “partnership between all three centres.” Each centre would contribute on an agreed-upon basis to the national budget. Minutes to the Meeting: October 28, 2009, Cape Town Holocaust Centre Audited Financial Statement report. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

in 2005, was incorporated into the newly establishment SAHF, and renamed the South African Holocaust Education Trust.¹⁴

Just over two years later another name occurred. In May 2010, the SAHF was renamed the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation (SAHGF). In his letter to the Trustees, Freedman explained that the change reflected the activities of the three centres that had “supported on an ongoing basis genocide awareness, particularly of the Rwandan genocide.”¹⁵ To some extent, the decision to change the name of the SAHF was also a case of playing “catch-up” to its centre in Johannesburg.

The JHC had already changed its name to the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Foundation (JHGF) in the preceding year, 2009.¹⁶ The JHGF Director, Nates, explained that it had been clear to her from the start that Rwanda would play “a significant role in the new [Johannesburg] Centre”, as she had been “involved in Rwanda for many years working with testimonies from Rwanda[ns] and with Tutsi living in South Africa from as early as 1996.” According to Nates, after discussion with Osrin and other Cape Town Holocaust Centre Trustees, “there was an agreement by everyone that the name of the [Johannesburg Holocaust] centre [would] include the word genocide to reflect [Nates’s] teaching and involvement with Rwanda.” Nates also pointed to the significant role played by Deborah Dwork, the visiting Holocaust scholar for 2009, who supported Nates’s decision to include “genocide” in the

¹⁴ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust Foundation (formerly Cape Town Holocaust Centre), 6 December 2007. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁵ Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust Foundation, May 11, 2010. CTHC Collection; Richard Freedman to individual SAHF trustees, 17 May 2010. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

¹⁶ Minutes of the Meeting of the National Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust Foundation, 23 November 2009. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

Johannesburg Centre's name.¹⁷ The decision to change the JHC's name received further support when an unexpected opportunity arose in the process of finding a permanent home for the JHC.

Initially, the development of the Johannesburg Holocaust Centre (JHC) appeared to follow a similar trajectory to that of the Durban Holocaust Centre (DHC), in its scale and scope. Like the DHC and the CTHC, the JHC was located within in the heart of the Jewish Community, in more ways than one. The Board members of the DHC and the JHC were active in the Jewish community structures.¹⁸ Wendy Kahn, a member of the JHC Board member, was also the National Director of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD). The DHC operated from within the Durban Jewish Club, home to the Durban Jewish community organisations, and the JHC occupied a building on the premises of Beyachad Community Centre, home to most of Johannesburg Jewish community organisations, including SAJBD.¹⁹ However, JHC's trajectory changed dramatically when the Johannesburg Metropolitan City leased land that had been bequeathed to the city, to the SAHF for the construction of the JHGC.²⁰

¹⁷ Tali Nates, email message to author, 9 October 2015. Deborah Dwork was the Ralph and Sue Stern Visiting Scholar for 2009. Dwork is the Rose Professor of Holocaust History and Director of the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University.

¹⁸ JHC committee member, Wendy Kahn, for example, was the national director of the SAJBD.

¹⁹ The JHC was housed temporarily in the Beyachad Complex. The site identified for the permanent home of the JHC was also within the Beyachad Complex. In 2012 the Durban Holocaust Centre moved to premises adjacent to the Durban Jewish Club.

²⁰ Minutes of a Meeting of the National Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust Foundation, 6 May 2009. CTHC Collection; South African Holocaust Trustees Meeting, Report from the Johannesburg Holocaust Centre, 6 May 2009. CTHC Collection; Minutes of the Cape Town Executive Board of Trustees Meeting of the South African Holocaust Foundation, 6 August 2009. CTHC Collection; Meeting of the South African Holocaust Foundation, 4 February 2010. CTHC Collection. Sue Blaine, "Ensuring Lessons of Genocide, the Holocaust are not Lost," *BDLive*, 30 August 2010, accessed on 6 October 2015. <http://www.bdlive.co.za/articles/2010/08/30/ensuring-lessons-of-genocide-the-holocaust-are-not-lost>. City of Johannesburg, "Holocaust Centre for Jozi," 25 August 2010, accessed 6 October 2015, http://www.joburg.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5602:holocaust-centre-for-joburg&catid=122&Itemid=203; Nonkululeko Mbuli, "Breaking ground. New Holocaust museum to be built in Forest Town," *Rosebank Killarney Gazette*, 25 June 2010, accessed 7 October 2015, http://issuu.com/caxton-community-newspapers/docs/rosebank_killarney_gazette_25_june_2010/1.

The parcel of land was located in a prominent position near to the South African Military Museum and within minutes of the University of the Witwatersrand and Johannesburg. Steven Sack, then Director of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Department of Johannesburg Metropolitan City, explained that the title deed of the land stated that the land had to be put to community use. Sack said that they “initially thought that the property would become an art gallery but a proposal from the JHGC to build its new premises on the site appealed to us.”²¹ According to Nates, Sack had

suggested that [Nates and the JHGC architect, Lewis Levin] check sites with him. We went to check 5 (sic) sites around the city and chose this site which was left by the Bernberg sisters to the city for use as a gallery or museum. ... That is how we got this property and also support to re-zone the area for museum purposes. The only document I have is the ... legal document leasing the land ... There is no reason [given] or anything other than legalise language of the lease.²²

Not only was the municipal land much larger than the original space that had been identified by the SAHF for the permanent home of the JHGC, but it also literally removed the JHGC from the confines of the Johannesburg Jewish Community complex, and placed it firmly in the public realm.

The new Centres rapidly established their own partnerships with local education departments and officials and also made their presence known internationally through presentations at conferences and publishing the occasional paper.²³ However, it became increasingly clear that the relationship of the CTHC to the SAHGF, as well as to the other Centres was a source of confusion to those outside the Foundation.

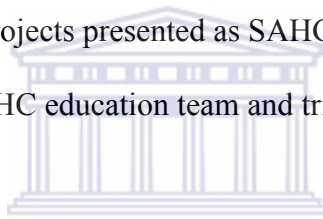
²¹ City of Johannesburg, “Holocaust Centre for Jozi,” 25 August 2010, accessed 6 October 2015, http://www.joburg.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5602:holocaust-centre-for-joburg&catid=122&Itemid=203

²² Tali Nates, email to author, 9 October 2015.

²³ While the DHC’s profile grew in its home province, KwaZulu Natal, it did not develop an international profile. In contrast, as a result of the presentations of papers and participation in national and international conferences and consultations by Nates and me in our capacities as Director of the JHGC and Education Director of the CTHCs, respectively, the perception of the JHGC and CTCH as regional specialists developed.

Partners in projects and delegates at conferences often confused the CTHC with the SAHGF and viewed the JHGC as entirely independent of the SAHGF.²⁴

The perception of the JHGC as a separate entity was partly its name, but largely the result of Nates's rapidly growing international profile. There were a number of reasons why the CTHC was conflated with the SAHGF. Freedman's dual role as Director of the CTHC and the SAHGF, the use of personnel from the CTHC to facilitate teacher training workshops as members of the SAHGF and not of their 'home' Centre and the decision not to appoint a national education director after Silbert's retirement in 2007, compounded the confusion. Furthermore, apart from one smaller project, all national projects presented as SAHGF projects, were in fact projects developed by the CTHC education team and trialed at the CTHC.²⁵



This ambiguous situation developed for a number of reasons. Because Kluk and Nates were occupied with the establishing of their respective centres, the identification and development of SAHGF projects were largely left to Freedman, in his capacity as Director of the SAHGF. Having his office a few steps away from the Cape Town Holocaust Centre's education offices, made communication much easier with the CTHC team, who were called on to assist with developing the project. Furthermore the reality was that the SAHGF had no staff beyond a Director and an administrator, thus any activities or programmes under the SAHGF's name needed to be actualised by staff from the Centres. However, because the CTHC personnel had experience in

²⁴ The DHC was not conflated with the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation. The DHC had only two permanent staff members. Its director, Kluk, saw the provincial and local development of the DHC's profile as the first priority. Kluk's commitment to Jewish community politics made it difficult to travel or write as Nates was able. In 2011, Kluk was appointed the Chair of the national office of the SAJBD.

²⁵ The JHGC developed a programme on the legacy of Raoul Wallenberg.

education methodology and programme development practice, that the personnel of the DHC lacked, and personnel resources neither the DHC nor the JHGC had, invariably CTHC staff implemented the SAHGFs programmes. In practice, the line between the CTHC and SAHGF was highly porous. However, funders appeared to have had little difficulty in understanding the changed structure, and continued funding projects initiated by the CTHC prior to the establishment of the SAHGF, that subsequently become SAHGF projects, such as the teacher training programmes.

A regional “beacon” of expertise?

The end of 2005 was an auspicious moment for Holocaust education internationally. On the morning of 1 November 2005, the 42nd plenary meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations passed Resolution 60/7, sponsored by 104 countries, without a vote. The Resolution designated 27 January as an annual International Day of Commemoration to Honour Holocaust Victims. It also rejected Holocaust denial and condemned

without reserve all manifestations of religious intolerance, incitement, harassment or violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief, wherever they occur.²⁶

Article 2 of the Resolution urged Member States to “develop education programmes to instill the memory of the tragedy in future generations to prevent genocide from happening again.” The Resolution also requested the establishment of a UN Outreach Programme and “measures to mobilise civil society for Holocaust remembrance and education.” The rationale given for Holocaust education and remembrance was that it

²⁶ UN General Assembly, Resolution 60/7, “Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the Holocaust Remembrance, A/RES/60/7,” 1 November 2005, accessed October 8, 2015, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/60/PV.42 .

would “help prevent further acts of genocide...”²⁷ by reminding “the world of the lessons to be learnt from the Holocaust in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide.”²⁸

The resolution made no mention of other genocides, a point of concern raised by a number of members. Muhammad Anshor, the representative of Indonesia, summed up the concerns shared by Maged Abdelfattah Abdelaziz, Egypt's Permanent Representative and Ms. Ismail, Malaysia's representative, in saying,

There are numerous [tragedies] that send an equally strong message and warning to all people of the dangers of hatred, bigotry, racism and prejudice. ... we would have preferred it if the sponsors, in formalizing and institutionalizing Holocaust remembrance and education within the United Nations system through the resolution, had given equal attention to other human tragedies.²⁹

The concerns raised by the members, appeared to have prompted the closing comment of Jan Eliasson, President of the 60th Session of the General Assembly:

In view of the explanations of vote after the vote and the statements in right of reply, I just want to repeat portions of my remarks at the 41st meeting, on the introduction of the resolution ...

‘The Holocaust also reminds us of the crimes of genocide committed since the Second World War. It must therefore be a unifying historic warning around which we rally, not only to recall the grievous crimes committed in human history but also to reaffirm our unfaltering resolve to prevent the recurrence of such crimes. We cannot, after the horrors in Cambodia, Rwanda and Srebrenica, continue to repeat, ‘Never again’.’

It is in the spirit both of remembering the crimes of the past and preventing their recurrence in the future that we must consider the ...

²⁷ UN General Assembly, Resolution 60/7, “Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the Holocaust Remembrance, A/RES/60/7,” 1 November 2005, accessed October 8, 2015, http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/60/PV.42 .

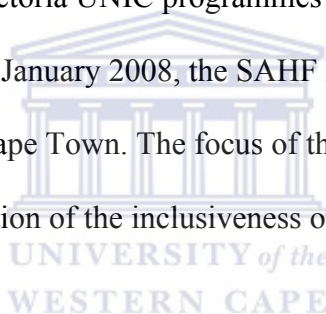
²⁸ Excerpt taken from webpage of the Holocaust and United Nations Outreach Programme. The Holocaust and United Nations Outreach Programme was established in response to the Resolution 60/7. Accessed 8 October 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/bg.shtml> .

²⁹ UN General Assembly, Resolution 60/PV.42, “Agenda Item 72,” November 1, 2005, accessed 8 October 2015, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/60> .

resolution on Holocaust remembrance.³⁰

The United Nations Information Centres (UNIC) and United Nations Information Service (UNIS) began to facilitate the “outreach” aspect of the UN’s Holocaust and Outreach Programme. UNIC and UNIS organised the annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, “in partnership with civil society groups and Government representatives.”³¹

The three centres of the SAHGF constituted the main “civil society groups” that partnered regularly with UNIC in South Africa, and in 2010, in Namibia. The CTHC broadened the scope of the Pretoria UNIC programmes to include a focus on the genocide in Rwanda.³² On 27 January 2008, the SAHF held a commemorative event at St George’s Cathedral in Cape Town. The focus of this event on Rwanda served to illustrate Tutu’s 1994 description of the inclusiveness of the CTHC.



³⁰ UN General Assembly, Resolution 60/PV.42, “Agenda Item 72,” November 1, 2005, accessed 8 October 2015, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/60> . On 23 December 2005, the General Assembly passed Resolution A/Res/60/225: “Assistance to survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, particularly orphans, widows and victims of sexual violence”. Article 4 urged Member States to “develop educational programmes that will inculcate future generations with the lessons of the genocide in Rwanda in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide”. Article 5 requested that the Secretary-General establish an outreach programme entitled “The Rwanda Genocide and the United Nations” as well as “measures to mobilize civil society for Rwanda genocide victim remembrance and education, in order to help to prevent future acts of genocide, and to report to the General Assembly on the establishment of the programme within six months from the date of the adoption of the present resolution.” UN General Assembly Resolution 60/225, “Assistance to survivors of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, particularly orphans, widows and victims of sexual violence,” 23 December 2005, accessed October 8, 2015, <http://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/60> .

³¹ Holocaust and United Nations Outreach Programme, accessed 8 October 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/bg.shtml> . Similarly, UNIC and UNIS facilitated the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda, designated 7 April by the United Nations General Assembly on 23 December 2003. UN General Assembly Resolution 58/234: “International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda,” 23 December 2003, accessed 8 October 2015., <http://research.un.org/en/docs/ga/quick/regular/58> .

³² In February 2001, two years after the CTHC had opened, it hosted a conference and an exhibition on the genocide in Rwanda. The CTHC marked the 10-year anniversary of the genocide in 2004, with a public lecture. Its educational materials referenced the genocide. From 2008, the commemorations marking the genocide became more regular. As a partner to UNIC, the Centre’s public programmes ranged from speeches by visiting Holocaust historians, to the screening of films, and larger projects.

The main address was delivered by the Dean of St George's Cathedral, the Very Rev. Rowan Smith, and the German Consul Andreas Kauke read a message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon. Survivors of the Holocaust and the genocide in Rwanda lit memorial candles, commemorating "the victims of these two genocides."³³ However, the inclusion of Rwanda extended beyond the lighting of a candle alongside Holocaust survivors. The SAHF also launched the exhibition 'Rwanda: 13 years after Genocide', developed by the Aegis Trust as one of a series of events it had organised marking the "UN Day of Commemoration to honour the victims of the Holocaust."³⁴

The SAHF's partnership with UNIC Windhoek in 2010, however, was particularly striking. UNIC Windhoek and the National Archives of Namibia invited the SAHF to bring the SAHF's travelling exhibition, 'The Holocaust: Lessons for humanity', as well as the exhibition, 'Wasted Lives', developed by the Aegis Trust, to Windhoek.³⁵ The exhibition was part of the "the first observance of the International Day in memory of the victims of the Holocaust".³⁶ The commemoration and exhibition, took place in the State Archives of Namibia. The Head of the National Archives, Werner

³³ South African Holocaust Foundation Annual Review, 2008. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

³⁴ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust Foundation. 18 February 2008. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. South African Holocaust Foundation Annual Review, 2008. CTHC Collection. In 2007, the CTHC played host to a multi-media project, 'Witnessing Darfur', which featured the exhibition, 'Genocide and Darfur'. 'Genocide and Darfur' was developed by the Aegis Trust. The Aegis Trust, set up by the James and Steven Smith, the creators of the Holocaust Centre in England, developed this exhibition in partnership with the UN as part of the UN's mandate set out in A/Res/60/225.

³⁵ In this instance, the 'SAHF' referred to Freedman and me. We co-developed an education programme that facilitated the engagement of high schools students and volunteer guides with the exhibition, and related concepts such as genocide, the genocide of the Herero, racism and colonialism, prejudice and state sanctioned violence, and ways in which individuals responded when faced with such injustices. Freedman mounted the exhibition in the Namibian State Archive hall, and facilitated the workshops with the students and volunteers.

³⁶ "International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust 2010: Holocaust Remembrance Activities around the world." accessed 8 October 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/2010/unic.shtml> ; CTHC Collection., "UN Holocaust Memorial Day." South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation Annual Review, 2010.

Hillebrecht, the German Ambassador, Egon Kochanke, and the Israeli Ambassador, Ilan Baruch, and CTHC Director Freedman each gave a short message. Having the Acting Chief of the Herero, Fanuel Tumbee Tomb speak, together with Leonard Rutagarama, a survivor of the genocide in Rwanda meant that “the Herero Genocide of the (sic) 1904 and the Rwandan Genocide in 1994 were also remembered during the ceremony”.³⁷

The UNIC report described the foyer of the Namibian National Archives as filled with people and a “strong ambiance of reconciliation and forgiveness, but not forgetfulness,” that “hung like a heavy blanket over the proceedings.”³⁸ Keynote speaker Nangolo Mbumba (the Namibian Minister of Education) observed that despite the murderous past “we as people are inherently good.”³⁹ The UNIC’s description of the evening expressed the multiple layers of the “heavy blanket” of meanings, the ironies, and the competing memories and identities present at the coming together of colonialism, race and genocide within the Namibian State Archive during the period of the SAHF’s visit to Windhoek.⁴⁰ The description raised the questions, who is the “we”? Whose pain and bloodshed bore remembering? Who should be remembering? 2010 was not the last visit of the CTHC to Namibia. Indeed the relationship between Namibia’s memory-scape, and its former colonizers, Germany and South Africa, raised profound questions when brought “into the same room” through the CTHC/SAHGF exhibition and materials.

³⁷ “International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust 2010: Holocaust Remembrance Activities around the world.” accessed 8 October 2015, <http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/2010/unic.shtml> .

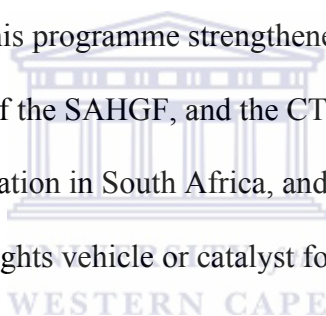
³⁸ “Holocaust Remembrance Day in Windhoek”, 12 February 2010, accessed 9 October 2015, unic.un.org/imu/recentActivities/?tag=/holocaust+remembrance+day&page=9 .

³⁹ “Holocaust Remembrance Day in Windhoek”, 12 February 2010, accessed 9 October 2015, unic.un.org/imu/recentActivities/?tag=/holocaust+remembrance+day&page=9 .

⁴⁰ The name of the SAHF to the SAHGF was only changed in May 2010. The SAHF’s exhibition ran from 28 January-12 February 2010.

The international profile of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre grew rapidly after 2005, as Freedman, acting in his capacity as Director of both the Cape Town Holocaust Centre and the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation, established relationships with the global Holocaust organisation network. The Association of Holocaust Organisations, Yad Vashem, USHMM, and the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research each invited Freedman to present the work of the CTHC.⁴¹

The Ralph and Sue Sterne Visiting Scholar programme begun in 2006, brought an eminent Holocaust scholar to the CTHC every year. This programme was extended to include the DHC and JHC. This programme strengthened international links further. It also added to the perception of the SAHGF, and the CTHC and JHC, as the authorities on Holocaust education in South Africa, and in sub-Saharan Africa, and teaching history as a human rights vehicle or catalyst for social agency.

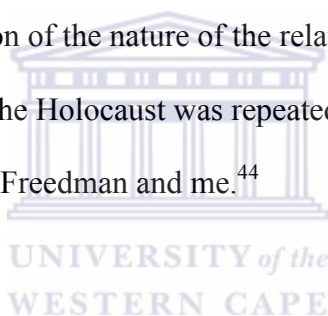


As Chapter Two illustrated, the relationship between the Anne Frank House (AF House) in Amsterdam and the CTHC predated the establishment of the CTHC. The relationship between the two institutions continued into the second decade of the CTHC's existence. In 2009 Nates, Kluk and I were invited to a conference at the AF House, on teaching the Holocaust to a diverse classroom. Both Nates and I examined what Holocaust education entailed in post-apartheid South Africa.⁴²

⁴¹ The Task Force is now known as the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (ILHRA).

⁴² Tali Nates, "But, Apartheid was also Genocide... What about our Suffering?" Teaching the Holocaust in South Africa – Opportunities and Challenges." *Intercultural Education* 21, no. S1 (2010): S17-S26; Petersen, "Moving beyond the toolbox."

The following year, 2010, Nates and I were invited to the House of the Wannsee Conference, Berlin. I had been asked to develop a paper with the Deputy Director of the Museum, Wolf Kaiser on the similarities and differences between the Holocaust and apartheid.⁴³ In my paper, I argued that understanding the experience of learning about both examples of injustice might help develop a better understanding of both histories, but I also sounded a warning that learning about the history of the Holocaust might lead to a denial of the very real brutality of the apartheid system. I illustrated the complexity for many teachers who had lived in a racial state, and now had to teach about the construction of a racial state. Finally I noted that young people born into the newly democratic South Africa would have a different understanding of apartheid than their parents. The question of the nature of the relationship between teaching and learning about apartheid and the Holocaust was repeated in subsequent papers and presentations given by Nates, Freedman and me.⁴⁴



⁴³ Wolf Kaiser and Elke Grylweski, email messages to author, 24 February, 31 March, 6 April, 27, 28 May, 8 June, 2 July, 5,6,9,11,12,13,14, 17, 23, 25 August 2010.

⁴⁴ Papers published include Nates, "But, Apartheid was also Genocide... What about our Suffering?" Teaching the Holocaust in South Africa – Opportunities and Challenges," Tali Nates, "Holocaust Education in South Africa" UN Discussion Papers Series Vol. II, Discussion paper no. 3. c2010; Petersen, "Moving Beyond the Toolbox"; Tracey Petersen, "Politics, Policy, and Holocaust Education in South Africa" *Policy and Practice: Pedagogy about the Holocaust and Genocide Papers*. Paper 11. (2013). <http://commons.clarku.edu/pedagogy2013/11/>; Petersen, "Lessons for Humanity: the Museumisation of Intangible Heritage." *South African Museums Association Bulletin* 32 (2006): 29-36; Tracey Petersen, "Holocaust Proves the Past still has Meaning for the Future". Op-ed: *Sunday Independent*, 31 January 2010 and "Learning the Lessons of the Holocaust." Op-ed: *Cape Times*, 27 January 2010; Richard Freedman, "Engaging with Holocaust Education in Post-apartheid South Africa," in *Holocaust Education in a Global Context*, eds. Karel Fracapane and Matthias Suss, (Paris:UNESCO, 2014), 134; Richard Freedman, "Teaching the Holocaust to Non-traditional Audiences: The South African Experience," *Canadian Diversity* 7, no. 2 (2009): 91-96. In 2009 and 2011, Nates presented at the Association of Holocaust Organisations. Freedman did so in 2010. In 2010, Nates spoke at the South African Students Congress (SASCO) Anti-xenophobia and Violence Campaign, and delivered the 2010 Steve Biko Lecture. Freedman and I presented at the Inaugural Conference of the Federation of International Human Rights Museums (FIHRM) in 2010. In 2011, Freedman met with the International Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (Task Force) in 2011. Freedman, Nates and I were invited to become fellows of the Salzburg Global Seminar. I presented at the UNESCO Regional Consultation about Holocaust and genocide education in Latin America in 2013, and at the Strassler Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Clark University. Nates and Freedman presented papers at the Yad Vashem International Conference on Holocaust Education, 2008, 2012 and 2014. Papers in Freedman and Nates's private collection.

Attending the AF House Conference in Amsterdam in 2009 was Lucio Sia, Programme Specialist, ED/HED/Section for Teacher Education of UNESCO. Just under two years after the UN had passed Resolution 60/7, UNESCO's 34th General Conference adopted Resolution 61, "Holocaust Remembrance".⁴⁵ UNESCO had since been

working with the Holocaust and the UN Outreach Programme and other major specialized institutions to promote educational resources that draw on the lessons of the past and help students better understand the ramifications of discrimination and mass violence.⁴⁶

UNESCO considered Holocaust education "fundamental to establishing respect for human rights, tolerance and to contribute to the prevention of genocide."⁴⁷

Sia asked Nates to attend and present at the conference, "Combating intolerance, exclusion and violence through Holocaust education" that he was organising.⁴⁸ A year later, in 2010, the SAHGF was asked to partner UNESCO in the planning of a consultative forum in Cape Town for representatives of education ministries in Sub-Saharan Africa. This regional consultation was the first of its kind in Africa. The Consultation was held from 10-11 September. Representatives from 14 countries attended the Consultation.⁴⁹ I was subsequently invited in 2012 to present a paper,

⁴⁵ UNESCO General Conference, Resolution 61, "Holocaust Remembrance", 34th Conference, November 2007, accessed 10 October 2015, www.ifa.de/fileadmin/pdf/abk/inter/unesco_gc34_bd1.pdf

⁴⁶ UNESCOPRESS. "Teaching about the Holocaust and genocide in Africa", 4 September 2012, accessed October 10, 2015, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/-364b349d98/#.Vhgd7aSd4Tl>.

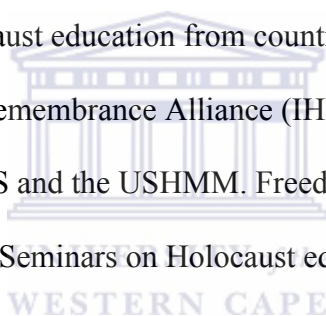
⁴⁷ UNESCOPRESS. "Teaching about the Holocaust and genocide in Africa", 4 September 2012, accessed October 10, 2015. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/-364b349d98/#.Vhgd7aSd4Tl>.

⁴⁸ Tali Nates, "Teaching about the Holocaust in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Issues and Challenges" (paper presented at the UNESCO Conference, Combating intolerance, exclusion and violence through Holocaust education, Paris, May 27–29, 2009). Accessed October 10, 2015. unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001866/186689M.pdf

⁴⁹ The countries represented were Benin, Burundi, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Republic of Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo and Zambia. UNESCOPRESS "Teaching about the Holocaust and genocide in Africa." 4

“Holocaust Education as a Tool of Social Transformation” at the UNESCO regional consultation with Latin American countries, and again in 2014 at the UNESCO conference, ‘The Impact of Holocaust Education: How to Assess Policies and Practices?’ held as part of the International Day of Commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust.⁵⁰

The association of the CTHC and SAHGF with the Salzburg Global Seminar (SGS) further enhanced the identity of the SAHGF and CTHC as regional experts. The SGS has brought experts in their field together to encourage discussion and networking. The Holocaust education Seminars 2012 and 2014 were aimed at bringing together individuals engaged in Holocaust education from countries that were not members of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The Holocaust education Seminars were run by the SGS and the USHMM. Freedman, Nates and I were invited to attend the Salzburg Global Seminars on Holocaust education.⁵¹



At the UNESCO Consultations as well as Salzburg, there were opportunities for the SAHGF to take a leading role in developing regional networks with the fellow

September 2012, accessed 25 September 2015, <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/-364b349d98/#.Vhgd7aSd4Tl>.

⁵⁰ Tracey Petersen, “Holocaust Education as a tool for social transformation”, paper presented at the UNESCO Regional Consultation In Latin America on Holocaust and Genocide Education, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 7-8 May, 2013, accessed 10 October 2015, unesdoc.unesco.org/images/000/022/227356m.pdf ; “South African learners engaging with the Holocaust”, paper presented at the UNESCO conference, ‘The impact of Holocaust Education: How to Assess Policies and Practices?’ Paris, France, 27 January 2014.

⁵¹ Salzburg Global Seminar, ‘Learning from the Past: Global perspectives on Holocaust education’, Session Report, Salzburg, Austria, June 27-July 21, 2012, accessed 10 October 2015, http://issuu.com/salzburgglobal/docs/sgs_report_holocaust_education_2012 ; Salzburg Global Seminar, Session 535: ‘Holocaust and Genocide Education: Sharing Experience Across Borders’, Salzburg, Austria, June 21 – 26, 2014. The mission of Salzburg Global Seminar is to “challenge current and future leaders to solve issues of global concern.” The SGS works with “carefully chosen partners to drive social change...” and “connects people... challenging governments, institutions and individuals at all stages of development and all sectors to rethink their relationships and identify shared interests and goals.” SGS Mission Statement. Accessed October 10, 2015. <http://www.salzburgglobal.org/who-we-are/our-mission.html>.

Africans who attended these conferences, and a South-South relationship with Latin America. This did not transpire, largely due to a lack of institutional capacity. Both Nates and I were over-committed to work “back home”. Nates was involved in every aspect of the construction and development of the JHGF, while I was involved in developing and facilitating national teacher training workshops, training education teams from the other centres, and also managing the education team and volunteers at the CTHCs. Freedman was also overcommitted in his position as Director of both the CTHC and the national foundation. A further reason why regional partnerships did not develop was that the “usefulness” of interregional networks was not obvious. Instead, partnerships with “northern” institutions were prioritised, partly because they had the resources to be “paying” partners and secondly because language was less of a barrier.



Reconciliation, Xenophobia and Homophobia

The Holocaust Centre provides a safe place to unpack hot, thorny issues. It is a great tool for teaching about our shared humanity. It reminds us that while the past has gone, whether we acknowledge it or not, it informs the future.⁵²

A meeting with the philanthropy coordinating body, Inyathelo in August 2009 identified a strategy that Freedman and Osrin realised was essential for the CTHC to adopt if it were going to be sustainable.⁵³ The strategy was to develop partnerships with organisations and institutions, and to approach funders with these joint projects.⁵⁴ The strategy allowed small organisations such as the CTHC to have a far

⁵² Lucinda Jolly, “Unspoken Atrocity of the Third Reich,” *Cape Times*, 26 February 2013, accessed 23 August 2015, <http://beta.iol.co.za/capetimes/unspoken-atrocity-of-the-third-reich-1477162> .

⁵³ Inyathelo promotes philanthropy and the sustainability of civil society organisations.

⁵⁴ Minutes of the Cape Town Executive Board of Trustees Meeting of the SAHF, 6 August 2009, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

greater reach than it would have had on its own, while also building its identity as a relevant non-government organisation engaged in human rights work.

I have chosen to focus on three projects undertaken by the CTHC, which show key features of the Centre and its leadership.⁵⁵ The first feature was the Centre's identification of partners who were a "good match" for the projects the CTHC wished to undertake. The second feature that the three projects shared was that they showed a willingness of the leadership of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre to extend the boundaries of the exhibition and to reach people who would ordinarily not have found the Holocaust of any relevance to them. The risk the leadership appeared willing to take with this approach was that the history of the Holocaust took second place to the contemporary debates with which the CTHC believed it should engage.

The first project was one that the CTHC developed in response to a crisis brutally playing itself out across South Africa in early 2008. Xenophobia, for some time a tension confined to sporadic outburst, erupted with great violence onto the streets of South Africa in May 2008. The Centre responded to the crises by developing an educational pack that took as its starting place, the plight of those seeking refuge from Nazis persecution, and built from there a connection to the contemporary expressions of xenophobia against those seeking asylum in South Africa. The pack was used in the CTHC and SAHF teacher training workshops.⁵⁶ In November, to mark the 70th anniversary of the "Kristallnacht" pogrom, and "to reflect on the plight of refugees in

⁵⁵ The CTHC undertook many more than three projects between the years 2006 and 2013. Some of these projects were labeled as 'SAHGF projects' but were in fact CTHC initiated and driven. All three of the projects chosen for examination in this chapter, were labeled as 'SAHF' or 'SAHGF', but initiated and driven by the CTHC.

⁵⁶ Tracey Petersen, "Responding to the Human Cry". CTHC Collection, Cape Town. This pack was used in the CTHC teaching materials. Another activity that I created was included in the Western Cape provincial education department's teaching material, 'Social Sciences (History And Geography) Grades 7–9 Teacher's Guide (How To Teach)', accessed 5 July 2015, <http://www.wcedcurriculum.westerncape.gov.za/index.php/component/jdownloads/send/1167-generic/10235-ss-grade-9-tg-how-to-teach> .

South Africa and worldwide,” the CTHC began a month-long series of events.⁵⁷

Included in the month’s events was a day-long symposium on refugees. Convened on the 20th November, the symposium was attended by a wide range of individuals and organisations who worked with refugees. These individuals and organisations included policy-makers, local government officials, members of the South African Police Service, provincial Department of Education personnel, and the NGO and faith-based community.

The programme included a panel discussion with experts in the field of migration and human rights. The panelists were Jonathan Crush (Professor and Executive Director – Southern African Research Centre, Canada), Nomfundo Walaza (CEO - Desmond Tutu Peace Centre), Paul Verryn (Bishop - Methodist Church of Southern Africa), Astrid Berg (Associate Professor, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, UCT), and lawyer Fatima Hassan.⁵⁸ Although people who attended the symposium did not come to the Holocaust Centre to learn about the Holocaust, some stayed and walked through the CTHC permanent exhibition, or else visited the temporary exhibition, ‘Seeking refuge: German-Jewish immigration to South Africa in the 1930s.’

A second well-chosen partnership took place the following year. A programme was developed around a temporary exhibition on the life of Janus Korczak.⁵⁹ By tying the

⁵⁷ South African Holocaust Foundation Annual Review, 2008. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁵⁸ South African Holocaust Foundation Annual Review, 2008. CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Invitation to a Symposium on Refugees. n.d. CTHC Collection; Chistina Taylor, “Xenophobic attacks likely to recur, panel warns,” *The Cape Times*, 21 November 2008.

⁵⁹ Janusz Korczak (born Henryk Goldszmit) was pioneer of children’s rights. He “introduced progressive orphanages into Poland, founded the first children’s national newspaper, trained teachers in what we now call moral education, and worked in juvenile courts defending children’s rights. His books gave adults new insights into child psychology.” (Elie Wiesel, introduction to Betty Lifton’s *The King of Children: the Life and Death of Janusz Korczak*, St Martin’s Griffin: New York, 1997. 3-4). Before WWII, Korczak was the Director of both the Catholic and Jewish orphanages in Warsaw. After war broke out, he refused offers of escape, and went instead into the Warsaw ghetto with the Jewish

exhibition, which highlighted Korczak's impact on children's rights, to contemporary challenges facing children, the CTHC formed partnerships with a number of organisations and children's rights activists. These included the renowned Children's Institute of UCT, the Durban Child Centre, and the Hlanganani Children Care Network. The CTHC also partnered with the Frank Joubert Art Centre, its Ibbabhathane Project and the Iziko Museums' Edunsemble Art Project.⁶⁰

These collaborations resulted in a multi-faceted project, which the Cape Town Holocaust Centre called the Champions of the Child Project (COTC Project). This Project included a Youth Symposium for young high school leaders, facilitated by the Durban Child Centre. The collaboration with the Ibbabhathane Project and the Iziko Museums of Cape Town's Edunsemble Art Project enabled the Cape Town Holocaust Centre to include a visual representation by young people of children's rights. An exhibition of the work by youth from Ibbabhathane Project and the youth and children from the Iziko Museums of Cape Town's Edunsemble Art Project, some of whom were disabled, refugees or affected by HIV/AIDS, formed a striking component of the COTC Project.⁶¹

The Hlanganani Children Care Network had also joined the organisations partnering with the CTHC and launched their publication, *African Children's Rights* book, a

children to look after them. On 6 August 1942 the Nazis sent Korczak, his staff and the children to the death camp Treblinka. All were murdered. Korczak's work greatly influenced the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations in 1989. The exhibition on Korczak opened at the CTHC on the 17 June 2008. CTHC Collection.

⁶⁰ From August 4-27, 2008, the CTHC embarked on a project called, "Through the eyes of children." The CTHC engaged the Frank Joubert Art Centre and its Ibbabhathane Project as partners, to develop an exhibition to accompany the artwork created by children imprisoned in the ghetto-camp Terezin, and an exhibition of the drawings of Darfuri children who had escaped Sudan and were living in refugee camps in Chad.

⁶¹ The Ibbabhathane Project enables children from historically-disadvantaged areas to study visual art and design.

child-friendly version of the New Children's Act. The Children's Institute, in association with the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, hosted a symposium for experts on the rights of children. The COTC Project provided a useful forum for the Children's Institute to launch their annual publication, the *Child Barometer*. In her letter to Richard Freedman, Shirley Pendlebury, the Director of the Children's Institute expressed what Freedman had hoped to achieve:

Last week's Child Rights Symposia and Champions of the Child Exhibition have made a significant contribution to raising the profile of children's rights in South Africa. On behalf of the Children's Institute, I would like to thank you for initiating this series of events which have helped strengthen key partnerships in the children's and human rights sector.⁶²

The third notable project began in 2012 with a collaboration between the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation and Klaus Muller, curator of an exhibition called "In Whom Can I Still Trust?" ('IWCIST'). The exhibition examined the history of the Nazi persecution of homosexuals. The exhibition text was translated into English, and subsequently edited by Muller, Freedman and me. Linda Bester, a member of the design team for the original CTHC exhibition, and the subsequent displays at the Durban and Johannesburg centres, redesigned the exhibition. The CTHC and the Gay and Lesbian Archive (GALA) developed additional panels. GALA developed a panel that examined the history of homophobia under apartheid and the struggle for equality. The CTHC developed three panels. The first panel examined the protection afforded by the Constitution of South Africa against discrimination on the grounds of sexuality. A second panel comprised newspaper cuttings of contemporary acts of homophobic violence in South Africa and the rest of Africa. A final panel was left blank apart from a question, "What can you do to

⁶² Shirley Pendlebury to Richard Freedman, 22 June 2009, CTHC Collection; "Champions of the Child" Project file, CTHC Collection, Cape Town; South African Holocaust Foundation Annual Review, 2009. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

protect the rights enshrined in the Constitution?” Visitors were invited to write their responses onto post-its and to place on the blank space of the panel. People responded to the question and to comments other visitors had written. These responses became a ‘living’ part of the exhibition and were added to daily.

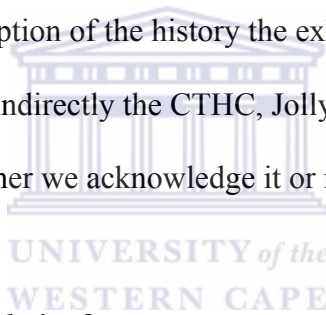
Based on the experience of the Champions of the Child Project (COTC Project), the CTHC approached organisations and individuals involved in LGBTQI work to partner in the development of a programme that would accompany the exhibition. As had been the case with the COTC Project, the partners responded very positively to the invitation to collaborate with the CTHC. The range of partners, and the strength of their credentials in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex (LGBTQI) community, meant that the attendance at public events developed in collaboration with the partners, was by far the most diverse audience the CTHC had ever seen. A panel discussion on faith and sexuality in particular drew a cross section of public and heartfelt responses from individuals. The partnerships with LGBTQI activists facilitated access to youth organisations and teenagers from very diverse range of communities engaged with one another about homophobia, sexual diversity, prejudice and rights at a one-day Youth Seminar at the CTHC.

The exhibition opened in January 2013 at the CTHC and ran until the end of March. The response to the exhibition and public events expressed a myriad of reactions. Visitors spoke, and wrote, of their surprise of finding a safe place and a sense of solidarity within the CTHC.⁶³ This reaction suggested that the CTHC, through the

⁶³ “In Whom Can I still Trust”, CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

exhibition and the partnerships it developed with activists and organisations, had succeeded in “embracing diversity” as described by Tutu in 2004.⁶⁴

What of the concern that the history would be compromised by the focus on contemporary matters? In Cape Town, the location of the IWCIST exhibition illustrated the answer to this question: the IWCIST exhibition occupied almost half of the hall in which the public events took place. It was impossible for the visitors to NOT see the exhibition. The exhibition was not simply a “backdrop”. Rather it was the *other* speaker on each panel, the *other* film in each screening, and the *other* stage for each theatre piece performed. Moreover, every review of the exhibition or allied event contained a short description of the history the exhibition portrayed. In her review of the exhibition, and indirectly the CTHC, Jolly wrote, “It reminds us that while the past has gone, whether we acknowledge it or not, it informs the future.”⁶⁵



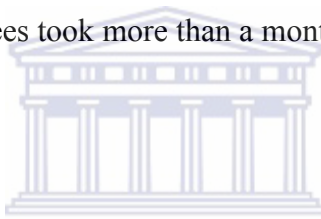
Whose Centre? Whose Foundation?

This chapter began quoting Desmond Tutu’s praise of the CTHC. The CTHC had been very proud to have the Archbishop Emeritus as its Patron. With the blessing of the Trustees, Osrin had literally given Tutu the last word in the exhibition, placing in large letters in the exhibition’s final panel, an excerpt from Tutu’s speech at the Centre’s inauguration. Tutu’s words became the rationale used repeatedly by the

⁶⁴ After its run in Cape Town, the exhibition moved to the DHC, and then to the University of the Free State, through the SAHGF’s partnership with the Institution for Reconciliation and Social Justice. Through the JHGC’s partnership with Constitution Hill, the exhibition was then mounted at the Women’s Fort. Following that it was displayed at the Baxter Theatre, at the University of Cape Town. Through the DHC’s relationship with the Gay and Lesbian Network organization, the exhibition was mounted at the Natal Museum. In 2014, the exhibition was held at the Vaal University of Technology, and at the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria. Freedman was invited by Pan Africa ILGA to present a talk on the exhibition at *Transforming our Future: setting an African Agenda* in Kenya. He discussed the “importance of the exhibition in the struggle for sexual minority’s rights on the continent.” CTHC Annual Review of the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation, 2013. CTHC Collection.

⁶⁵ Lucinda Jolly, “Unspoken atrocity of the Third Reich,” *The Cape Times*, 26 February 2013, accessed 23 August 2015, <http://beta.iol.co.za/capetimes/unspoken-atrocity-of-the-third-reich-1477162> .

CTHC, and the SAHGF to prove its legitimacy. The CTCH Trustees were aware of the power of the former Archbishop Tutu's profile. At their meeting on 12 July 2004, the Trustees suggested that Tutu speak at a CTHC future fundraiser in Johannesburg.⁶⁶ The CTHC held a special function in honour of Tutu on 21 October 2004.⁶⁷ At this function, Tutu launched the CTHC's curriculum support materials. At the same function, Silbert, the education director, announced the inauguration of the Desmond Tutu Lessons for Humanity Award.⁶⁸ Photographs of Tutu at CTHC functions appeared in the CTHC's Annual Reviews and brochures.⁶⁹ He was the esteemed patron.⁷⁰ Yet when an online petition was launched, on 8 December 2010, that charged Tutu with antisemitism and challenged his position as Patron of the CTHC and SAHGF the Trustees took more than a month before they spoke out in defence of their Patron.



The petition that went live on-line on 8 December 2010, called for the "termination and/or resignation of Archbishop Tutu as a Patron of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre and the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre." The petitioners accused Tutu of "being against the Jewish people and Israel" and for this reason, the "wrong person to hold this position." Tutu was labeled an antisemite and a bigot. The

⁶⁶ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 12 July 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁷ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, 12 July 2004, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁶⁸ The award was to be given annually to a teacher whose students produced excellent work done in response to the education materials developed by the CTHC.

⁶⁹ "Holocaust Centre pays tribute to Archbishop Desmond Tutu," Cape Town Holocaust Centre Newsletter, July/August 2001, August 2005, 2008. CTHC Collection; The Anniversary Review 1999-2004. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁷⁰ "Holocaust Centre pays tribute to Archbishop Desmond Tutu," Cape Town Holocaust Centre Newsletter, July/August 2001. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Apart from the Director's message, the article paying tribute to Tutu is the only article on the front page of the first newsletter. The event on which it reports was the special reception held in Tutu's honour at the CTHC on the 22 May 2001. There were over 200 specially invited guests, including the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, Dr B.S. Ngubani. Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris gave a tribute to Tutu, singling out his "dazzling array of qualities."

final paragraph of the petition called not only for Tutu's resignation, or removal, but "that the trustees ... terminate the appointments of Professor Kader Asmal and Judge Richard Goldstone" who the petitioners wanted to "resign their patronage."⁷¹

A counter petition, "In Defence of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu" appeared on 9 January 2011. The petition was drawn up by Open Shuhada Street (OSS).⁷² Within ten days, the counter-petition had 2852 signatures.⁷³ The "termination" petition by that stage had accumulated a mere 403 signatures. By the time the petition site closed the petition six months later, 5467 people had signed the "defence" petition while only 600 had signed the "termination" petition. The "petition war" caught the attention of the media, and the international community. It put the spotlight on the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) since one of the three creators of the "termination" petition, David Hersch, was a vice-chair of the SAZF.⁷⁴ The response to the "termination" petition forced the chair of the SAZF, Avrom Krengle, to state publicly the SAZF's support for the SAGHF and to acknowledge the autonomy of the SAHGF and its Trustees and Patrons.⁷⁵

⁷¹ David Hersch, Joselle Reuben, Howard Joffe, "Petition calling for the termination and/or resignation of Archbishop Tutu as a Patron of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre and the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre" petition, 2010. <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/tutupetition/> .

⁷² Group of Concerned People, "In Defence of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu" petition, 2011. <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/defend-tutu/> .

⁷³ Open Shuhada South Africa describes itself as "a South African advocacy organisation campaigning for human rights in Palestine and Israel," accessed 15 September 2015, https://www.facebook.com/OpenShuhadaStreetSouthAfrica/info/?tab=page_info .

⁷⁴ Joselle Reuben and Howard Joffe were the other two originators of the "termination" petition.

⁷⁵ In the SAZF press statement, the CTHC is praised for being an "outstanding success ... an educational institution serving all citizens of the country as a whole and ... dedicated to creating a more caring and just society in which human rights and diversity are respected and valued." South African Zionist Federation Media Release, "Petition against Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu," January 12, 2011, accessed 10 October 2015, http://www.sazionfed.co.za/press_statements.html ; Melanie Gosling, "Support still pouring in for Tutu." *Cape Times*, 13 January, 2015, accessed 10 October 2015, <http://beta.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/support-still-pouring-in-for-tutu-1011450> .

The Chief Rabbi also made a public pledge of support for Tutu's patronage of the SAHGF, and called the CTHC a "vitaly important institution in our country...doing holy and vital work." He identified as "holy and vital" the honouring of the "memory of the six million Jewish martyrs," and the education of "thousands of South Africans in the vital lessons of the Holocaust" which are "lessons of the horrific consequences of hatred and racism. The Centre preaches and teaches sensitivity and commitment to human rights, tolerance and the dignity of all people, irrespective of race, colour or creed."⁷⁶ Neither Goldstein nor Krengle commented on the call to remove Goldstone and Kader Asmal.⁷⁷

Both the chairperson of the SAHGF, Mervyn Smith and SAHGF Director Freedman were out of the country when the 'petition war' broke out. This explains partly why they only met with Tutu towards the end of January. Freedman said that he and Smith had decided to wait until they had met with Tutu before releasing a statement.⁷⁸ On 25 January 2011, Freedman, Smith and Osrin met Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu at his offices. The SAHGF team arrived with a draft press release that assumed that

⁷⁶ Chief Rabbi's Press Release about Archbishop Tutu and the Holocaust Centre, Post date: 14 January 2011, post modified date: January 20, 2011, accessed 10 October 2015, <http://www.chiefrabbi.co.za/2011/01/chief-rabbis-press-release-on-archbishop-tutu-and-holocaust-centre> ; Melanie Gosling, "Chief Rabbi Slams anti-Tutu Petition", *Cape Times*, 16 January 2015, accessed 10 October, 2015, <http://beta.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/chief-rabbi-slams-anti-tutu-petition-1012103> ; "Chief Rabbi backs Tutu", SAPA, 14 January 2011, accessed 10 October 2015, <http://news.iafrica.com/sa/698389.html> ; "South Africa's chief rabbi defends Tutu", *Jewish Journal*, 17 January 2011, accessed 10 October, 2015, http://www.thejewishweek.com/news/international/south_africas_chief_rabbi_defends_tutu . Chief Rabbi Goldstein did not defend Tutu's position on Israel however, calling it "unfair criticism". He called for engaging with Tutu but not through a petition or protest. In this Goldstein was consistent with his argument in the "open letter" that he wrote on 4 November 2010. Accessed October 10, 2015, <http://www.chiefrabbi.co.za/2010/11/open-letter-to-archbishop-desmond-tutu/> . The "open letter" was also published in the *Jerusalem Post*, 3 November 2010, accessed 10 October 2015, <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Op-Ed-Contributors/An-open-letter-to-Tutu> . The headline of David Saks's regular column, the "Barbaric Yawp" in the *South African Jewish Report*, was "Anti-Tutu petitioners blunder badly." Saks rejected the petition, but not because he agreed with Tutu's views. For him the petition was a PR blunder, "allowing the anti-Israel crowd to weigh in against 'apartheid Israel' and its local Jewish supporters..." , 28 January-4 February 2011, 6.

⁷⁷ The "defence" petition also made no mention of Goldstone or Asmal.

⁷⁸ Richard Freedman, email communication with author, 12, 13 January 2011.

Tutu would not resign. However, the team did not produce the document until some time into the meeting.

Smith began by assuring Tutu that it was the “unanimous wish of all the Trustees that [Tutu] ...continue as Patron of the SAHGF”. Smith reaffirmed the value Tutu added to the work of the SAHGF. Freedman reminded Tutu of his support in the past for the work of the SAGHF. Tutu expressed his appreciation for the unanimous support from the SAHGF. He explained that he was guided in particular by the Prophet Jeremiah. The minutes do not indicate whether Tutu explained what he meant by this, or whether Smith, Freedman and Osrin understood the reference. Tutu had made similar references to Jeremiah in other contexts as a way to explain why “he had no choice but to speak his mind.”⁷⁹ Tutu said of himself, that like Jeremiah, he could “no more stop speaking truth to power than he could stop breathing” and that God’s word of justice “burned within [his] breast.” Tutu explained to Freedman, Smith and Osrin, that he would continue to speak out, although he was sorry that this would divide the community.⁸⁰

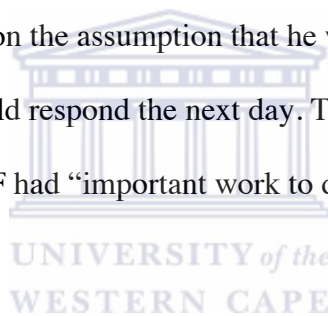
Smith explained that there were “other Jewish voices who felt [that Tutu’s] support of the cultural and academic boycott would lead to the delegitimisation of Israel and ... antisemitism... powerlessness ... and even a repeat of the past.”⁸¹ Tutu listened to

⁷⁹ John Allen, *Rabble-rouser for peace: The authorized biography of Desmond Tutu* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), 221.

⁸⁰ Minute of meeting held at the offices of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu on 25 January 2011. CTCH Collection, Cape Town.

⁸¹ Minute of meeting held at the offices of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu on 25 January 2011. CTCH Collection, Cape Town. It is very unlikely that Smith, Freedman, Osrin or Tutu believed the trajectory Smith drew from a cultural boycott to a second Holocaust. Nor is it likely that Smith would think that Tutu would believe the trajectory. The minutes of the meeting of the SAHF Trustees on 6 May 2009 noted that Rabbi Suiza had made “inappropriate comments about Archbishop Tutu” at the Holocaust Survivors’ Dinner. Suiza also indicated on the ‘termination petition’ that all Jews were Holocaust survivors. While Smith’s ‘trajectory’ may have been a rhetorical device, Suiza’s comments,

Smith and then repeated his position to which Smith replied that, “there would have to be another meeting.” Tutu answered that were he to resign, it would be that he did not want to “be a source of division in the community.” The subsequent responses of Smith, Freedman and Osrin indicated a growing alarm that Tutu might insist on resigning. Freedman repeated that the SAHGF “required Tutu to stay on for purposes of [their] work”. Osrin pointed out that the “majority of the Jewish community did not want [Tutu] to resign” and that the Chief Rabbi, the “spokesman of the Jewish community had spoken out in support” of Tutu remaining Patron of the SAHGF. Smith, concerned that Tutu might still resign, then explained that “it was not a good time” for Tutu to do so. Freedman then handed Tutu a prepared press release that the trustees had drafted for Tutu on the assumption that he would not resign. Tutu read the draft and said that he would respond the next day. The meeting ended with Tutu saying he felt that the SAHGF had “important work to do in South Africa”.⁸²



Tutu did not resign. Both the SAHGF and the Tutu Peace Centre released a press statement that was picked up by a number of newspapers.⁸³ The decision to allow the “petition war” to take its course paid off largely in favour of the CTHC, JHGF and

and the petition, suggest that there were indeed some members of the community who might have believed that criticism of Israel would result in another Holocaust. Minutes of a Meeting of the National Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust Foundation held on 6 May 2009 at 17:00, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸² Minute of meeting held at the offices of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, January 25, 2011. CTHC Collection, Cape Town; Extraordinary Minute of meeting held at the offices of Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus, 26 January 2011. CTHC Collection, Cape Town. Apart from the date that differs, the minutes are almost identical. The changes effected are superficial. The meaning remains the same.

⁸³ “Holocaust Foundation says Tutu will continue as SAHGF patron”, *South African Jewish Report*, 25 January 2011; “Holocaust museums wants Tutu to stay,” *BDLive*, 27 January 27, 2011, accessed 3 October 2015, <http://www.bdlive.co.za/articles/2011/01/27/holocaust-museum-wants-tutu-to-stay>; “Anti-Tutu petition fails,” *iafrica.com*, January 26, 2011, accessed 11 October 2015, <http://news.iafrica.com/sa/701464.html> ; “Tutu thanks supporters”, SAPA, *Timeslive*, 1 February 2011, accessed 11 October 2015, <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2011/02/01/tutu-thanks-supporters> .

SAHGF.⁸⁴ The petition in favour of Tutu served to couple the Nobel Laureate and anti-apartheid campaigner's credentials to the work of the CTHC and SAHGF, and the positive response to Tutu was overwhelmingly greater than the negative.

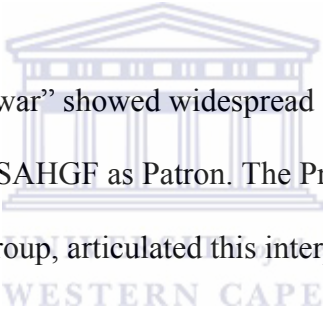
And yet the “petition war” revealed a core tension that the Centre had not been able to resolve: how could it be “seen” as relevant and legitimate in post-apartheid South Africa, without alienating the Jewish community? The question of the Centre's identity lay at the heart of the tension. The identity that the Trustees had nurtured for over the decade and more since the CTHC had opened its doors was that of neutral teacher, facilitator of reconciliation, non-partisan documenter in the history of the Holocaust only. The creation of the Holocaust Centres in Durban and Johannesburg and the establishment of the SAHGF impacted the CTHC's institutional identity, but only insofar as the other two Centres and the SAHGF took on the CTHC's identity as their own.



As this Chapter has shown in the examples of the choices made by the CTHC and the SAHGF in the projects it developed, the CTHC stretched the boundaries of the label of “documenter in the history of the Holocaust only”. The CTHC was at pains to show its relevance to South Africans who believed in human rights and who were not Jewish and had assumed that its relevance was obvious to the broader Jewish community. The “petition war” reminded the Trustees and management that the

⁸⁴ Tutu mentioned the support he had received “from many members of the Jewish faith who have signed petitions, written letters and issued statements of support,” in an article in the *Mail & Guardian*, “Peace centre (sic) defends Tutu's criticism of Israel,” 18 January 2011, accessed 10 October 2015, <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-01-18-peace-centre-defends-tutus-criticism-of-israel>; “Tutu thanks supporters”, SAPA, *Timeslive*, 1 February 2011, <http://www.timeslive.co.za/local/2011/02/01/tutu-thanks-supporters>. Not everyone approved of the SAHGF's keeping Tutu as their patron, as Joel Wolpert's condemnation of the SAHGF attests. Wolpert asserted that the “SAHGF shows arrogant abrogation of accountability” to their “principal stakeholder, namely the SA Jewish community...” Joe Wolpert to the Editor, *South African Jewish Report*, 4 February 2011, 12.

CTHC and SAHGF could not assume wholehearted support from within the Jewish community for its work, unless the CTHC and the SAHGF were perceived to be in agreement with the sentiments expressed by the SAZF and the SAJBD regarding the Middle East conflict generally and in particular, those of Tutu. Until the “petition war”, there were enough indicators that the SAHGF and its centres shared the SAZF and SAJBD position.⁸⁵ The SAZF national chair, Avrom Krengel gave his assurance that, “The Holocaust centres are autonomous bodies entitled to choose their patrons.” The Jewish community was not “a homogenous body and we have no jurisdiction over other bodies,”⁸⁶ he reiterated. Nevertheless the “petition war” was a very public challenge to the CTHC and SAHGF.



Simultaneously, the “petition war” showed widespread support for Tutu, and his ongoing relationship with the SAHGF as Patron. The Press Statement issued by the Open Shuhada Street (OSS) group, articulated this interpretation.⁸⁷ A few of OSS members met Freedman at the CTHC offices on 24 January 2011 (a day before Freedman, Osrin and Smith met with Tutu). The OSS members “delivered” the petition and the 5815 signatures defending Tutu’s “standing as a patron of the Cape Town and Johannesburg Holocaust Centres and affirms the vital service that these Centres perform in our communities.”⁸⁸

⁸⁵ The fact that the WPZC and the national and provincial chapters of the SAJBD, along with other community groups met a few metres from the CTHC offices and that most of the volunteers, staff and trustees were also members of communal bodies, including the WPZC, would have been enough ‘evidence’ of the ‘neutral’ position taken by the CTHC to go unchallenged.

⁸⁶ Melanie Gosling, “Support still pouring in for Tutu” *Cape Times*, 13 January 2011, accessed 9 October 2015, <http://beta.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/western-cape/support-still-pouring-in-for-tutu-1011450>.

⁸⁷ Open Shuhada Press Statement: Petition in Support of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu Delivered to Holocaust Centre, January 24, 2011. CTHC Collection.

⁸⁸ The Open Shuhada Press Statement explained that the majority of signatures were collected electronically, but several hundred were also accumulated by hand outside clinics and shopping centres in Khayelitsha. In total, 5,815 signatures were collected. The signatories hail from 88 different countries: from Sweden to Botswana, from New Zealand to Brasil.(sic)” Open Shuhada Press

Both petitions referred to Tutu's appropriateness as patron of the SAHGF suggesting at first glance that the 'petition war' was about the CTHC and the JHGC (and the SAHGF) and who could lay claim to the history of the Holocaust. However I would argue that the petitions, and the comments that some chose to include with their signature, suggested that the battle was over something else. The comments in both petitions illustrated that the Centre itself had become a proxy for a debate that was at the heart of the Jewish community at the time. This was a debate about what it meant to be Jewish in South Africa more than 60 years after the Holocaust had ended, after the State of Israel had been declared, and 18 years after apartheid. This debate and the tension it caused can also be seen in the way in which Freedman responded to the delivery of the petition.



While it would seem to be cause for celebration to receive an endorsement of over 5000 people from across the world, including human rights luminaries supporting your patron in the face of a call for his resignation, Freedman interpreted the action of the OSS members as far less positive. He told me that he felt that the OSS were trying "to make a point: that they had won, not us."⁸⁹ Yet, the OSS's press statement was clear that the outcome and process of the "petition wars" was an endorsement of the SAHGF:

Through this petition people have been educated about the Holocaust. The petition is a forceful affirmation of both the criminal truth of, and universal lessons inherent in, the Holocaust as a human and moral catastrophe. To find a contradiction between asserting human rights and memorialising the Nazi genocide is to abrogate the true meaning of this horrific event, and arrogate it to much narrower purposes. The petition shows that the Holocaust can and must guide us in the struggle against injustice and ethical betrayal that grips our world today. As this petition affirms Archbishop Tutu so it affirms the work of the South

Statement: Petition in Support of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu Delivered to Holocaust Centre, 24 January 2011. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁸⁹ Richard Freedman, personal communication with author, 24 January 2011.

African Holocaust Foundation, an institution whose moral bearing dignifies our country.⁹⁰

Everything in this paragraph resonated with what the SAHGF espoused. Yet, Freedman did not experience this in his encounter with OSS. I would argue that Freedman was not reacting to OSS's press statement, or the petition, but rather to the OSS itself. Freedman distrusted the messenger, as did Smith and the Trustees. That OSS won the PR battle is clear. But what Freedman sensed and what the comments of the vast majority of the more than 5000 signatories showed, was that Tutu was not the focus point. The battle was rather over the identity of Jewish South Africa, particularly its relationship to Zionism and Israel/Palestine in the shadow of the Gaza War and the growing presence of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS) in South Africa.⁹¹



⁹⁰ Open Shuhada Press Statement: Petition in Support of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu Delivered to Holocaust Centre, 24 January 2011. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹¹ The landscape of Jewish communal identity had been especially contested in the year before the Tutu Affair. In July 2008, six months before the war broke out in Gaza, 23 prominent South Africans had visited Israel and the occupied territories. This widely publicized visit sparked a vicious battle of words in the Jewish press. (See Doron Isaacs, "Human Rights Group returns from five 'remarkable' days in Israel and Palestine." *Cape Jewish Chronicle*, August 2008; Linda Ensor, "Local Group On Mideast Mission to Support Negotiated Peace Deal" *Business Day*, 1 July 2008; Ilse Fredericks, "SA aktiviste besoek Israel, Palestyne gebiede" *Die Burger*, 1 July 2008; Nathan Geffen and Doron Isaacs, "Israeli soldiers testify to rights violations in Gaza" *Cape Times*, 17 July 2009. The *Cape Jewish Chronicle* (CJC) ran an apology twice in the September 2008 edition for Isaacs's article that had appeared in the August edition. A joint response from the SAJBD and SAZF appeared in the September issue, as did letters to the editor that used language such as "Israel-hating Jew", and described the delegation as "The Big Con". Such was the vitriol leveled at the members of the delegation in the months that followed, that the Chair of the SAJBD called for tolerance (*Cape Jewish Chronicle* August-October 2008. Accessed 2 October 2015. <http://cjc.org.za/?m=200808>; <http://cjc.org.za/?m=200809>; <http://cjc.org.za/?m=200810>). In January 2009, the Chief Rabbi, the SAJBD and the SAZF issued a press statement on behalf of the Jewish community, giving their support to Israel's war with Gaza. Two days later a letter signed by 315 members of the Jewish community, distanced themselves from the "communal structures ... who purport[ed] to speak for ... the many Jews who are uncomfortable with the destruction in Gaza, claiming one collective view for the entire community." The signatories said that the approach of the communal structures was "irresponsible" in the face of the "divergence of opinion within the community". It was this fact they said, that had forced the signatories to respond. The 315 signatories included Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer, UCT Vice Chancellor, Max Price, ANC MPs Janet Love and Andrew Feinstein, Journalist Anton Harber, Cartoonist, Zapiro, Inyatelo CEO Shelagh Gastrow, Max Coleman, David Bruce, Graham Bloch, Taffy Adler. A few weeks later, eleven South Africans signed another letter supporting the sentiments of the 315 signatories. The eleven who signed the 1 February letter included South Africa's first President of the Constitutional Court, Arthur Chaskalson, William Kentridge, Gill Marcus, Jules and Selma Browde, Gillian Slovom Geoff Budlender and David Goldblatt. (Percy Zvomuya and Sello S Alcock, "Top SA Jews slam Gaza

The period after 2008 was a period of exponential growth for the profile of the CTHC as a part of the SAHGF. At the meeting on the 15 May 2008, after noting that Kader Asmal had agreed to become a Patron of the Centre, the Trustees discussed whether they should appoint additional Trustees “from outside of the Jewish community”.⁹² The Trustees decided that due to the new national structure and the “recent subsequent enlargement of the Board of Trustees,” it was best to consider the matter again the following year.⁹³ This matter was not raised again. The Trustees of the CTHC, the DHC and JHGC were still all from within the Jewish community, as were the Trustees of the SAHGF. The lack of diversity in the Trustees, the Directorships, the staff and volunteers undermined the identity that the projects undertaken after 2006 suggested for the SAHGF and its centre in Cape Town. Unlike the inclusiveness Tutu ascribed to the CTHCs in his song of praise in 1994, the fundamentally unchanged structure of the CTHC more than a decade after its opening, suggested instead that the executive had not been able to move beyond the founding conception of the CTHC as an outreach programme of the Jewish community.

The CTHC may have provided, in journalist Lucinda Jolly’s words, “a safe space for hot sticky topics”⁹⁴ such as homophobia and xenophobia, but it had not provided a space for the Jewish community to grapple with what it meant to have been Jewish in apartheid, and therefore given unearned privileges based on “race”. The decision of the Trustees and the SAHGF Director of keeping the Board of Trustees within the

attack”, *Mail and Guardian*, 1 February 1, 2009, accessed 12 October 2015, <http://mg.co.za/article/2009-02-01-top-sa-jews-slam-gaza-attack> .)

⁹² Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust Foundation, 5 May 2008, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹³ Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the South African Holocaust Foundation, May 5, 2008, Cape Town. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

⁹⁴ Lucinda Jolly, “Unspoken Atrocity of the Third Reich,” *Cape Times*, 26 February 2013, accessed 23 August 2015, <http://beta.iol.co.za/capetimes/unspoken-atrocity-of-the-third-reich-1477162> .

mainstream Jewish community closed the CTHC and the SAHGF to learning from those to whom its Holocaust Centre was “reaching out”.⁹⁵ The CTHC, and SAHGF, remained what it was when it began: a community outreach programme.



⁹⁵ By “mainstream” I mean individuals with close ties to communal structures represented on the SAJBD. None of the Jewish members of Human Rights Delegation that had gone to Israel/Palestine or anyone from the Jewish community who had publicly associated themselves with a stance that was critical of Israeli state, however eminent they might be, were approached for a position on the Board of Trustees.

CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I set out to answer why in post-apartheid South Africa Holocaust education had such a large footprint in the South African National Curriculum. I sought to examine not only why a Holocaust Centre was constructed in Cape Town shortly after the country's first democratic election, but more importantly, why so many people outside the small South African Jewish community seemed to care. What did the CTHC actually do when it opened its doors?

In answering this question, another question asked by the founders of the CTHC kept recurring, namely, where did one put apartheid in the CTHC's exhibition and its education programmes? It became apparent that this question, of positioning one history in relation to another, was the outer garment of the matter central to Holocaust commemoration in South Africa. This central concern had to do with addressing two questions: how should the Jewish community position itself in relation to the broader South African society and state, and how could it indicate this position?

Through Holocaust commemoration, the community leadership could signal to the state and other South Africans the place of the Jewish community as a legitimate part of the country. Holocaust commemoration, of which Holocaust education was a component, constructed a collective Holocaust memory for Jewish South Africa and broader South Africa. The study shows how this collective memory was constructed and how it shifted as the political landscape of South Africa transformed.

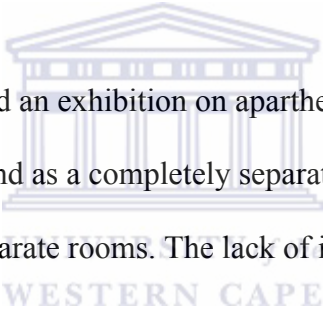
The Holocaust Centre in Cape Town was a physical embodiment of the Holocaust memory and collective memory of the Jewish community. Even as it opened, the CTHC was performing collective memory construction. This dissertation illustrates how the CTHC offered a way of seeing the Holocaust and apartheid that, at the turn of the 20th century, appeared to give comfort and hope to South Africans across the board.

The CTHC had opened in 1999 as the permanent home of the SAJBD and WPZC's Holocaust education outreach programme. The CTHC was unambiguously a Jewish community project, located within a complex of community buildings, funded mainly by the local Jewish community, and managed by its leaders. The SAJBD, the Jewish communal leadership, had not condemned apartheid until 1985. A decade later, the Chief Rabbi in his submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, acknowledged the Jewish leadership's shortcomings in not supporting those anti-apartheid activists who were Jewish, and acknowledged that Jewish South Africans had benefited from apartheid.

And yet, the doyens of the anti-apartheid movement, including President Nelson Mandela, lauded the CTHC for its place in the newly democratic South Africa. In examining how the Centre had come to be claimed by the wider South Africa, I have argued that the genesis and construction of the CTHC was shaped by the changes in the political landscape of the country. The political transition and the ending of the cultural boycott, made it possible for the Dutch-based Anne Frank House to bring its exhibition to South Africa. The exhibition was a useful vehicle for heritage

institutions, such as the South African National Gallery and leaders of the Jewish community to signal their support of the future democratic dispensation.

On the recommendation of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the Mayibuye Centre was approached to develop an exhibition on apartheid that would accompany the “Anne Frank in the World” (AFITW) exhibition. Despite the initial recommendation of the Ideël Organisation who advised the Anne Frank House that an exhibition on apartheid be integrated into the Anne Frank exhibition and that questions be incorporated to encourage viewers to consider the history of Anne Frank and the Holocaust having relevance for South Africa, the two exhibitions remained separate.




The Mayibuye Centre prepared an exhibition on apartheid without any assistance from the Anne Frank House and as a completely separate entity. In some instances the exhibitions were placed in separate rooms. The lack of integration was further illustrated in the guiding: large numbers of volunteers, mainly from the Jewish community, were trained to guide the AFITW exhibition, but had nothing to do with the apartheid exhibition. However, the AFITW was the first time that an explicit link between the human rights abuses of the Holocaust and apartheid was made. The AFITW exhibition provided an important impetus for the construction of the CTHC.

An analysis of the archive suggests that a key concern and source of friction within the organisation of the CTHC was about how to integrate apartheid into the exhibition. This debate reflected a wider existential question that had to do with collective memory and communal identity. Holocaust commemoration provided the

Jewish community with a “screen memory” and had encouraged Jewish South Africa to see itself as the proxy of victims of the Holocaust.

I show how Holocaust commemoration before 1948 and then during the period of apartheid rule signalled the community’s loyalty to the apartheid state in two main ways. Firstly, Holocaust commemoration framed the Holocaust as the most extreme form of brutality, and in no way comparable to South Africa. Furthermore, Holocaust commemoration entrenched a sense of ethnic identity and unity which sat comfortably with the apartheid state’s strategy of foregrounding, cultivating and constructing ethnic divisions to justify apartheid policies of segregation.



Holocaust commemoration served to confirm South African Jewry’s position in the racial hierarchy of apartheid South Africa and confirmed Jewishness as “whiteness.” Holocaust commemoration stressed the ethnic solidarity based on the experience of the commemoration of the Holocaust. The SAJBD insisted that in other matters, such as the political situation of South Africa, a Jewish collective did not exist, and individuals were to respond as individuals, not as Jewish individuals. Individuals within the Jewish community challenged the collective memory of the Holocaust being constructed through Holocaust commemoration, as divorced from the South African context. The community leadership responded to these moments of dissent by isolating and marginalising the individuals, to exclude them from the collective. This response however, did not prevent an alternative collective memory of the Holocaust being developed by antiapartheid activists who were Jewish.¹

¹ See for example, Shimoni, *Community and Conscience*, and Gilbert, “Jews and the Racial State.”

Holocaust commemoration stressed the uniqueness of the Holocaust, the impact of the Holocaust exclusively on European Jewry only and the diaspora, and claimed Holocaust memory as part of the collective South African Jewish memory. It placed the Holocaust beyond history, both as part of a longer history of persecution and resistance, but also as a rupture in this cycle as it was seen to have led to the establishment of the State of Israel. The positioning of the State of Israel as rebirth in answer to the near destruction of the European Jewry reflected South African Jewry's close ties to Zionism.

During the period of political transition in South Africa, the collective memory of the Holocaust expanded to include a construction of the Holocaust as a way to bring reconciliation to South Africa. This construction positioned South African Jewry as the elders who had gone through a similar but worse, ordeal of the Holocaust and were thus in a special position to usher other South Africans through the process of coming to terms with the impact of apartheid.

South African Jewry was not alone to engage in redrawing their identity as a community and as individuals in the newly democratic South Africa. Post-apartheid identity formation was shaped by the rhetoric of the “rainbow nation”, “reconciliation” and “non-racialism”. Heritage institutions were but some of many public sites of identity formation. They provided spaces where questions of what the “New” South Africa was, and how South Africans would remember the “Old” South Africa. Whilst the debates were made visible through curatorial choices, the questions posed by visitors to the museums of these curatorial choices, illustrated how

contentious the terrains of identity formation were.² Institutions such as the CTHC and other heritage institutions became spaces in which South Africans could claim identities that allowed some to disavow their previous culpability during apartheid, The CTHC provided other South Africans with the opportunity to recreate themselves as imagined resisters against the abuses perpetrated by the Nazi state and their collaborators. This provided some South Africans, implicated as bystanders by their classification as “white”, with an opportunity to position themselves as future defenders of human rights in the new South Africa.

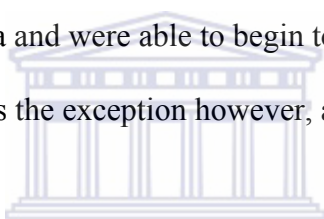
I have argued that the CTHC reframed its mission of spreading Holocaust education to one of reconciliation as it became apparent that framing Holocaust education as a vehicle for reconciliation gave Holocaust education, the CTHC and by association, the Jewish community of South Africa, legitimacy in post-apartheid South Africa. The position of Holocaust education as a vehicle for reconciliation placed its educators, the Jewish community, into the position of neutral facilitator. The road map they held was the history of the Holocaust. Their licence to drive was the prevailing collective Holocaust memory, which appointed Jewish South Africans the proxy victims and survivors. Such a positioning allowed the Jewish community to sidestep the contradictions of teaching about a history of racism when they themselves had been beneficiaries of the racist system of apartheid.

The construction of the CTHC revealed a conception of how it could be a space that could control how the Holocaust was remembered, and how apartheid would be

² See for example, Davison’s account of the reactions to Pippa Skotnes’s exhibition, “Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture” at the South African National Gallery, in “Museums and the Re-shaping of Memory.”

remembered. Patron Steven Smith had suggested in the early discussions about the design of the CTHC that it would be better to leave apartheid out of the exhibition. The responses of visitors showed that it would never have been possible for the CTHC to leave apartheid out of the exhibition because the memory of apartheid came into the exhibition every time a South African walked inside.

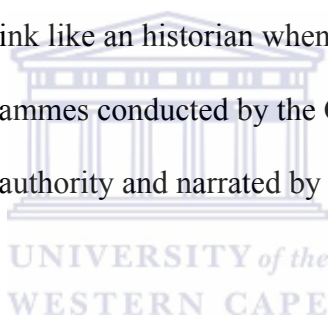
This dissertation explored how adult South African made sense of the two traumatic pasts represented together in one venue. Some South Africans were able to hold both memories simultaneously without the one diminishing the other. Some South Africans made the connections between the construction of race both by the Nazis, and by the National Party of South Africa and were able to begin to question their assumptions about their identities. This was the exception however, and not the rule.



I drew on literature from the field of memory, Holocaust memorialisation, in particular the work of LaCapra, Goldberg and Confino's consideration of global Holocaust memory, and Rothberg's multidirectional memory, in developing a theoretical framework for the examination of the history of Holocaust memory in South Africa. The field of literature related to Holocaust education offered insight into the assumptions implicit in the education programmes developed by the CTHC and the methodologies used. The dissertation suggests that the normative lesson-centric approach that dominated the presentation of Holocaust education in the first decade of the CTHC's existence was a result not only of the preferred methodology of the Education Director, but because it met the needs of a teaching corps which found the shifting terrain of education after 1994 and the curriculum reform disconcerting and threatening. However, the change in curriculum that made Holocaust education

mandatory and placed it in the history curriculum redirected the teaching approach of the CTHC to what it meant to teach history.

This shift in focus from universal/life lessons to history as discipline brought increasing pressure to bear on the presentation and the rationale for Holocaust education as a “lesson for humanity.” The “lesson-centric” approach was displaced from being front of centre to a focus on methodology applicable to History teaching. The positive responses from teachers and senior education personnel quietened the concerns of certain members of the CTHC, about this shift. However, apart from the occasional programme the re-orientation in focus in teacher programmes to examining what it meant to think like an historian when examining the Holocaust, was not sustained in the programmes conducted by the CTHC and the narrative of the history remained the voice of authority and narrated by the guides and the facilitator.



The nationalisation of Holocaust education through it being made a mandatory component of the school history curriculum, led to the establishment of the SAHF and then the SAHGF by the CTHC Board of Trustees, as a way to control and manage Holocaust education. Because of the lack of personnel in the Durban and Johannesburg Centres, the CTHC staff carried out most of the activities of the SAHGF. The establishment of the SAHF and the SAHGF was accompanied by a widening of contact beyond South Africa with international Holocaust organisations and the development of an identity for the CTHC as being a regional expert. However despite the opportunities these international contacts offered, the SAHGF was not able to develop long-term partnerships with other African countries, not least with its

neighbour Namibia. This lack of sustainability was the product of a lack of capacity: the footprint of the SAHGF did not reflect the very tiny staff of the three centres.

Wole Soyinka in “The Burden of Memory, the Muse of Forgiveness” wrote,

I have rallied against the thesis that it was the Jewish Holocaust that placed the first question mark on all claims of European humanism – from the Renaissance through the Enlightenment to the present-day multicultural orientation. Insistence on that thesis, we must continue to maintain, merely provides further proof that the European mind has yet to come to full cognition of the African world as an equal sector of a universal humanity, for, if it had, its historic recollection would have placed the failure of European humanism centuries earlier – and that would be at the very inception of the Atlantic slave trade.³

Goldberg referenced this quote from Soyinka as a challenge to the notion of a global Holocaust memory, arguing that the “global” was less global than it purported, and the network of academics was located within Europe, Israel and North America, the main loci of Holocaust study.⁴

The study of Holocaust memory and education in South Africa held the potential to offer a useful contribution to the body of literature dominated by voices from the North and an orientation Northwards. This research about the CTHC and Holocaust education practices in post-apartheid South Africa provides a contribution to the discussion on the impact of the globalisation of the Holocaust. My study argues that local histories cannot be ignored nor should they be feared in a consideration of the place of Holocaust education within a society recently emerged from conflict. History, like memory, is a work in progress. That it is constantly under construction is not the problem. Whether the process of construction and facilitation of meaning is made

³ Wole Soyinka, *The Burden of Memory, the Muse of Forgiveness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁴ Goldberg, *Marking Evil*.

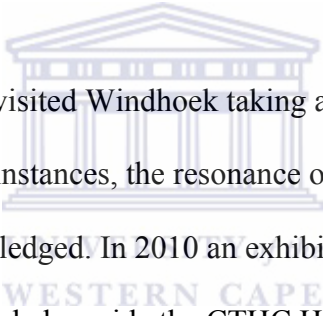
transparent is far more relevant. My study has shown how the CTHC attempted to control the collective memory of the Holocaust at various stages of the CTHC's development. At times, this attempt at control was challenged by staff working within the education department of the CTHC, at other times by participants in the workshops.

The research has offered a contribution to the field of literature that examines the role of memorialisation in the construction of identity and collective memory in societies emerging from conflict. Allied to this is the question of the place of history education in that nexus. The examination of the CTHC included analyses of the factors involved in shaping the experience of memorial, and how the relationship between memorial and visitor had shaped that memory. The study examined the implications for an understanding of the Holocaust if it were presented as a history, and why such an orientation would be considered threatening for some.

The second field in which this research has offered a contribution is that of Holocaust education. Unlike countries that were in the theatre of war during the Holocaust, Holocaust education in South Africa after 1999 has always had to assume that the participants had no direct link to the history, and that strategies to engage their empathy for the history had to be developed. The process of negotiating the education programmes and the responses to these programmes could be of value. The contribution this study would make is not only to the question of best practice. The research conducted to gauge the responses of teachers and students offers some insight into what aspects of the

history teaching, as well as exhibition and museum teaching made the greatest impression on the students.

The research contributes to the literature that examines the work of education, and in particular, history education, in countries emerging from conflict. It indicates some of the challenges inherent in a society where the educators, be they high school teachers or museum facilitators, are implicated in the history of conflict in one way or the other. It also offers some insight into the impact of learning about genocide on young people who are living in socio-economically deprived areas, as well as middle class areas.



In 2010 and 2014, the CTHC visited Windhoek taking an exhibition on the Holocaust with them. In both instances, the resonance of the Holocaust with Namibian history was acknowledged. In 2010 an exhibition created by the Aegis Committee was exhibited alongside the CTHC Holocaust exhibition. This exhibition included a section on the genocide perpetrated against the Herero and Nama by the German colonial troops at the turn of the 20th century. In 2014, Freedman and I facilitated a workshop with teachers, student teachers and History staff and students from the University of Namibia (UNAM). The workshop was to illustrate how the exhibition could be used to teach about the Holocaust. A lecture on the colonial genocide of the Herero and Nama was delivered, and the connections to Nazism illustrated. At no point was the third memory addressed: the more recent colonial experience under apartheid South Africa. Again, the CTHC took on the position of neutral guide, and the opportunity to engage, was missed.

My research suggests that despite the curriculum change that propelled Holocaust education and the CTHC into the national mainstream, Holocaust education as organised by the CTHC remained the work of a Community Outreach organisation. The Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre on the other hand is located outside the Jewish community centre. It has included in its exhibition a substantive section on the history of the genocide in Rwanda, and mention of the genocide in German South West Africa. Its director, Tali Nates, has consistently and publicly located the Centre in Africa, as an educational space connected to, and for, Africa. In 2005, Sue Brophy-Smith's external audit of the CTHC recommended that the Centre make reference to other 20th Century genocides and that it considers "its role for the next decade with regard to both the South Africa and the Africa agenda."⁵

Perhaps the JHGC can take the lead towards a sphere of memory work where the CTHC has been unable to go. Whether the collective memory that such an inclusive move requires, sits comfortably with everyone, remains to be seen.

⁵ Brophy-Smith, "Cape Town Holocaust Centre Study, 13. CTHC Collection, Cape Town.

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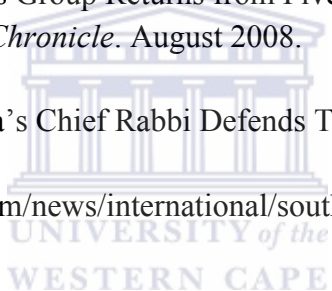
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