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CAPE TOWN

PROBLEMATIZING THE HERITAGE MANAGEMENT OF PRESTWICH STREET

By Christian Ernsten
February 2006

**Stylizing Cape Town
Problematizing the heritage management of Prestwich Street**

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A minor dissertation submitted in the partial *fulfilment* of the requirements for the
award of the degree of

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Compulsory declaration

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature:



Date: 20.02.2006

STYLIZING CAPE TOWN

Problematizing the heritage management of Prestwich Street

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of
MPhil in African Studies with a specialisation in Public Culture

20 February 2006
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Front-page: The copy on the transparency is of a drawing of the Alfred Street elevation (A303: 1 February 2005) of The Rockwell, a building designed by Messaris, Wapenaar and Phillippides Architects. The photograph (made by the South African Heritage Resources Agency) that shows through the transparent displays the temporary storage room of the human remains, which were exhumed at the construction site of the Rockwell.

Abstract

The uncovering of an unmarked colonial burial ground as the result of the construction work on a set of luxurious apartments and an office complex alongside Cape Town's Waterfront area in May 2003 has proved to be the most publicly contested instance of archaeological work in South Africa since the end of apartheid. From the public debate about this burial place at Prestwich Street, a number of poignant questions emerge with respect to not only the significance of this heritage, but also the subsequent use of this city space. In relation to issues of reconciliation especially, but also of reparation, restitution, identity, and memory in the context of the post-apartheid city, a broad spectrum of styles of thought, discourses and practices have been brought to the fore. In this dissertation I examine the management practices of three organisations directly involved in the management of the heritage of Prestwich Street – namely, the South African Heritage Resources Agency, the Heritage Resources Section of the City of Cape Town and the Cultural Sites and Resources Forum. The analysis of the management of the heritage and development of Prestwich Street thus represents a lens for looking at the city in its transformation. I argue centrally that in the process of manufacturing this transformation, the heritage managers are engaged in a series of improvisations conditioned by the institutional memory of the city's past.

University of Cape Town

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Preface

How do we choose the memories that inspire our imaginations of the future?

In the fall of 2004 I and two friends undertook a research project in Kosovo – a province in former Yugoslavia. Kosovo's transformation to democracy led to outbursts of violence and radicalism, such as mass killings, destruction of holy places and forced removals. Currently, UN-soldiers form a cordon between the ethnic groups, an army of internationals attempts to manufacture a democracy and forensic specialists uncover mass graves. Our business in this region was to collect and represent the imaginations of a *brave new Kosovo*.

Photos of missing persons, traditional dances during the opening of a monument for a former leader of the Kosovo Liberation Army and UN troops guarding a monastery – these are the images central to my recollection of our research trip. I also remember the freezing cold, the power cuts and feeling uncomfortable. Mass demonstrations against the international presence in Kosovo and hysteric newsreels made the atmosphere electric. Most of Kosovarians we met, were wonderful and welcoming though. In these conversations we encountered a variety of articulations of identity. The ways of self definition were based on categories as origin, tradition, language, but as well, territory, dream, and memory.

Although the conflict left behind a landscape of destruction, displacement and decline, Kosovo appeared to us rich in symbolism and meaning. As we spoke with activists, café-owners, artists, but also, former freedom fighters and students we came to understand that the imaginations of Kosovo are, partly, based on re-appropriations of the past and the recycling identities. The celebration of resistant leaders, medieval battlefields and religious buildings gave account of strong nationalist sentiments. Next to that, the omnipresence of internationals, as well as the numerous satellite dishes on apartment buildings, made us aware of the impact of global influences. We noticed that the 'new' identities in Kosovo were not only the result of acts of re-enchanting tradition, but were also inspired by a cosmopolitan culture of cappuccinos, house music, and James Bond movies.

Our preliminary conclusion was, amongst others, that an amalgamation of conflicting and contradicting local memories and global desires holds the society in its grip. Inspired by this complex cultural landscape in the Western Balkans I formulated my interests and focus for my study at the Centre for African Studies of the University of Cape Town.

The research and writing of this work would not have been possible without the advice of Nick Shepherd. Not only did he draw my attention to the management of Prestwich Street, but also, his knowledge of this case study inspired me throughout the research process. In addition my thanks are due to: Andre van der Merwe, Clive James and Antonia Malan for making available the archives of, respectively, Styleprops Ltd, the Heritage Resources Section of the City of Cape Town and the Cultural Sites and Resources Forum; Bonita Bennett, Beverly Crouts, Antonia Malan, André van der Merwe, Bridget O'Donoghue, Michael Philippides, Ciraj Rassool, and Michael Weeder for making themselves available for interviews. Furthermore, I want to express my thankfulness to Gerard Ralphs and Eva Franzidis whose time and dedication were of great importance to this dissertation.

I wrote most of this dissertation in the Bath Villa, my house in Cape Town. I was very lucky with my 'family' there - Anna, Marie, Rita and Kahliya - who made this place to a home. Finally, I thank my friends and family in the Netherlands and South Africa for their support. Financial support was received from the VSB Foundation.

Christian Ernsten, February 2006

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Abbreviations

ACO	Archaeological Contract Office
ANC	African National Congress
CRM	Cultural Resource Management
CSRFB	Cultural Sites and Resources Forum
GAIN	Global Assets Investment Network
HOPSAHC	Hands Off Prestwich Street Ad-Hoc Committee
HRS	Heritage Resources Section of the City of Cape Town
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWP architects	Messaris, Wapenaar and Philippides architects
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act
NMC	National Monuments Council
POPP	Project on Public Past
PPPC	Prestwich Place Project Committee
RESUNACT	Research Unit for the Archaeology of Cape Town
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
SFRG	Special Focus Reference Group
UCT	University of Cape Town
UCU	Urban Conservation Unit of the City of Cape Town
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WAC	World Archaeological Congress

1. INTRODUCTION: PROBLEMATIZING HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

'Our sense of urban totality has been fractured – hence the juxtaposition of different images, memories of a past rejected or fantasized. Specific historical objects are ripped out of their context even as the state busily tries to memorialize and museumize, to build new monuments and historic landscapes that are supposed to bring together different fragments of the nation.'

Achille Mbembe¹

In May 2003, construction work on a set of luxurious apartments and an office complex – a contribution to the further gentrification of Cape Town's Waterfront area – uncovered an unmarked colonial burial ground. This discovery, situated alongside South Africa's 'number one' tourist attraction, has proved to be the most publicly contested instance of archaeological work in the country since the end of apartheid.² A public consultation process, which was supposed to determine the significance of this heritage, and to decide on the 'final' resting place for the remains, constituted a field of contestations. Different and opposing ideas, practices, values, dreams languages, views, traditions and, subsequently, identities and cultures, were brought to the surface. Moreover, these were not just simple confrontations between supporters of newness (development and urban renewal) and defenders of oldness (heritage and memory). Instead, the actors involved performed on a stage that, in the vocabulary of the theorist Arjun Appadurai, can be characterized 'by radical disjunctures between different sorts of global flows (economical, cultural and political) and the uncertain landscapes created in and through these disjunctures.'³ Thus, the opinions and the attitudes regarding this burial place were not only highly complex, but were also influenced by a diversity of cultural conditions and convictions.

As such, the heritage and development of this burial site at Prestwich Street has to be placed in the context of the ending of apartheid and the effects of globalization. It should also be seen as constituting a case of some of the problematics of South Africa's urban transformation. The theorist Achille Mbembe describes how, in the new South Africa, fragments of the city are opening up as spaces for experiences of displacement, substitution and condensation. He stresses, though, that none of these experiences are simply the repetition of a repressed past; instead, they are a manifestation of traumatic amnesia and, in some cases, a sense of nostalgia and mourning.⁴ In this way, Cape Town's urban landscape figures as a complex space where citizens of the same nation do not necessarily have the same historical perspective or consciousness, nor are they able to speak the same language concerning heritage and development.

From the debate about the Prestwich Street burial place, a number of poignant questions emerge with respect to not only the significance of this heritage, but also the subsequent use of this city space. In relation to issues of reconciliation especially, but also of reparation, restitution, identity, and memory in the context of post-apartheid Cape Town, a broad spectrum of styles of thought, discourse(s) and practice(s) have been brought to the fore.

¹ Achille Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of superfluity', in: *Public culture* 16 (2004) 373–407, here 404.

² Francisca Kellett and Lizzie Williams, *Footprint South Africa* (Bath 2004) 86 and Nick Shepherd, 'What does it mean "to give the past back to the people"? Archaeology and Ethics in the postcolony' (Forthcoming; April 2005).

³ Arjun Appadurai, 'Disjunction and difference in the global cultural economy', in: S. During (ed.), *The cultural reader* (London 1993) 220–230, here 230.

⁴ Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of superfluity', 374.



1. Aerial photograph of a part of Cape Town's Green Point area, 2005 (Archive A. Malan).



2. c1880 Photograph of land between Signal Hill and Alfred Basin (Cape Archive AG4122).

Situated in close range to the city centre and the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, Prestwich Street is part of a city block which is currently a 'hot' location in Cape Town. In the colonial period, however, this area constituted the urban periphery and was used as burial ground for the underclass (figure 1 and 2). During the apartheid years this block and its surroundings – namely, Green Point – was part of Cape Town's urban core and was initially inhabited by black and Coloured Capetonians.⁵ The introduction and implementation of the Group Areas Act (1950), led to the forced removal and relocation of these people to Cape Town's fringes: the Cape Flats.⁶

The uncovered human bones at Prestwich Street brought development work on the site to a halt and resulted in a public process, which sought to interrogate the importance of this 'new' heritage. These consultations had a dynamic character, which was partly because of strong appeals to stop both exhumation and further construction. In particular those Capetonians, who claimed that their relatives were forcibly removed from the area, pleaded for a place of remembrance. The Hands Off Prestwich Street Ad-Hoc Committee (HOPSAHC) – a group of local citizens – organised a series of public actions to strengthen their appeals; City managers and officials of the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) claimed the burial place was 'unknown' and implemented the procedures and regulations outlined in the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA); the manager of Styleprops Ltd. – the company that currently owns the site – warned about the impact of further construction delays, and a possible expropriation for future development in the Green Point area as a whole; finally, some local archaeologists argued that exhumation was a necessity for further scientific research.⁷

SAHRA and the Minister of Arts and Culture, Pallo Jordan, finally came to a decision regarding the delicacy of this heritage. That is, they permitted the proceeding of exhumation and gave the go-ahead for construction work to continue. The disinterred bones were stored at a former hospital in Woodstock.⁸ At present, the building on the site – 'The Rockwell' – is under construction. According to the website of the building, its creation is inspired by 'the early 1900 buildings of downtown Manhattan' which is '...designed to have an upmarket industrial New York feel'.⁹ In addition, on 1 October 2004 at the Memory Exhibition held at the Civic Centre, the City's Heritage Resources Section (HRS) presented its concept for a memorial park at St. Andrews Cathedral.

⁵ Black and Coloured are racial designations introduced under apartheid. Coloured denotes a complex amalgamation of *mestizo* identities with descendants of Khoisan groups, people imported from the Dutch possessions at Batavia, and others; black refers to the South Africans who are currently designated as African, for example the Xhosas, the Zulus and Venda. Black and Coloured have remained widely used categories in post-apartheid South Africa. And, although I consider notions of race bankrupt as analytical instruments, it is the general usage of these designations in the present context of South Africa, which made that I introduce them in this dissertation.

⁶ Shepherd, 'What does it mean "to give the past back to the people"?'

⁷ Comment by Katie Smuts, Video footage of the second public meeting concerning the heritage of Prestwich Street, made by Paul Brehem and Guy Pringle at Alexander Sinton High School, Crawford on 16 August 2003, Manuscripts & Archive Department of the University of Cape Town (MAD of UCT), Prestwich Street collection (PS), Interview with Clive James, held on 28 July 2005 in Cape Town, recording past of the collection author and Report (email) of Andre Van Der Merwe, Prestwich Place Development (14 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS and 'The issue "is about us as South Africans"', *Cape Argus* (5 November 2003).

⁸ Melanie Gosling, 'Prestwich skeletons: memorial for Green Point', *Cape Times* (5 October 2004).

⁹ URL: <http://www.therockwell.co.za/rocknstyle.htm> 'Rock and style' (accessed 4-10-2005).

The proposal of the HRS, as also evidenced in the design of The Rockwell, represents no trace of the full complexity of contestations, eccentricities, and power relations and struggles, which come forward from the material in the Prestwich Street Archive.¹⁰ One of the outcomes of these ways of stylizing Cape Town's urban transformation seems to be denial of its own making. Furthermore, little or no reference is made to the layered social histories of this particular area. In this dissertation, then, I aim to interrogate the management of the heritage and development of Prestwich Street. In particular I aim to give a partial explanation for the present meaning and function of this part of Green Point.

Earlier in this introduction I introduced Mbembe's term 'stylizing'. He writes that 'the disparate, and often intersecting, practices through which Africans *stylize* their conduct and life can account for the thickness of which the African present is made'.¹¹ I think this term is a particularly useful tool in thinking through the management practices of Cape Town's heritage institutions. Mbembe understands the practice of African 'self-stylizing' as constituting 'mobile, reversible and unstable' forms of African identity.¹² In connection to this reading of the case of Prestwich Street through Mbembe, I wish to examine the ways in which the management of heritage and development of Prestwich Street represents the character of the institutions involved. Thus, I argue that the stylizing of Cape Town is a product of, amongst other things, the current state of these institutions, which, in turn, is determined by their knowledge, discourse and practice.

More specifically, in this dissertation I examine the management practices of three organizations directly involved in the Prestwich Street heritage. Two of the three are directly linked to South Africa's governmental structures, namely the HRS and SAHRA, and both bodies are products of the South African National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999). Before the development and introduction of this new legislation, SAHRA was known as the National Monuments Council (NMC); the HRS was named the Urban Conservation Unit.¹³ The third organization I wish to examine is the Cultural Sites and Resources Forum (CSRFF). The CSRFF is an initiative of academics at the University of Cape Town (UCT) aimed at opening up public spaces for debates on the meaning of heritage resources in South Africa. The CSRFF is not a public institute, nor is it registered as a legal entity; nevertheless its members were actively involved in the heritage management of Prestwich Street, which took form in a private-public partnership.

The involvement of these organizations took place at different levels of intensity; all three organizations also dealt with different issues. By focusing on the management practices of these organizations I aim to develop an understanding of the complex historical problems that underlie developments in post-apartheid Cape Town. Moreover, I hope to identify the ways in which these practices are inspired by an ethical approach to thinking through the meaning and function of Cape Town's city spaces. In particular I highlight how these institutions incorporate in their acts of stylizing ideas about wholeness and self-worth, especially in the light of the damage of South Africa's recent past.¹⁴ The analysis of the management of the heritage and

¹⁰ With the term Archive I refer to the vast number of material that was produced in relation the construction and the heritage of the Prestwich Street site.

¹¹ Achille Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 239-273, here 273.

¹² Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing', 272.

¹³ Their past practices were based on the National Monument Act (No 28 of 1969).

¹⁴ Nick Shepherd, 'Heading south, looking north. Why we need a post-colonial archaeology', in: *Public archaeology* 3 (2004) 248-254, here 252.

development of Prestwich Street thus represents a lens for looking at the city in its transformation.

By responding to the central question: *What is heritage at Cape Town's Prestwich Street according to HRS, SAHRA and CSRF?* I aim to shed a light on the fractured and unstable meanings of heritage in this particular instance of Cape Town's transformation. Moreover, I argue centrally that in the process of manufacturing this transformation, heritage managers are engaged in a series of improvisations conditioned by the institutional memory of the city's past.

In this analysis the ways in which the heritage management is invoked by certain disciplinary practices will also be interrogated. In this regard, I show how the institutional memory of this city is dominated by a discourse of Cultural Resource Management (CRM), which finds its origins in South Africa in the disciplines of archaeology and planning/architecture.

To lead my research and structure my analysis, I decided upon three sub-questions. The answers to these questions lead, in my view, to an in-depth and challenging understanding of complexity of the heritage management of Prestwich Street. Moreover, these questions are conceptualised to understand the attempts which were made to channel the anger, fear, hurt and insecurities, which seemingly burdens Capetonians as a consequence of their recent past.

Thus, the first sub-question is historical – that is: What has happened at Prestwich Street since the discovery of the burial ground in 2003? The second question is: In what way can the praxis of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF related to the heritage of Prestwich Street be characterised? Finally, my third sub-question reads: How can the heritage management of Prestwich Street be interpreted in relation to the institutional memory of the city's past? I show, in response to these questions, the relation between discourse and practice of the memorializing of Cape Town's heritage and the celebrating its urban development.

The method I have used to approach this Prestwich Archive is one of close reading and discourse analysis. Specifically, the material I have examined constitutes a wide range of documents, video footage, reports, letters, emails, newspaper clippings, drawings, policy documents, and, amongst others, interviews. The sources are the direct products of the Prestwich Street 'knowledge producers'. That is, the central actors – such as SAHRA, HRS, CSRF, HOPSAHC, the developer and architect – in the controversy as it developed since 2003.

I have structured this dissertation as follows: in the second chapter, I discuss the key theoretical texts I use, my research process, methodology and literature review. I also outline the theoretical themes relevant for this research: ways of reading the city, the production of heritage and history in South Africa, public history in Cape Town, the theory of cultural resource management in South Africa and critiques of the disciplines of archaeology and architecture. This chapter also constitutes a framework upon which I situate a further discussion of the heritage management of Prestwich Street.

In the third chapter I address the first sub-question. After introducing three moments in Cape Town's present, I begin by narrating a time period from the moment that construction work unearthed the bones of the graveyard, to, amongst others, the recommencement of the construction of The Rockwell. I discuss the way in which the heritage of Prestwich Street entered the public sphere. In this chapter I also introduce the central actors, and provide a description of the public participation process. Finally I describe the appeals, which the Prestwich Place Project Committee (PPPC), the current name for the HOPSAHC, made against the decision to continue

exhumation, in relation to the management of the site and the human remains by SAHRA. Here I also touch upon the debates concerning a Prestwich Street memorial park and research on the human remains.

In the fourth chapter I address my second sub-question. That is, I discuss the roles of the different heritage management actors involved in the case of Prestwich Street. Moreover, I attempt to explain the roles of the different organizations in the light of the NHRA; here I also address issues such as the text of the NHRA and policy regarding heritage resources. Particularly, I examine the ways in which these actors produce a public history of Green Point. In this chapter I also discuss the management of the public participation process. Finally, I hope to detail the improvisatory character of the work done by these organizations.

In the fifth chapter I address my third sub-question by placing the heritage management of Prestwich Street in historical and academic context. I interrogate the traditions of urban conservation in Cape Town, as well as the kinds of practices they invoked at Prestwich Street. In this section, I also reflect on the institutional gaze at the city. Using critical literature of the disciplines of archaeology and architecture I examine the ways the praxis of these organizations is given shape by local disciplinary traditions and the discourse of CRM. Finally, I place these practices in the context of the transformation of the post-apartheid city, discussing the impact of globalization. As such, I develop a reflection on the meaning of these management practices as part of the whole of attempts to stylize Cape Town.

In my conclusion to this dissertation, I return to my central question. Finally, here, I like to invoke Svetlana Boym's remark that 'in cities in transition the porosity is particularly visible; it turns the whole city into an experimental art exhibit, a place of continuous improvisation'.¹⁵ In response I suggest that in the context of the city as space of exhibition, heritage managers can be seen curators and their praxis as acts of collecting. In this light, I wish to think through the meaning and the ethics of heritage production concerning Cape Town's Prestwich Street.¹⁶

¹⁵ Svetlana Boym, *The future of nostalgia* (New York 2001) 77.

¹⁶ Note: In this dissertation I haven chosen to apply the reference system, which was taught to me as a student at the history department of the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. This approach entails the footnote convention as prescribed by P. de Buck et al in *Zoeken en schrijven. Handleiding bij het maken van een historisch werkstuk* (8th edition; Rijswijk 1992).

2. THEORY, RESEARCH PROCESS AND LITERATURE

'Where text is absent, the history of (African) oral societies is constructed from found and sourced objects, artefacts, implements, ruins and so on.'
Joachim Schönfeldt¹⁷

In this chapter I discuss the texts central to the framing of this research project on the heritage of Prestwich Street. As part of this, I explain my theoretical approach to this subject. Specifically, I introduce two writers whose observations, thoughts and ideas prove to be of great value for understanding this particular case of knowledge production in the postcolony. In connection, I want to make explicit why I have chosen for a particular methodological approach. As well as, the ways in which this methodology became apparent throughout the course of my research process. In this way, I want to bring to the fore the different phases and projects that constitute this process. Furthermore, I set out my involvements and engagements in the locating and shaping of the Prestwich Archive. Finally, I point out which literature I find particular useful as tools to think through the problematic I sketched in the introduction.

In this chapter, it will become evident that these key texts are directly linked to my theoretical approach. As my focus on Prestwich Street concerns the heritage management of this site – importantly, in the context of the transformation of Cape Town, I have chosen five thematic areas of study. These are: ways of reading the city, the production of heritage and history in South Africa, public history in Cape Town, theorizing cultural resource management, and critiquing the disciplines of archaeology and planning/architecture. An engagement with this material, I think, enables an understanding of the full complexity of this case of South Africa's contemporary public culture. In what follows, I introduce a number of authors according to their different critical traditions, subfields and academic enterprises.

Yet, as a point of departure, I first want to reflect on the context of this master dissertation, namely as a piece research in the postcolony.

2.1 Research in the Postcolony

The unearthing the South Africa's hidden histories, which were suppressed by apartheid, but should now form the foundation of the new nation, has proved itself as a demanding task, writes the South African scholar Nick Shepherd. Shepherd, like Valentin Y. Mudimbe and Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall, points out that this challenge can be seen as the result of a twofold development. The archaeologist notes, on the one hand, the continuing effects of globalization on the post-apartheid society and, on the other hand, he outlines a prevailing lack of engagement of the South African academic disciplines with critical theory on the postcolony.¹⁸ I position this

¹⁷ Joachim Schönfeldt, 'Illustrating the unwritten text: *Silence! and Roar!*', in: Joachim Schönfeldt, Ivan Vladislavic and Andries Walter Oliphant, *The Model Man* (Johannesburg 2004) 9.

¹⁸ Shepherd refers here in particular to the discipline of archaeology in South Africa. See: Nick Shepherd, 'Heading South, looking North', 249. In Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', in: *Public Culture* 347-373 and Valentin Y. Mudimbe, *The idea of Africa* (Bloomington and London 1994) and *The invention of Africa: gnosis, philosophy and the order of knowledge* (Bloomington and London 1988), but as well in the edited volume by Mudimbe and Jean O'Barr entitled *Africa and the disciplines* (Chicago and London 1993) these issues are brought to the fore in a broader context of the knowledge production of the disciplines in Africa.

research project, therefore, deliberately in this uncertain context of the effects of globalization and postcolonial academic refiguration.

As a researcher in the field of African studies, my intention is to think through the nature of the disciplinary research as it presents itself in this case study. I, also, seek to develop an understanding of the practices of knowledge production regarding the Prestwich Street heritage in relations to complex notions of ethics in the postcolony. Thus, I endeavor to create new windows for looking at the South African society and the ways in which it positions itself in relation to the past, the present and the future.

My attempt to challenge predominant readings of Prestwich Street will be informed by a critical analysis of the relation between discourse, power and the knowledge production concerning this site. Moreover, in thinking through 'alternative' ways of researching and writing its past and present, I use the theoretical approaches of Arjun Appadurai and Achille Mbembe. I understand 'alternative' here, as in Shepherd words, 'a kind of rebelliousness, the act of writing back'.¹⁹ Theorists Appadurai and Mbembe, both in the field of cultural studies, address new theoretical approaches to (postcolonial) societies in the context of globalization. I thus use their ideas both to interrogate my case study and to apply 'new' discursive formations and categorizations for giving meaning to the public history of this part of Cape Town. Importantly, I will do this against the backdrop of Mudimbe's insightful thought that there are 'phases in the development of a discourse [having] both positive and negative aspects'.²⁰

Global scapes and multiplicities of time

Appadurai extends Benedict Anderson's concept of imagined communities to imagined worlds²¹, understanding the irregularities of these imagined worlds in terms of 'scapes' of global culture.²² In 'Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and queries for a transnational anthropology' (1991) he unpacks and analyses the meanings of this multiplicity of worlds for anthropological research.²³ Regarding the study of local histories and their 'translocal' connections, Appadurai suggests that 'it seems advisable to treat the present as a historical moment and use our understanding of it to illuminate and guide the formulation of historical problems'.²⁴

Observing the present, Appadurai determines that the worldview of people is build up by different elements/influences/characteristics of the global scapes. Locality, according to the Indian scholar, is still a platform for identity, but local sentiments have become spread out over irregular scapes. Appadurai points to the influence of both electronic media and mass migration on people's imagination of the present world. In *Modernity at large. Cultural dimensions of globalization* (1996) the scholar addresses that these imaginaries form a space of contestations 'in which individuals and groups seek to annex the global into their own practices of the modern'.²⁵

¹⁹ Shepherd, 'Heading South, looking North', 252.

²⁰ Mudimbe, *The idea of Africa*, xvi.

²¹ See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and the spread of nationalism* (London 1983).

²² He speaks about ethnoscapes, mediascapes, finascapes, technoscapes and ideoscapes

²³ Arjun Appadurai, 'Global ethnoscapes. Notes and queries for a transnational anthropology', in: Richard Fox (ed.), *Recapturing Anthropology. Working in the present* (Santa Fe 1991) 191-209.

²⁴ Appadurai, 'Global ethnoscapes. Notes and queries for a transnational anthropology', 208.

²⁵ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at large. Cultural dimensions of globalization* (London and Minneapolis 1996) 4.

In his article 'Disjunction and difference in the global cultural economy' (1993) Appadurai argues that our reality can be seen as a complex, overlapping and disjunctive constellation, 'based on deeply perspectival constructs, inflected very much by historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different actors'.²⁶ In addition, he observes that certain sentiments, which invoke intimacy into political sentiment and turn locality into a staging ground for identity, are spreading over the vast variety of scapes.²⁷

Appadurai thus stresses the importance of globalization for people's imaginations of the world. His metaphor of global scapes therefore reveals the complexity of doing research in the current South Africa. Critiques of Appadurai's work, which address the vagueness of the notions of global scapes in terms of social science research, are made by Gijsbert Oonk, Martin Albrow and Imre Szeman.²⁸ Regarding research in the field of cultural studies on the impact of globalisation on issues of culture and identity are also of interest the edited volumes by Stuart Hall and Bram Bieben, Simon During, Lawrence Grossberg et al, but as well the works by Stuart Hall, Richard G. Fox and Lila Abu-Lughod.²⁹

In the next sub-section, I outline the concepts of time and place that Mbembe develops for examining contemporary Africa.

Mbembe guides, in an eclectic and polemical manner, his readers through, what he names, a project of 'disrupting and "jamming" the dominant imaginings of Africa'.³⁰ By unsettling Africa in his texts, he intends to determine and describe the conditions under which the African subject can become self-conscious. In the mirror image of Western civilization, namely, African narratives became characterized by a trope of lack. In response, Mbembe attempts to describe and analyse how current African imaginations of the self open the way for other narratives.³¹ In my view, Mbembe aligns his ideas in this regard with Appadurai's thoughts on a transnational anthropology.

Furthermore, Mbembe writes against the instrumentalist paradigm, which, according to him, leads to a 'cult of victimization'.³² The scholar articulates instead in *On the Postcolony* (2001) the assumption that the 'historicity' of African societies, the explanations of why they are what they are, should be formulated in relation to an outside, globalized world. Moreover, Mbembe speaks of 'a multiplicity of times,

²⁶ Appadurai, 'Disjunction and difference in the global cultural economy', 221-222.

²⁷ Ibidem, 228.

²⁸ URL: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_world_history/v011/11.loonk.html: Gijsbert Oonk, 'Modernity at large. Cultural dimensions of globalization', in: *Journal of world history* 11 (2000) 157-159 (accessed 5-1-2005), URL: <http://eserver.org/clogic/1-1/szeman.html>: Imre Szeman, 'Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization by Arjun Appadurai' (1997) (accessed 5-1-2005) and Martin Albrow, 'Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization by Arjun Appadurai', in: *The American journal of sociology* 103 (1998) 1411-1412.

²⁹ Stuart Hall and Bram Bieben (eds.), *Formations of modernity* (Cambridge 1992), Lawrence Grossberg et al. (eds.), *Cultural studies* (London 1992), Simon During (ed.), *The cultural studies reader* (London 1999), Stuart Hall, 'The question of cultural identity', in: Stuart Hall and David Held, *Modernity and its futures* (Cambridge and Oxford 1992) 274-325, Richard G. Fox, 'Introduction: Working in the present', in: R.G. Fox (ed.) *Recapturing anthropology. Working in the present* (Santa Fe 1991) 1-16 and Lila Abu-Lughod, 'Writing against culture', in: R.G. Fox (ed.) *Recapturing anthropology. Working in the present* (Santa Fe 1991) 137-162.

³⁰ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 352.

³¹ Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing', 239 and 242.

³² Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley et al. 2001) 12 and Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing' 243- 244.

trajectories and rationalities' that fundamentally give shape to the African self. He suggests that it is especially regarding conceptualisations of time possible to *rewrite* Africa, to create new ways of producing knowledge of Africa.³³ Mbembe offers his fellow-researcher a series of concepts and research strategies to think through potential new ways.

The African subject, argues Mbembe, should be understood as the direct product of the character or 'spirit' of a certain time period.³⁴ To indicate such a period he utilises the term 'age'. Mbembe writes that the current age in Africa can be understood as the 'postcolony'. Accordingly, the character of the postcolony in Africa is shaped by the impact of the African condition on the African subject. In 'African modes of self-writing' (2002) Mbembe explains this condition as constituted by three historical events namely slavery, colonization and apartheid, which fuel Africans' desire 'to know themselves, to recapture their destiny, and to belong to themselves in the world.'³⁵

In addition, Mbembe reasons that the postcolony is made up of a variety of appreciations of time or what he calls 'durées'. He explains the latter notion as constituted by 'discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another, and envelop one another'.³⁶ As such, Mbembe describes a layering of temporal dimensions, which make up the 'life world' of Africans. In this way, he argues that the world is in fact a multiplicity of worlds. Furthermore, to express the universal status of the sharing of these multiple worlds, Mbembe introduces in 'Writing the world from an African metropolis' (2004) - an article written with co-author Sarah Nuttall - the notion 'sameness-as-worldliness'.³⁷ Mudimbe, Paulin, J. Hountondji, and Steven Feierman discuss variations on this concept regarding Africa, the universality of its diversity, and the interconnectedness of different worlds.³⁸

Mbembe connects his conceptualisation of time to an analysis of the appreciation of place in Africa. The scholar points out that the continent is constantly in contact with other places and, as a result, a wide variety of information is available for individuals' experience of Africa. Mbembe terms this 'displacement', by which he explains that the imagination of Africans is not necessarily based on what happens on the continent, but rather reflects their lives against a fractured horizon.³⁹ In connection to this idea, he states elsewhere that the subject is always 'leaking and

³³ Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 9 and 14.

³⁴ Mbembe uses here also the German word *Zeitgeist*.

³⁵ Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing', 241-242.

³⁶ Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 14.

³⁷ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 351. I read in Mbembe and Nuttall's text a reflection on Dipesh Chakrabarty's project of 'provincializing Europe' and the recognition of the universality of diversity it tries to establish. Chakrabarty understands provincializing namely as 'unravelling the necessary entanglement of history, to write into the history of modernity the ambivalences, contradictions, the use of force, and the tragedies and ironies that attend it'. Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Postcoloniality and the artifice of history: Who speaks for Indian pasts?', in: *Representations* 37 (1997) 1-26, here 23.

³⁸ See: Mudimbe, *The idea of Africa* and *The invention of Africa*, but as well Paulin, J. Hountondji, *The struggle for meaning. Reflections on philosophy, culture, and democracy in Africa* (Athens, Ohio 2002) and *African Philosophy. Myth and reality* (2nd edition; Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987) and Steven Feierman, 'African histories and the dissolution of world history', in: Robert H. Bates, V.Y. Mudimbe and Jean O'Barr (eds.), *Africa and the disciplines* (Chicago and London 1993) 167-212.

³⁹ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 351 and Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 14-15.

fleeing'.⁴⁰ In this vein, Mbembe argues in 'African modes of self-writing' (2002) that all African practices and experiences are based on a fragmentary set of ideas influenced by the local and the global environment.⁴¹ As such, I think, he indicates that the outside world constitutes an essential element in the formation of the African experience.⁴²

Importantly he argues that it is not sufficient just to state that the postcolony has contradictory meanings to different actors. Mbembe wants to think about the significance for Africa in terms of what he names 'emerging time'. He points out that existence and experience in Africa is not necessarily moving toward a single point, trend or cycle. The emerging time is the result of a variety of 'trajectories', which Mbembe characterises as interlocked and paradoxical.⁴³ The contemporary African experience, argues Mbembe, is distinguished by an emerging time appearing in a context of a 'closed' future, coterminous with a past which is opening up. I do not think his point here is that the African is merely looking back. Rather, the past is a reservoir from which the African self extracts inspiration for his self-conscious in the present.⁴⁴ As such, Mbembe suggest a constant process of re-appropriation of the past.

Mbembe's conceptualisation of time and place in the contemporary African society, against the backdrop of his notion of the African condition, is particularly useful regarding notions of culture, identity and politics. Moreover, his work constitutes an insightful critique on more instrumental approaches of the study of postcolonial Africa. Jeremy Weate, Jane I. Guyer, Ato Quayson, Candance Vogler, Bogumil Jewsiewicki, Françoise Vergès, Paul Gilroy, Arif Dirlik, and Souleymane Bachir Diagne provide a series of interesting critiques of the work of Mbembe. They point, amongst others, at a lack of analysis of the relation between resistance and discursive dominance in Mbembe's work.⁴⁵ Other works of interest on the postcolony or postcolonialism are those by Edward Said - I discuss his work in more depth at a later stage -, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, David Theo Goldberg and Ato Quayson, Robert J. C. Young, Ania Loomba, Bill Ashcroft, John McLeod, Zine Magubane, Pal Ahluwalia and Paul Nursey-Bray, and Jean L. Comaroff and John Comaroff.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 353.

⁴¹ Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing', 265 and Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 353.

⁴² In the following article Mbembe deals with these issues as well: 'On the power of the false', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 629-641.

⁴³ Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 16.

⁴⁴ Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 16-17 and Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing', 258. V.Y. Mudimbe writes in *The idea of Africa* on this subject as well.

⁴⁵ See: Souleymane Bachir Diagne, 'Keeping Africanity open', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 621-623, Arif Dirlik, 'Historical colonialism in contemporary perspective', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 611-615, Jane I. Guyer, 'Contemplating uncertainty', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 599-602, Bogumil Jewsiewicki, 'The subject in Africa: in Foucault's footsteps', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 593-598, Paul Gilroy, 'Toward a critique of consumer imperialism', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 589-591.

Ato Quayson, 'Obverse denominations: Africa?', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 585-588, Françoise Vergès, 'The power of words', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 607-610, Candace Vogler, 'Social imaginary, ethics, and methodological individualism', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 625-627 and URL: http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/research_in_african_literatures/v034/34.4weate.pdf: Jeremy Weate, 'Achille Mbembe and the postcolony. Going beyond the text', in: *Research in African literatures* 34 (2003) 27-41 (accessed 19-9-2005).

⁴⁶ See: Zine Magubane (ed.), *Postmodernism, postcoloniality and African studies* (Trenton 2005), Ania Loomba, *Colonialism-postcolonialism* (New York 2005), David Theo Goldberg and Ato Quayson (eds.), *Relocating postcolonialism* (Oxford 2002), Bill Ashcroft, *On post-colonial futures: transformations of colonial culture* (London and New York 2001), Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism*

A useful way of understanding the full complexity of heritage management, its practice, outcomes and appreciations in Cape Town is, in my opinion, to place this problematic in the theoretical context of the African and global scapes and multiplicities of times as described by Appadurai and Mbembe. But in addition to their ideas, I think, there is also a need to think through the complex nature of discourse, knowledge and power. I will apply these theories in the following chapters. In the next section, then, I explain this pursuit through an explanation of my methodological approach.

2.2 Methodology

Against the backdrop of Mbembe and Appadurai, I have used a number of writers in developing my method of discourse analysis. It is through discourse analysis that I intend to come to an understanding of the relation between discursive practices, knowledge and power in the heritage management of Prestwich Street. I introduce these authors and their analyses hereafter.

Hall points out in 'The West and the rest: discourse and power' (1992) that a discourse does not consist of one statement, but a series of statements working together to form a 'discursive formation'. Although discourse is not a closed system, the relationships and differences between the statements are regular and systematic. He terms discourse, in Michel Foucault words, 'a system of dispersion'.⁴⁷ The French philosopher Foucault calls in *The archaeology of knowledge* (1972) for the disturbance of the 'tranquillity' in which discourses become accepted. He argues that the right of discourses to claim a 'field' in space and time should be problematized. Moreover, 'discourse must not be referred to the distant presence of origin, but treated as and when it occurs'.⁴⁸ This is a particularly useful idea for discourse analysis. Also, what is crucial here, I think, is the idea that a particular kind of power is reaffirmed each time a statement is made as part of a discursive formation.

Interestingly, Hall points out that the *same* discourse can be used by groups with different, even contradictory (class) interests.⁴⁹ The impact of discursive formations can be varied, subtle and diffuse. Nevertheless, the knowledge which a discourse produces always constitutes a kind of power, exercised by those who know over those who are known. In *Representation. Cultural representation and signifying practices* (1997) Hall explains that a discursive approach is focused on the historical specification of a particular form of representation of meaning. As such, the eruption of discourses can be seen as projects of knowledge construction. More precisely,

(Oxford 2001), Ato Quayson, *Postcolonialism: theory, practice or process* (Cambridge 2000), John McLeod, *Beginning postcolonialism* (Manchester 2000), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A critique of postcolonial reason: towards a history of the vanishing present* (Cambridge, Mass. 1999), Pal Ahluwalia and Paul Nursey-Bray (eds.), *Postcolonialism, culture and identity in Africa* (Commack, New York 1997) Jean L. Comaroff and John Comaroff, 'Occult economies and the violence of abstraction: notes on the South African postcolony', paper delivered at the international centre for contemporary cultural research at the University of Manchester (1997) and Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London 1978).

⁴⁷ Stuart Hall, 'The West and the rest: discourse and power', in: Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (eds.), *Formations of modernity. Understanding modern societies. An introduction* (Cambridge and Oxford 1992) 276-331, here 291-293.

⁴⁸ Michael Foucault, *The archaeology of knowledge* (New York et al 1972) 25-26.

⁴⁹ Hall, 'The West and the rest: discourse and power', 293.

discourse constructs a system of validation for the reality or, what is known as a 'regime of truth'.⁵⁰ A well-known example of how a regime of truth can be unraveled and disturbed is evident in Said's seminal work *Orientalism* (1978).

Here Said points to a collection of writers and texts that 'accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, "mind", [and] destiny.' To come to an understanding of how these texts constitute the dominance of the authority of the 'West', he outlines two methodological devices: 'strategic location' and 'strategic formation'. Firstly, Said thinks through the 'agency' of the writer: he analyses the position of the writer and the analytical and descriptive choices he or she makes while producing knowledge about the 'Orient'. Secondly, he tries to understand how a text becomes part of a larger body of writings and, finally, culture at large that together constitute an authoritative voice.⁵¹

In my opinion, the writers mentioned above provide a series of definitions, concepts and methodological tools, which are essential in thinking through the nature of the relation between discourse, power and knowledge production. Below, I introduce a number of authors whose work and analyses of discourse are particularly useful regarding sub-themes in my research.

J.M. Coetzee's 'Introduction' and 'Idleness in Africa' in *White writings: on the culture of letters in South Africa* (1988), but also M.L. Pratt's 'Narrating the anti-conquest' (1992), are interesting attempts to unravel the recurrent themes that form part of a discourse of the Cape.⁵² Interestingly, Coetzee introduces the idea of a 'dream topography' to describe how this discourse of the Cape is imagined.⁵³

Concerning the impact of globalization on discourse, the British scholar Norman Fairclough articulates, like Mbembe, in *Language and Power* (1989) that local discursive practices have external points of reference; what happens in one place happens against a global horizon and thus, is shaped by international tendencies affecting discourse. Furthermore, Fairclough speaks of a 'codification of discourse' as a result of globalization. Paradoxically this means that the increasing global complexity is paralleled by a narrowing down of ways of using language for representing multiple imagined worlds. Thus, a superficial layer of sameness forms a kind of cover for an increasing field of difference.⁵⁴ I found these approaches useful to come to a deeper understanding of the complexity of both the global and the local character of the discourse of the heritage management of Prestwich Street.

Finally, scholars Chris Baker and Dariusz Galasiński articulate in *Cultural studies and Discourse Analysis. A dialogue on Language and identity* (2001) that discourse analysis can be used to unravel the ideological framings of the discursive

⁵⁰ Stuart Hall (ed.), *Representation. Cultural representation and signifying practices* (London, Thousands Oaks and New Delhi 1997) 6.

⁵¹ Said, *Orientalism*, 2-3 and 19-20 and 24.

⁵² J.M. Coetzee, 'Introduction', in: J.M. Coetzee, *White writings: on the culture of letters in South Africa* (London 1988) 1-11, M.L. Pratt, 'Narrating the anti-conquest', in: M.L. Pratt, *Imperial eyes: travel writings and transculturation* (London 1992) 38-85.

⁵³ Coetzee, 'Introduction', 6.

⁵⁴ Norman Fairclough, *Language and power* (London and New York 1989) 204-207. J.M. Coetzee, 'Introduction', in: J.M. Coetzee, *White writings: on the culture of letters in South Africa* (London 1988) 1-11, M.L. Pratt, 'Narrating the anti-conquest', in: M.L. Pratt, *Imperial eyes: travel writings and transculturation* (London 1992) 38-85.

practices.⁵⁵ Scholars as wide-ranging as Marianne Jorgensen, Philip Nelson and Cynthia Hardy, Ruth Wodak and Micheal Meyer, Stefan Titscher *et al*, James Paul Gee, Lilie Chouliaraki and Norman Fairclough, Fairclough, Ian Pople, Gillian Brown and George Yule, and Richard Malcolm Coulthard have written on the theory of discourse analysis.⁵⁶

Criticizing development discourse, political scientists David B. Moore and Patrick Bond argue in *Debating development discourse. Institutional and popular perspectives* (1995) that concepts as 'sustainability', 'equity' and 'participation' are disputed. The analysis of what Moore and Bond describe as 'counter-hegemonic movements' has been co-opted in the dominant development discourse focused on economic growth.⁵⁷ Moore and Bond's theory, but as well that of R.D Grillo and R. L. Stirrat and T.K. Oommen, are of significance to understanding the development tropes in discourse of heritage management. More broadly, the theory on discourse analysis as introduced above enables an illustration of the ways in which the Prestwich Street heritage has become a locus for knowledge production, but also a place where the nature of different disciplines has, and continues to emerge. I will address this in more depth in the next chapters.⁵⁸

My special focus is the naming and framing of this heritage in relation to the Capetonian 'public' and the NHRA. I paid attention to the recurrent tropes in the discourse as it was used. In addition, I have applied these strategies and theories in my research and analysis of the Prestwich Archive as a whole. The ways I selected documents has certainly been influenced by this focus on discourse, knowledge and power. Below, I outline how my research process developed, and the ways in which I gave shape to the Prestwich Archive.

2.3 Research process

My research process can be divided up into three (albeit interconnected) phases. In the first, introductory, phase, I researched the public participation process regarding the Prestwich Street heritage. Secondly, and in parallel, I interned with the City's HRS, which provided me with insights with respect to their practice, but also with access to their files. Finally, I undertook a project focussed on the creation of a

⁵⁵ Chris Baker and Dariusz Galasiński, *Cultural studies and discourse analysis. A dialogue on language and identity* (London 2001) 2 en 25-28.

⁵⁶ Marianne Jorgensen, *Discourse analysis as theory and method* (London 2002), Philip Nelson and Cynthia Hardy, *Discourse analysis: investigating processes of social construction* (Thousand Oaks, CA 2002), Ruth Wodak and Micheal Meyer (eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (London 2001), Stefan Titscher *et al.*, *Methods of text and discourse analysis* (London 2000), James Paul Gee, *An introduction to discourse analysis* (London and New York 1999), Lilie Chouliaraki and Norman Fairclough, *Discourse in late modernity: rethinking critical discourse analysis* (Edinburgh 1999), Ian Pople, *An introduction to text and discourse analysis* (Cheltenham 1998), Norman Fairclough, *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of languages* (London 1995), Richard Malcolm Coulthard, *An introduction to discourse analysis* (London 1986), and Gillian Brown and George Yule, *Discourse analysis* (Cambridge and New York 1983).

⁵⁷ David B. Moore and Gerald J. Schmitz, *Debating development discourse. Institutional and popular perspectives* (London 1995) and Patrick Bond, 'Urban social movements, the housing question and development discourse in South Africa', in: David B. Moore and Gerald J. Schmitz, *Debating development discourse. Institutional and popular perspectives* (London 1995) 149-178.

⁵⁸ T.K. Oomen, *Development discourse: issues and concerns* (Rengency Park 2004) and R.D Grillo and R. L. Stirrat, *Discourses of development: anthropological perspectives* (Oxford 1997).

public archive related to the Prestwich Street material. In this section, I will give a detailed account of these undertakings.

A first encounter

In August 2005, about two months after I finished my internship at the HRS, I strolled through the Gallery of the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town enjoying an art exhibition entitled 'The model man. The hero of his own drama'. This exhibition consisted of illustrations and texts by Johan Schönfeldt and Ivan Vladislavic, which presented certain iconographic images and an accompanying story line. Rather than the normal procedure, in this exhibition the narrative was written *after* the images were made. I was intrigued by the idea, as articulated in the exhibition brochure, of objects as 'augmentation to speech' and Schönfeldt's remark that the history of African oral societies is constructed from objects. His question, 'In speech, when does a speaker revert to visuals?', I find insightful for describing my early fascination with heritage management in Cape Town.⁵⁹

Six months earlier – my first week in Cape Town as a Dutch international student - I took the lift up to the sixteenth floor of Cape Town's Civic Centre in search of the City's Urban Design and Heritage Resources Section. After explaining to members of staff my interest in questions of identity, memory and urban planning, as well as describing my background as an historian and former employee of a Dutch peace and reconciliation NGO, I was finally directed to Bridget O'Donoghue of the HRS. O'Donoghue presented herself as a heritage project manager. As such, she was actively involved in an 'exciting new project' requested by the Mayor's office: the Memory Project. This project seemed to deal with all the issues in which I was interested. That day I left the Civic Centre with the project's constituting document, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Cape Town and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, a local Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).

This three-page document introduced the Memory Project as follows:

'The celebration of the first decade of democracy provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the contributions and sacrifices of residents of this City in securing our freedom from oppression.

Currently the symbolic aspects of our environment from street names to public spaces and public buildings to memorials almost exclusively reflect the colonial and apartheid past. There is very little expression of our democratic values in this symbolic life. The City is committed to engaging with our citizens to find ways in which our public space, the physical environment and the cultural life of our City can better reflect this.

It is against this background that the institute for Justice and Reconciliation and the City of Cape Town agree to establish a partnership to convene a participative and inclusive process to identify and plan a set of projects that would help commemorate the role and sacrifice of our residents for freedom.'⁶⁰

Thus, as part of the celebration of ten years of South African democracy, these two parties endeavoured to transform the 'symbols' in Cape Town's public space, physical environment, and cultural life. In addition, the City and the IJR aimed to

⁵⁹ Schönfeldt, 'Illustrating the unwritten text: *Silence! and Roar!*', 9.

⁶⁰ Memorandum of understanding between the City of Cape Town and Institute of Justice and Reconciliation, as received from Liezel du Preez on 15 February 2005, part of collection of the author.

promote 'a deeper sense of reconciliation and common understanding amongst all citizens' and a strong culture of civic engagement and participation in the City based on [...] recognizing our history of struggle.'

Furthermore, the document outlined that the scope of the process should cover at least the following areas:

- 'The creation of a City memorial to the struggle and those who participated and sacrificed;
- Supporting community initiatives to acknowledge the contributions of individuals, organization and communities to the struggle for freedom;
- Establishing a struggle route as a way of supporting community initiatives and creating awareness;
- Approaches to street, place and public building renaming;
- Ways of using city facilities and programs to deepen our memory of the struggle for freedom including libraries, social development programs and so on.'⁶¹

In the process of organizing the Memory Project, the City and the IJR envisaged working on a draft policy on memorials, public places and buildings, and street names. According to the MOU, this would include an extensive public participation process, 'a wide range of stakeholders (local, provincial and national government; NGOs and CBOs; religious communities, families and tertiary institutions, and so on) will be invited to participate in the dialogue and visioning process.' In addition, the initiative-takers focused their work on 'giving voice to victims of oppression' and on 'creating opportunities for participation of marginal groups'.⁶²

In reading the text, I was immediately struck by not only the absence of historical analysis of Cape Town's past or sense of reflection on the nature of the city's present – besides a single sentence in the introduction referring to the colonial and apartheid past –, but also by the fact that the authors of this document had not used notions such as identity, culture, or heritage. The City and the IJR seemed to be making an attempt to create memory objects without a narrative.

The day following my visit to the Civic Centre, I walked through Cape Town's central business district, the words of the Memory project still resonating in my head. From the taxi platform above the train station I made my way towards the so-called Cape Quarter area. In this part of the city, in between the Bo-Kaap and the Victoria and Albert Waterfront, I was told one could still see the site of an early colonial burial ground that had been unearthed in 2003. From a superficial glance at the newspaper clippings, I learned that this site was believed to hold 'international significance'.⁶³ Crossing Buitenkant Street, I walked down in a narrow road named Prestwich Street. After walking about 150 meters I came across a small fenced-off piece of land. An employee of the security company guarding the place confirmed that bones had been found here.

Not much at the site reminded one of the fact that from 2003 onwards over a thousand human remains were unearthed at this small site. And although a fellow student later reported to have seen bones at the edges of the terrain, the thing what struck me the most was the apparent 'normality' of this place of construction.⁶⁴ No sign or notice indicated that here, at Prestwich Street, local and international archaeologists worked for more than a year to exhume one of largest and one of the

⁶¹ Memorandum of understanding.

⁶² Ibidem.

⁶³ 'Burial site holds international significance', *Monday paper* (22 -27 July 2003).

⁶⁴ Personal communication with Gerard Ralphs on 25 February 2005, Cape Town.

most contested urban burial sites in South Africa since the end of apartheid. Nothing reminded the uninformed pedestrian of the significance of this space in relation to the city's recent past. In the light of the City's new ambition, as spelt out in the Memory Project memorandum, I found a lack of information and celebration of this pivotal site in the city's transformation process astounding. I expected this place to form one of the central images in the City council's ambitions to commemorate the struggle to freedom. It did not.

These early experiences in my research laid a certain foundation for how I further pursued my work. Two observations – namely, on the one hand, the desire of the City to create new icons in the city's social environment in combination, and, on the other hand, the lack of commemoration of the materiality of one of the city's key sites in its symbolic transformation process - constituted my problematic. Returning to my interest and focus on heritage management, I wondered how the City wanted to realize its ambition if it overlooked key spaces such as Prestwich Street. How, moreover, were the City managers involved in creating the symbolic character of the urban environment? I speculated that in answering Schönfeldt's question it is possible to argue that the City of Cape Town reverts to and constructs visuals when found in the absence of a coherent narrative. Thus, my research on the heritage management of Prestwich Street began.

Researching an archive of Cape Town's present

In the period from 17 February until 11 June 2005, I became actively involved in the organization of the Memory Project for the City of Cape Town's HRS. During my internship, I came to understand the policy dilemmas and politics regarding heritage management in Cape Town. Moreover, I learned about the HRS's relationship with organizations and individuals in the public sector. In addition, I witnessed how a discourse of reconciliation was made material by the HRS but was contested in the public. I had an insight into how, as historian Ciraj Rassool articulates, South Africans are placed on a path of 'achieving reconciliation as the basis for the new rainbow nation'.⁶⁵

Next to that, I had, by default of my internship, access to the HRS files on the Prestwich Street. The HRS was and is one of the key players in the management of this site. Via interviews with the manager of the HRS, Clive James, and project manager O'Donoghue, I came to a deeper understanding of their practice. Moreover, by engaging in the organization of the Memory Project (one of my tasks was creating a database of heritage organizations) I learned about the 'field' of heritage practitioners in Cape Town.

As I was present at most of meetings between officials of the HRS and the Mayor's office, I developed certain insights in the politics of heritage in this city. In addition, I did research on policy and other official documents; I interviewed several officials and had meetings with a number of people working for community organizations. As such, I also gained knowledge about the way in which the City of Cape Town attempts to articulate a coherent package of regulations regarding heritage in the city, and the ways these regulations are contested. Finally, I wrote an account of this internship in a term paper named 'Collecting heritage in Cape Town. A reflection

⁶⁵ Ciraj Rassool, 'The rise of heritage and reconstitution of history in South Africa', in: *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 26 (2000), 1-21, here 1.

on Cape Town's Memory Project in relation to the praxis of heritage by the City's Heritage Resources Section' (2005).⁶⁶

The second project I have worked on, in the first half of 2005 that is, focussed on the Prestwich Street public consultation process. As part of this research, I met with several documentary-makers and obtained the video footage of the public meetings. I, also, did a wide range of interviews: I interviewed SAHRA's Western Cape Manager Beverly Crouts, project manager of Styleprops Ltd. André van der Merwe, and Antonia Malan of the CSRF. I asked Crouts about the nature of the SAHRA intervention, the implementation of the heritage act and the relation between SAHRA and the HRS. The contact with Van der Merwe gave me insights into the construction and commercial side of a Prestwich narrative. Through discussion with Malan I learned about the involvement of the archaeologists, the ways the finding of the human remains were made public and the character of the organization of the public process.

This second research project was also constituted by a study of a series of reports, submissions, emails, newspaper clippings and appeal documents. Moreover, I attempted to reconstruct the 'theatre' in which the public process took place. Finally, this project resulted in a paper as well, named "Bones that stick in the throat of development." A discourse analysis of the public consultation process on the heritage and the development of Cape Town's Prestwich Street' (2005).⁶⁷

A third phase, starting in August until November 2005 in my research process was an archive project. In this particular project, I gave account of the partial making of the Prestwich Street Archive. In doing so, I collected material and made it part of the public domain. As such, I gave shape to a context in which the complexities and secrets of the heritage and development of Prestwich Street might be brought to the fore. In addition, I intervened in the field of public culture of Cape Town in taking an active role in the naming and framing of a potential knowledge project – a project that directly links not only to the debate about the practice of disciplines as archaeology, and architecture, but also to a debate about the archive in relation to memory and transformation.

In the process of collecting material related to the development and heritage of Prestwich Street, I focussed on the key actors involved: SAHRA, HRS, CSRF, HOPSAHC, the developer and the architect. I interviewed, amongst others, the architect of The Rockwell, Michael Phillippides; I also spoke to Bonita and Michael Weeder of the HOPSAHC. Next to this, I interviewed SAHRA councillor and historian Ciraj Rassool. These individuals and organizations produced knowledge about the site as it entered into the public domain. Regarding any Prestwich material held in the private sphere, I approached the actors concerned with the proposal to deposit their collection (or copies thereof) at the Manuscripts and Archives Department of UCT.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Christian Ernsten, 'Collecting heritage in Cape Town. A reflection on Cape Town's Memory Project in relation to the praxis of heritage by the City's Heritage Resources Section', term paper for CAS 411Z: Public Culture Internship, University of Cape Town (11 September 2005).

⁶⁷ Christian Ernsten, "Bones that stick in the throat of development." A discourse analysis of the public consultation process on the heritage and the development of Cape Town's Prestwich Street', term paper for CAS 406Z: Public Culture in Africa, University of Cape Town (3 June 2005).

⁶⁸ Hereafter, I have referenced to the primary source material, which is currently part of the Prestwich Street collection of the Manuscripts and Archives Department of UCT as MAD of UCT, PS.

In a paper named 'The making of the Prestwich Street Archive. An analysis of the collection, categorisation and display of the material related to the development and heritage of Cape Town's Prestwich Street' (2005), I self-consciously catalogued the Prestwich material and reflected on my archiving practices. In addition to this, I made explicit the ways in which I approached this challenge and I have pointed out how this is interlinked with my interests in this case of urban transformation.⁶⁹

Moreover, I explained that the structure of this archive is mostly determined by the knowledge producers of Prestwich Street. By focussing on their practices, I have created an archive against which the historicity of Cape Town's transformation can be read. In the post-apartheid context, I think the Prestwich Street Archive, in its current state, forms both a field of contestations and a context for research on issues of heritage in relation to issues of development in the postcolony. Perhaps most importantly, the archive provides evidence of how the past is constantly mediated, collected, presented and represented.⁷⁰

The research trajectory, as described in the above, has created a platform for my current work. Particular, I want to stress how I encountered the heritage management as an archive of Cape Town's present. Here, then, I intend to embark on a more in-depth analysis by analyzing the knowledge production as it emerges from the primary material. I do this in relation to current academic literature related to this subject. In the next section, I introduce per theme the key works I selected in this regard.

2.4 Literature review

Ways of reading the African city

The first theme I review, concerns local and global debates on the city. I deal here mostly with authors who have moved away from merely a social scientist approach. Although, I focus in particular on literature on (South) African cities, I mention writers who take part in more general debates as well.

A foundational work on South African architecture and the South African city is Hilton Judin and Ivan Vladislavic' edited volume, *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* (1998).⁷¹ One of the contributors, Jennifer Robinson, writes in '(Im)mobilizing – dreaming of change' (1998) of a vastly compromised negotiation taking place in South Africa between the unconscious and conscious selves, such as in dreams inspiring hopes for transformation of the South African city.⁷² I discuss the other papers of this work in more depth later, in the context of a critical review of South Africa's spatial disciplines. Here, my point of departure is a discussion of a recent contribution to the debate on the South African city by Mbembe and Nuttall. In an edition of *Public Culture*, entitled *Johannesburg: The elusive metropolis* (2004),

⁶⁹ Christian Ernsten, 'The making of the Prestwich Archive. An analysis of the collection, categorisation and display of the material related to the development and heritage of Cape Town's Prestwich Street', term paper for CAS410Z: The African studies archives - Collection, representation and display, University of Cape Town (30 October 2005), MAD of UCT, PS.

⁷⁰ Witz, 'Museums on Cape Town's townships tours'.

⁷¹ Hilton Judin and Ivan Vladislavic (eds.), *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* (Cape Town and Rotterdam 1998).

⁷² Jennifer Robinson, '(Im)mobilizing – dreaming of change', in: Hilton Judin and Ivan Vladislavic (eds.), *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* (Cape Town and Rotterdam 1998) 163-171, here 168.

they extend Robinson's idea to use, amongst others, the unconscious as a lens for reading urban processes.

Mbembe and Nuttall claim that in the context of the African cities, discourse and knowledge production is disciplined by an instrumental analysis. In the articles 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 'Aesthetics of superfluity' (2004) and 'Stylizing the self: The Y generation in Rosebank, Johannesburg' (2004), particularly, the two scholars think through new ways of seeing reading contemporary African cities.⁷³

Writing in the intellectual tradition of Michel de Certeau and Walter Benjamin, but also Jean-Luc Nancy, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, Mbembe and Nuttall criticize the dominant gaze at the city, which is derived from 'the metanarrative of urbanisation, modernisation, and crisis'. As a consequence of this gaze, Mbembe and Nuttall explain that the city is read as solely 'the spatial embodiment of unequal economic relations and coercive and segregationist policies'.⁷⁴ The instrumental approach – concerning neoliberalism and Marxist political economy especially – underestimates, according to these two scholars, that all African practices and experiences are based on a fragmentary set of ideas influenced by the local and the global environment. David M. Anderson and Richard Rathbone, Alan Mabin and Dan Smit, Patrick Bond, Allen J. Scott provide account of these more conventional urban imaginaries, based upon an analysis of social, spatial and economic power differences.⁷⁵

A second scholarly approach, where Mbembe and Nuttall write against, is that of the development studies or, its local variant - namely post-apartheid studies - which are focussed on solving urban problems. The South African scholar Edgar Pieterse, for example, mentions in 'Alternative futures of the South African city' (forthcoming), but also in a work published in 2004, that to achieve a balanced understanding, construction and reproduction of future South African cities one has to address locality, identity, freedom, diversity and security together. The only way to do this, according Pieterse, is by figuring out how to reinstate the empathy between the imagination and the everyday.⁷⁶

In the same vein, works such as by Jeremy Seekings, Jo Beall, Owen Crankshaw and Susan Parnel, Lindsay Bremner, Crankshaw and Parnell, A.L. Mabogunje, Robert Cameron and Mabin, can be characterised by 'the trope of a city

⁷³ Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of superfluity' 373-405 and Sarah Nuttall, 'Stylizing the self: The Y generation in Rosebank, Johannesburg', in: *Public Culture* 3 (2004) 430-452.

⁷⁴ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 353. See as well: Micheal de Certeau, *The practice of everyday life* (Berkeley 1984), Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (London 1999), Chakrabarty, 'Postcoloniality and the artifice of history' and Jean-Luc Nancy, *The sense of the world* (Minneapolis 1997). Interesting secondary sources on Walter Benjamin's work are Graeme Gilloch, *Myth and metropolis. Walter Benjamin and the city* (Cambridge 1996), and Susan Buck-Morss, *The dialectic of seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades project* (Cambridge, Mass 1989).

⁷⁵ David M. Anderson and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Africa's urban past* (Portsmouth and Oxford 2000), Patrick Bond, *Cities of gold, townships of coal: essays on South Africa's new urban crisis* (Trenton 1999), Alan Mabin and Dan Smit, *Reconstructing South Africa's cities? The making of urban planning 1900-2000* (London 1997) and Allen J. Scott, *Metropolis: from division of labour to urban form* (London and Berkeley 1988).

⁷⁶ Edgar Pieterse, 'Alternative futures of the South African city' (forthcoming; December 2004), URL: http://www.isandla.org.za/dark_roast/DR19%20Pieterse.pdf; Edgar Pieterse, 'Building with ruins and dreams... Exploratory thoughts on realizing integrated urban development through crisis', *Dark roast occasional paper series* 19 (2004) (accessed 5-1-2005).

under siege'⁷⁷, but also a platform for fundamental change.⁷⁸ Mark Swilling, Roger Behrens and Peter Wilkinson, Andrew Boraine, Phillip Harrison, Marie Huchzermeyer and Mzwanele Mayeskiso, Firoz Khan, Edgar Pieterse, A. Atkinson, Stephen Stewart Townsend, David Dewar, Ivan Turok, and John J. Williams read the city in terms of its development goals.⁷⁹ Beall, Loren Kruger, Alan Morris, Bremner, and Jeremy Seabrook, instead, describe the South African urban landscape as a space of anxiety, fear and terror.⁸⁰

Mbembe and Nuttall, whose analysis can be positioned in the field of cultural studies, argue instead that the city always operates as a site of fantasy, desire and imagination. Moreover, 'it also compromises actual people, images and architectural forms, footprints and memories; the city is a place of manifold rhythms, a world of

⁷⁷ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 359.

⁷⁸ Jeremy Seekings, 'Are South African city's changing? Indications from the mid-1990s', in: *International journal of urban and regional research* 27 (2003) 197-202, Jo Beall, Owen Crankshaw and Susan Parnell, Lindsay Bremner, 'Reinventing the Johannesburg inner city', in: *Cities* 17 (2000) 185-193, Owen Crankshaw and Sue Parnell, 'Johannesburg: World city in a poor country', Paper presented at Urban future conference, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (2000), A.L. Mabogunje, 'Global urban futures: an African perspective', in: *Urban Forum* 11 (2000) 165-184, Robert Cameron, *The democratization of South African local government: a tale of three cities* (Pretoria 1999), and Alan Mabin, 'On the problems and prospects of overcoming segregation and fragmentation in southern Africa's cities in postmodern era', in: S. Watson and K. Gibson (eds.), *Postmodern cities and spaces* (Oxford 1995).

⁷⁹ Mark Swilling, 'Grasping the passing breeze: rethinking the sustainability of the South African city', in: *Development Update* 5 (Forthcoming), Andrew Boraine (ed.), 'State of the city report 2004', South African cities network (Braamfontein 2004), Roger Behrens and Peter Wilkinson, 'Housing and urban passenger transport policy and planning in South African cities: a problematic relationship?', in: Phillip Harrison, Marie Huchzermeyer and Mzwanele Mayeskiso (eds.), *Confronting fragmentation: Housing and urban development in a democratizing society* (Cape Town 2003), Phillip Harrison, Marie Huchzermeyer and Mzwanele Mayeskiso (eds.), *Confronting fragmentation: Housing and urban development in a democratizing society* (Cape Town 2003), Firoz Khan, 'Continuities, ambiguities and contradictions: the past, present and (possible) future of housing policy and practice in South Africa', in: Firoz Khan and Petal Thring (eds.), *Housing policy and practice in post-apartheid South Africa* (Johannesburg 2003), Edgar Pieterse, 'Problematizing and recasting vision driven politics in Cape Town', in: Christoph Haferburg and Jürgen Oßenbrügge (eds.), *Ambiguous restructurings and change in Africa: the spatial form of socio-political change* (Münster 2003) and 'At the limits of possibility: working notes on a relational model of urban politics', in: Abdoumalig Simone and Abdelghani Aboelhami (eds.), *Urban Africa: changing contours of survival in the city* (London and New York 2005), Stephen Stewart Townsend, 'Development rights and conservation constraints. Urban conservation in the city centre of Cape Town' PhD Thesis School of architecture, planning and geomatics, Faculty of engineering and the built environment, University of Cape Town (September 2003), Ivan Turok, 'Persistent polarisation post-apartheid? Progress towards urban integration in Cape Town', in: *Urban studies* 38 (2001) 2349-2377, A. Atkinson, 'Promoting sustainable human development in cities of the south: A southeast Asian perspective', in: *Geneva 2000 Occasional paper* 6 (Geneva 2000), David Dewar, 'The relevance of the compact city approach: the management of urban growth in South African cities', in: M. Jenks and R. Burgess (eds.), *Compact cities. Sustainable urban forms in developing countries* (London 2000), and John J. Williams, 'South Africa: urban transformation', in: *Cities* 17 (2000) 167-183.

⁸⁰ URL: www.crisisstates.com/publications/wp10.htm: Jo Beall, 'The people behind the walls: insecurity, identity and gated communities in Johannesburg', in: Working paper 10, Crisis states programme, London School of Economics (2002) (accessed 10-11-2005), Loren Kruger, 'Theatre, crime and the edgy city in post-apartheid Johannesburg', in: *Theatre Journal* 53 (2001) 223-252, Alan Morris, 'Race relations and racism in a racially diverse inner city neighbourhood: A case study of Hillbrow, Johannesburg', in: *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25 (1999) 667-694, Lindsay Bremner, 'Crime and the emerging landscape of post-apartheid Johannesburg', in: Hilton Judin and Ivan Vladislavic (eds.), *Blank architecture, apartheid and after* (Cape Town and Rotterdam 1998) 49-63 and Jeremy Seabrook (ed.), *In the cities of the south: scenes from: scenes from a developing world* (London 1996).

sounds, private freedom, pleasures, and sensations.⁸¹ In addition, they point at the place of the township 'in the making of the city's many identities.'⁸² Michael Watts writes a critique of Mbembe and Nuttall's articles.⁸³

Influenced by Henri Lefebvre⁸⁴, AbdouMaliq Simone - an urbanist trained in social psychology - introduces the idea of 'people as infrastructure'. In the article with a similar name, but also in earlier works, he points out how African cities exist of 'incessantly flexible mobile, and provisional intersections of residents' who engage in 'complex combinations of objects, spaces, persons, and practices.'⁸⁵ Also, James D. Tarver, F. Cooper and Jean-Loup Amselle describe how African cities have been a locus of administrative, social and spatial experimentation.⁸⁶ In the same vein as Mbembe and Nuttall, Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, Christine M. Boyer and Svetlana Boym give accounts of a focus on memory, imagination and the unconscious for understanding urban developments. In addition, John Matshikiza, Hubert Damisch, Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl-Ann Michael, Sallie Westwood and John Williams and Appadurai write about the city as a site of imagination.⁸⁷

Desire lines. Space, memory and identity in the Post-apartheid city (forthcoming) edited by UCT-based Noeleën Murray and Nick Shepherd is the most recent attempt to read the South African city in new ways. The articles in this collection, which adds to the literature on public culture in Africa, unravel cities as sites of memory and desire, spaces of power, privilege, identity and difference, as palimpsests of historical experiences and as stages for the performance of everyday life. The two editors introduce as emblematic figure of African modernity in Cape Town: the victim of forced removal.⁸⁸

A number of social scientists discuss the city as part of an increasingly complex organizational system that crosses national borders. In the tradition of Alain Touraine⁸⁹, the sociologist Manuel Castells explains the idea that the contemporary city is in a state of crisis. In 'Material for an exploratory theory of the network city'

⁸¹ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 353-360.

⁸² Ibidem, 357.

⁸³ Michael Watts, 'Baudelaire over Berea, Simmel over Sandton', in: *Public Culture* 17 (2005) 181-192.

⁸⁴ Henri Lefebvre, *Writing on cities* (Oxford 1996) and *The production of space* (Oxford 1991).

⁸⁵ AbdouMaliq Simone, 'People as infrastructure: intersecting fragments in Johannesburg', in: *Public Culture* 16 (2004) 407-429, here 407-408. See also: AbdouMaliq Simone and Abdelghani Aboelhani (eds.), *Urban Africa: changing contours of survival in the city* (London and New York 2005), AbdouMaliq Simone, *For the city yet to come: changing African life in four cities* (Durham 2004) and 'Urban processes and change in Africa', CODESRIA (Senegal 1998).

⁸⁶ James D. Tarver (ed.), *Urbanization in Africa: a handbook* (Westport 1994), F. Cooper, 'Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History', in: *American Historical Review* 99 (1994) 1516-1545 and Jean-Loup Amselle, *Mestizo Logics: anthropology of identity in Africa and elsewhere* (Stanford 1998).

⁸⁷ John Matshikiza, 'Instant city', in: *Public Culture* 16 (2004) 481-498, Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, *Cities: Reimagining the urban* (Cambridge 2002), Svetlana Boym, *The future of nostalgia* (New York 2001), Hubert Damisch, *Skyline: The narcissistic City* (Stanford 2001), Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl-Ann Michael (eds.), *Senses of culture: South African culture studies* (Oxford 2000), Christine M. Boyer, *The city of collective memory* (Cambridge 1994), Sallie Westwood and John Williams, *Imagining cities: scripts, signs, memory* (London and New York 1997) and Arjun Appadurai, 'Deep democracy: Urban governmentality and the horizon of politics', in: *Public Culture* 14 (2002) 21-47.

⁸⁸ Noeleën Murray and Nick Shepherd, *Desire lines. Space, memory and identity in the Post-apartheid city* (London Forthcoming).

⁸⁹ Alain Touraine, *Production de la société* (1st edition 1973; Paris 1993).

(2000), but also in his seminal trilogy on the information age⁹⁰, Castells articulates that our cities are in a functional split between the laws of the global networks and the needs of the local population. The city as the agency for meaning, as crystallizing point for the public sphere, is under pressure and its political society loses legitimacy. There is no longer a dominant culture, established in institutions, where people can rely on. Castells describes this as urban social disintegration.⁹¹ Another social scientist of interest whose work focuses on the influence of globalization on the city is Saskia Sassen.

Sassen does not portray the decline of the function of city, instead she articulates a transformation of the 'geography of power', making some urban areas extremely dominant and integrated. In *Global networks, linked cities* (2002), but also in her earlier work⁹², she unfolds how the gap between centre and periphery is characterized by a difference in culture of language, fashion and urban design. Although the pedantic culture of power creates a façade of cultural homogenization, the underlying social landscape is characterized by a diversity of partial and conflicting cultures.⁹³ Mark Abrahamson, Toyin Falola and Steven J. Salm, Josef Gugler, Peter Newman and Any Thornley, Kathleen M. Adams, Ida Susser, Peter Marcuse and Ronald Van Kempen, Fo-chen Lo and Yue-man Yeung, and Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin theorize about the impact of globalization on cities as well.⁹⁴

The production of history and heritage in South Africa

A second theme I want introduce here concerns the production of history and heritage in South Africa. Two pivotal moments in the reassessment of the production of South African history after apartheid appear to be the University of Witwatersrand's History Workshop in 1992 - entitled 'Myths, monuments and museums: new premises'⁹⁵; and the conference at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) 'On the future of the past: the production of history in changing South Africa' in 1996.⁹⁶ Both occasions were accounts of the debate regarding the role of the scholar, the discipline, the function of historical production, and the meaning of

⁹⁰ Of interest for this research are mainly the following two works: Manuel Castells, *The information age: economy, society and culture. Volume I: The rise of the network society* (Oxford 2000), *The information age: economy, society and culture. Volume II: The power of identity* (Oxford 2004).

⁹¹ URL: <http://www.transformaties.org/castells/bibliotheek/castells.pdf>: Manuel Castells, 'Material for an exploratory theory of the network city', in: *British Journal of Sociology* 51 (2000) 5-24 (accessed 12-5-2005).

⁹² See for instance: Saskia Sassen, *Cities in a world economy* (Thousand Oaks 1994) and *The global city: London, New York, Tokyo* (Princeton 1991).

⁹³ Saskia Sassen (ed.), *Global networks, linked cities* (New York 2002).

⁹⁴ Peter Newman and Any Thornley, *Planning world cities: globalization and urban politics* (Basingstoke and New York 2005), Mark Abrahamson, *Global cities* (New York 2004), Toyin Falola and Steven J. Salm, *Globalization and urbanization in Africa* (Trenton 2004), Jozef Gugler, *World cities beyond the West: globalization, development and inequality* (Cambridge and New York 2004), Kathleen M. Adams, 'Global Cities, Terror and Tourism: The Ambivalent Allure of the Urban Jungle', in: R. Bishop, J. Phillips and W. Yeo (eds.), *Postcolonial Urbanism: Southeast Asian Cities and Global Processes* (London 2003) 37-59, Ida Susser (ed.), *The Castells reader on cities and social theory* (Malden, Mass. 2002), Peter Marcuse and Ronald Van Kempen, *Globalizing cities: a spatial new order* (Oxford 2000), Fo-chen Lo and Yue-man Yeung, (eds.), *Emerging world cities in Pacific Asia* (Tokyo 1996) and Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, *Telecommunications and the city, electronic spaces, urban places* (London 1996).

⁹⁵ URL: <http://www.wits.ac.za/historyworkshop/conferences.htm#1990s>: 'History Workshop conferences in 1990s' (accessed 21-8-2005).

⁹⁶ URL: <http://www.uwc.ac.za/arts/history/conferences.htm> 'Conferences' (accessed 12-12-2005).

historical artefacts in the new nation. Shamil Jeppie, Rodney Davenport, Carolyn Hamilton, Sandra Klopper, and Irina Ivanovna Filatova also problematize these issues.⁹⁷

The difference between the Wits Workshop and the UWC initiative, led to a call by UWC-based scholars for a greater involvement of historians in the transformation of the heritage sector.⁹⁸ Historians Gary Minkley, Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz' 'Thresholds, gateways and spectacles: journeying through South African hidden pasts and histories in the last decade of the twentieth century' (1996), delivered at the UWC conference, but also a paper by Witz and Rassool from 1992⁹⁹, laid the foundation for a critical discourse regarding the production of historical knowledge. Their efforts resulted eventually in Project on Public Past (POPP).¹⁰⁰

Witz, the convenor of the POPP, explains in his book *Apartheid's festival. Contesting South Africa's national pasts* (2003) the notion that the production of history 'takes history beyond the writing of the academy and recognizes that there are many producers, at various sites, who utilize different historical methodologies to process a range of pasts'. In this context, Witz writes of 'multiple places of historical knowledge'.¹⁰¹ 'These presentations of pastness, whether they are oral or written or visual, are not prior to history but are actual historical practices within different genres characterized by different sociologies and modalities of historical production'. One major implication of this multiplicity, Witz sets out to elaborate, is that there are constant struggles for control, voices and texts in innumerable settings, which often animate the processing of the past.¹⁰²

The combined effort of the scholars of the POPP scholars is directed at problematizing both the archive and the disciplines fundamental to representations of public history. Their critique is thus aimed at a specific kind of knowledge production in the public domain. It challenges not only the standard analytical categories within the academy, but it also undermines the dominant historical discourse vocalized outside the university by the institutions of the new South African state and other agencies. As such, their project criticizes emergent discourses of reconciliation, memorialization and development. According to Witz, in 'new' or 'reborn' nations 'the past is aligned with the present, so that the nation appears to be pre-determined outcome of a history usually seen as having begun in a "deep time" of "long ago"'. Thus the nation and its history become a litany of struggles and achievements that

⁹⁷ Shamil Jeppie (ed), *Towards new histories for South Africa: on the place of the past in our present* (Landsdowne 2004), Rodney Davenport, 'On writing history for South Africa in interesting times', paper delivered at South African Institute for Race Relations, Cape Town (1999), Sandra Klopper, 'Whose heritage?: The politics of cultural ownership in contemporary South Africa', paper presented at the fault lines conference- re:membering, re:collecting, re:constructing, Cape Town (1996), Irina Ivanovna Filatova, 'New history for a new South Africa? A comment by an outsider', paper presented at the conference Transition in Africa, Cape Town (1994) and Carolyn Hamilton, 'The poetics and politics of public history', in: *South African historical journal* 29 (1992) 234-237.

⁹⁸ URL: <http://www.uwc.ac.za/arts/history/conferences.htm> 'Conferences' (accessed 12-12-2005).

⁹⁹ Leslie Witz and Ciraj Rassool, 'The dog, the rabbit and the reluctant historians', in: *South African historical journal* 29 (1992) 238-242.

¹⁰⁰ Gary Minkley, Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz, 'Thresholds, gateways and spectacles: journeying through South African hidden pasts and histories in the last decade of the twentieth century', Future of the past conference, University of the Western Cape (July 1996) 1-32.

¹⁰¹ Leslie Witz, *Apartheid's festival. Contesting South Africa's national pasts* (Bloomington 2003) 7.

¹⁰² Witz, *Apartheid's festival*, 7.

demand replication in the future, manufacturing “a never ending story of development”.¹⁰³

Focussing on the tercentenary festival celebrating the landing of Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape, Witz shows how, in the process of constructing and presenting public pasts, the layering of history and context come to be eliminated in the desire and search for an overarching narrative of a national past.¹⁰⁴ Rassool and Witz deal with the same matter as well.¹⁰⁵ Rassool articulates, in his article entitled ‘The rise of heritage and the reconstitution of history in South Africa’ (2000), that the discourse of ‘a society of many cultures’ and ‘a history of great lives of resistance and reconciliation’ are emerging, but also contested in almost every sphere of heritage construction and public culture.¹⁰⁶

Witz, Rassool and Minkley describe in ‘Who speaks for “South African” pasts?’ (1999) how in contemporary South African public history, marginally researched groups become agents in making their own history. Generally this means though that these agencies are added to the dominant discourse. They write that ‘in the academic revisions people are being recovered as part of hidden history [...]. They are necessarily cast as racialized and gendered extras on a stage where the main actors are firmly set in their leading roles.’¹⁰⁷ Of interest here is as well a paper by Premesh Lalu.¹⁰⁸ Witz, Rassool and Minkley point out that giving voice to new agencies alone does not fundamentally alter the structure of the dominant discursive model. Jennifer Robinson shares their criticism from a gender perspective.¹⁰⁹

Finally, regarding oral history, Minkley and Rassool articulate in ‘Orality, memory and social history in South Africa’, that this historical form ‘binds and entrenches’ the collective memory. According to these authors, the meanings of collective memory are seen to belong to the political field.¹¹⁰ Other papers on the making of memory in South Africa are part of Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee’s edited volume, entitled *Negotiating the past: the making of memory in South Africa* (1998).¹¹¹

Archaeologist Martin Hall and anthropologist Pia Bombardella - both actively involved in the UCT-based Research Unit for the Archaeology of Cape Town (RESUNACT), which have contributed to a critical discourse regarding the

¹⁰³ Ibidem, 10. See here also Witz, ‘Museums on Cape Town’s townships tours’.

¹⁰⁴ Witz, *Apartheid’s festival*, 11 and 251.

¹⁰⁵ Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz, ‘The 1952 Jan van Riebeeck tercentenary festival: constructing and contesting public national history in South Africa’, in: *Journal of African history* 34 (1993) 447-371.

¹⁰⁶ Ciraj Rassool, ‘The rise of heritage and reconstitution of history in South Africa’, in: *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 26 (2000), 1-21, here 1. See also: Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz, ‘“South Africa: A world in one country”: moments in international tourist encounter with wildlife, the primitive and the modern’, in: *Cahiers d’études africaines* 143 (1996) 335-371.

¹⁰⁷ Leslie Witz, Gary Minkley, and Ciraj Rassool, ‘Who speaks for South African Pasts’, paper presented at the Telling Stories: Secrecy, Lies and History Conference, University of Western Cape (11-14 July 1999) 1-29, here 7.

¹⁰⁸ Premesh Lalu, ‘History after apartheid’ paper presented at workshop: critical heritage practice, co-hosted by POPP & the research unit of archaeology of Cape Town at UCT, Centre for African Studies, UCT 1-32 (2-3 August 2003).

¹⁰⁹ Jennifer Robinson, *Methodology and feminism: a case study with Indian women* (Heslington 1994).

¹¹⁰ Gary Minkley and Ciraj Rassool, ‘Orality, memory and social history in South Africa’, in: Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee (eds.), *Negotiating the past: the making of memory in South Africa* (Oxford and New York 1998) 89-99.

¹¹¹ Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee (eds.), *Negotiating the past: the making of memory in South Africa* (Oxford and New York 1998).

disciplinary production of history and heritage - write in 'Las Vegas in Africa' (2005) about the production of heritage at sites or destinations as GrandWest and Gold Reef Casino. Hall and Bombardella are of the opinion that that these entertainment complexes are South Africa's new public spaces. According to them, 'they are closely linked to the definition of a new middle class and to the mechanisms of exclusion of the majority of the population'.¹¹² Also C. Kros' 'Experiencing a century in a day? Making more of gold reef city. Myths, monuments and museums. New premises' (1992) and Hall, 'The legend of the lost city; or, The man with the golden balls' (1995) deal with meaning of these destination resorts.¹¹³ Interestingly, I think, these writers show how discourse related to public history and heritage is influenced by both local and global incentives.

Roger B. Beck, Leonard Thompson and Robert Ross but as well Thomas R. H. Davenport and Christopher Saunders wrote overview works regarding South Africa's history.¹¹⁴

Public history in Cape Town

In this third thematic section, I will discuss key texts on public history in Cape Town. Aligned to Hall and Bombardella, historians Nigel Worden and Elizabeth van Heijningen write in 'Signs of Times. Tourism and public history at the Cape Town's Victoria and Alfred Waterfront' (1996), and also in other papers by Worden, that one of the central problems with the image of Cape Town's Victoria and Albert Waterfront heritage is that it represents only a white South African heritage. It does not include the middle class or the (black) working class. Moreover, there is no reference to the fact that the waterfront area used to be a workplace, a 'dirty, cold, wet and often harsh' environment.¹¹⁵ The complex layered history of the Waterfront is narrowed down to a singular representation of the past.¹¹⁶ Moreover, Nigel Worden, Elizabeth van Heijningen and Vivian Bickford-Smith show in *Cape Town. The making of a City. An illustrated social history* (1998) and *Cape Town in the twentieth century* (2000) the complex historical layering of the Capetonian society and its fragmented contemporary character.

Two central spaces to the memorialization of Cape Town's recent history are District Six and Robben Island. Both places are associated with strong, but different narratives in historical production since the end of apartheid. Regarding the public history of Robben Island, Harriet Deacon, former research coordinator of the Robben

¹¹² Martin Hall and Pia Bombardella, 'Las Vegas in Africa', in: *Journal of social archaeology* 5 (2005) 5-25, here 23.

¹¹³ C. Kros' 'Experiencing a century in a day? Making more of gold reef city. Myths, monuments and museums. New premises', paper delivered at the University of the Witwatersrand history workshop, Johannesburg (1992) and Martin Hall, 'The legend of the lost city; or, The man with the golden balls', in: *Journal of Southern African studies* 21 (1995) 179-199.

¹¹⁴ Roger B. Beck, *The history of South Africa* (Westport 2000), Leonard Thompson, *A history of South Africa* (New Haven 2000), Thomas R. H. Davenport and Christopher Saunders, *South Africa: a modern history* (Basingstoke 2000), and Robert Ross, *A concise history of South Africa* (Cambridge 1999).

¹¹⁵ Nigel Worden and Elizabeth van Heijningen, 'Signs of Times. Tourism and public history at the Cape Town's Victoria and Alfred Waterfront', in: *Cahier d'études africaines* 141-142 (1996) 215-236, here 227, Nigel Worden, 'Contested heritage at the Cape Town Waterfront', in: *International journal of heritage studies* 2 (1996) 59-75, here 65 and Nigel Worden, 'Contesting heritage in a South African city: Cape Town', in: Brian J. Shaw and Roy Jones (eds.), *Contested Urban heritage. Voices from the periphery* (Hants 1997) 31-62.

¹¹⁶ Worden, 'Contested heritage at the Cape Town Waterfront', 71 and Worden and Van Heijningen, 'Signs of Times', 231.

Island museum, points out in 'Memory and history at Robben Island' (2000), but in other works as well,¹¹⁷ that Robben Island's institutional story closely matches government policy of reconciliation and provides 'something for everyone 'within a culture of human rights and democracy'. In addition, she mentions that an analysis of an extended period of oppression under colonial rule does not fit easily within the 'triumph and reconciliation narrative'.¹¹⁸ Noel Solani, Véronique Rioufol, Harriet Deacon et al, Penny Berens et al, Barbara Hutton, as well as, Nigel Penn, Harriet Deacon and Neville Alexander, and G. Lubbe discuss issues related to the memorialization of the history of the island as well.¹¹⁹

A key work regarding the memorialization of the history of forced removals in Cape Town is Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis, *Recalling community in Cape Town. Creating and curating the District Six museum* (Cape Town 2001). In the introduction, Rassool writes that this book and the museum attempts to stimulate a critical stand regarding academic knowledge appropriation and the assumed neutrality of 'tourist discourses of diversity'. This publication regarding the District Six museum criticizes the discourse of reconciliation. Rassool adds 'the museum places a more complex model of the community museum, as a place of contestation, on the agenda of heritage transformation'.¹²⁰ Other contribution to the discussion of memorialization are Haajirah Esau, Charmaine McEachern, and Crain Soudien and Renate Meyer. On the memories of Cape Town's forced removals is of importance as well the works Sean Field and Anna Bohlin.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Harriet Deacon, 'Secret gardens: myth and meaning in Robben Island's garden', paper delivered at the University of the Western Cape, Belville (1999), 'Remembering Tragedy, Constructing Modernity: Robben Island as a national monument', in: Carli Coetzee and Sarah Nuttall (eds.) *Negotiating the Past: the Making of Memory in South Africa* (Oxford 1998) and Harriet Deacon (ed.), *The island: history of Robben Island, 1488-1992* (Cape Town 1996),

¹¹⁸ URL: <http://www.fl.ulaval.ca/celat/histoire.memoire/histoire/cape1/deacon.htm>: Harriet Deacon, 'Memory and history at Robben Island' July 2000 (accessed 12-12-2005).

¹¹⁹ Noel Solani, 'Representation of prisoner memories of Robben Island Museum', paper presented at an international conference on memory and history: Remembering, forgetting and forgiving in the life of the nation and the community, Cape Town (2000), Véronique Rioufol, 'Behind telling: post-apartheid representation of Robben Island's past, in: *Kronos: journal of Cape History* 26 (2000) 22-41, Harriet Deacon et al., *The Robben Island Exhibition: Esiqithini* (Cape Town 1996), Penny Berens et al., *Dreaming of Freedom: the Story of Robben Island* (Cape Town 1995), Barbara Hutton, *Robben Island: Symbol of Resistance* (Bellville, 1994), Nigel Penn, Harriet Deacon and Neville Alexander, 'Robben Island: the politics of rock and sand', paper presented at the 1992 UCT summer school, Cape Town (1992), and G. Lubbe, 'Robben Island: the early years of Muslim resistance', *Kronos: journal for Cape History*, 12 (1987), 49-56.

¹²⁰ Ciraj Rassool, 'Introduction: recalling community in Cape Town', in: Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis (eds.), *Recalling community in Cape Town. Creating and curating the District Six museum* (Cape Town 2001) vii-xii, here xi.

¹²¹ Haajirah Esau, 'Museum, medium, message: an analysis of the ways in which District Six mediates its messages through its work with memory, history and memorialization', Honours thesis at the department of History, University of Cape Town (2005), Charmaine McEachern, *Narratives of nation media memory and representation in the making of the new South Africa* (New York 2002), 'Working with memory: memories of District Six in Cape Town', in: *Social Analysis* 42 (1998) 48-72, and Crain Soudien and Renate Meyer, 'The District Six public sculpture project', Catalogue of the District Six sculpture festival, Cape Town (1998). On memories of forced removals: Sean Field (ed.), *Lost communities, living memories. Remembering forced removals in Cape Town* (Cape Town 2001) and Anna Bohlin, 'The politics of locality. Memories of District 6 in Cape Town', in: Nadia Lovell (ed.), *Locality and belonging* (London 1998).

Managing heritage in South Africa

Closely associated with the official discourse of reconciliation and the rainbow society in South Africa, are the practice and theory of CRM. Below I discuss key works related to CRM focussed in a South African context.

The practice of CRM in South Africa is directly connected to the discipline of archaeology. In 1988 Hilary J. Deacon, professor of archaeology at the University of Stellenbosch, makes mention of CRM in an editorial of the *The South African archaeological bulletin*, named 'What future has archaeology in South Africa'. Deacon points out that with the introduction of legislation providing for the conservation of the natural environment, new jobs for archaeologists will be created. He writes that 'the services of archaeological trained cultural resource managers are going to be necessary to assess impact, initiate surveys, carry out recovery excavation and implement conservation and education programmes'.¹²²

One year later, in 1989 – the new Environment Conservation Act was by now implemented - Martin Hall, professor of archaeology at UCT, writes in the same bulletin an editorial entitled 'Contract archaeology in South Africa'. Hall describes Contract archaeology, partially the South African variant of CRM, as an exciting new commercial concept. At the same time he warns about the consequences of the proliferation of these private agencies, possibly 'staffed by second-rate archaeology graduates whose interest [is] maximum profit'. Hall prophesies that 'reports will be lost, and store rooms will fill up with under-curated, under-documented collections.' Referring to the American archaeologist David Frederickson, he articulates that the central issue at stake is control over accreditation and practice. Access to the results of the fieldwork and commercial rights are also potential issues, which might generate disagreements, according to the archaeologist.¹²³

Regarding the heritage management of the urban environment an important moment was the Urban Conservation Symposium in Johannesburg in 1990. The preface of the edited volume on this symposium by architects Derek and Vivienne Japha reads: 'there has been the realization that, if conservation is to have a future in South Africa, it must shed its present sectarian and culturally chauvinistic overtones; and this cannot be done as long as conservation remains divorced from broader problems of planning and development'.¹²⁴ Especially, the contributions of Herbert Prins and Japha and Japha are of interest.¹²⁵

Janette Deacon, member of the NMC in 1993, member of writing team for the new Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999), chair person on the SAHRA

¹²² H.J. Deacon, 'What future has archaeology in South Africa?', in: *The South African archaeological bulletin* 147 (1988) 3-4, here 3.

¹²³ Martin Hall, 'Contract archaeology in South Africa', in *The South African archaeological bulletin* 150 (1989) 63-64.

¹²⁴ Derek Japha and Vivienne Japha (eds.), *Proceedings of the national urban conservation symposium* (Oakville Press and Cape Town 1990) vi.

¹²⁵ Herbert Prins, 'Conservation for a post-apartheid South Africa', in Derek Japha and Vivienne Japha (eds.), *Proceedings of the national urban conservation symposium* (Oakville Press and Cape Town 1990) 1-6, Stephen Townsend, 'Conservation-related control in South Africa, with particular reference to Cape Town', in: Derek Japha and Vivienne Japha (eds.), *Proceedings of the national urban conservation symposium* (Oakville Press and Cape Town 1990) 30-36, Derek Japha and Vivienne Japha, 'Conservation in small Cape Towns', in: Derek Japha and Vivienne Japha (eds.), *Proceedings of the national urban conservation symposium* (Oakville Press and Cape Town 1990) 49-55 and Martin Hall and Antonia Malan, 'Archaeology and conservation in the urban environment: the example of Cape Town', in: Derek Japha and Vivienne Japha (eds.), *Proceedings of the national urban conservation symposium* (Oakville Press and Cape Town 1990) 130-133.

exhumation permit committee and currently council member of SAHRA, describes in 'The Cinderella metaphor: the maturing of archaeology as a profession in South Africa' (1993) the improvement of professional opportunities for archaeologists since Ray Inskip became Senior lecturer at UCT. In this paper she writes that although the 1989 Act stimulates organized CRM, archaeologists lack a centralized facility with site records and permanent staff to see that assessments are made and recommendations carried out.¹²⁶

In 'Archaeological sites as national monuments in South Africa: a review of sites declared since 1936' (1993), Deacon discusses a selection of sites and their management. She describes that archaeological sites hardly function as living monuments because the history of conflict in South Africa has 'destroyed many of the traditions of the indigenous people, and their descendants are unaware of the wealth of archaeological information about their past'.¹²⁷ At the end of the 1990s Deacon wrote an account of her vision on CRM during the fourth World Archaeological Conference in Cape Town.¹²⁸ Two works by Harriet Deacon et al and Harriet Deacon, Sephai Mngqolo, Sandra Prosalendis represent more recent accounts of strategy papers for CRM institutions in South Africa.¹²⁹

In opposition to the theory of CRM a number of texts are of importance. In *Skeletons in the cupboard. South African museums and the trade in human remains* (2000) Legassick and Rassool reveal the 'economics' of the collection of human remains in South Africa. They criticise a lack of self-reflection of public institutions, especially museums, regarding their history in the trade of Khoisan skeletons. The two scholars ask questions about the ethics of exhumation and the nature of scientific research on the indigenous human body under colonial conditions. According to them, the failure of tackling these sensitive questions 'derives from a perpetuation of the idea that the bones and skulls of Khoisan people in the twentieth century are natural history fossils, referred to as relics'.¹³⁰

Also, the edited volume by Claire Smith and H. Martin Wobst entitled *Indigenous archaeologies. Decolonizing theory and practice* is of importance. The contributions to this collection deal with a global debate within archaeology on human remains and cultural property.¹³¹ The discussions in the subfield of indigenous archaeology are also reflected in the World Archaeological Congress (WAC) code of ethics of 1991 and the Vermillion accord on human remains adopted in 1989.¹³²

¹²⁶ Janette Deacon, 'The Cinderella metaphor: the maturing of archaeology as a profession in South Africa', in: *The South African archaeological bulletin* 158 (1993) 77-82, here 78.

¹²⁷ Janette Deacon, 'Archaeological sites as national monuments in South Africa: a review of sites declared since 1936', in: *South African historical journal* 29 (1993) 118-131, here 131.

¹²⁸ URL: <http://www.wac.uct.ac.za/wac4/olddoor.htm>: 'World archaeological congress' (accessed 12-12-2005).

¹²⁹ Harriet Deacon et al., *The subtle power of intangible heritage: legal and financial instruments for safeguarding intangible heritage* (Cape Town 2004) and Harriet Deacon, Sephai Mngqolo, Sandra Prosalendis, *Protecting our cultural capital: a research plan for the heritage sector* (Pretoria 2003).

¹³⁰ Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool, *Skeletons in the cupboard. South African museums and the trade in human remains 1907-1917* (Kimberley 2000) 2.

¹³¹ Claire Smith and H. Martin Wobst (eds.), *Indigenous archaeologies. Decolonizing theory and practice* (London and New York 2005).

¹³² URL: <http://www.wac.uct.ac.za/archive/content/ethics.html>: 'World Archaeological Congress. First code of ethics' (accessed 10-12-2005) and URL: <http://www.wac.uct.ac.za/archive/content/vermillion.accord.html>: 'Vermillion accord' (accessed 10-12-2005).

For reviews of the acts of collecting of CRM-practitioners the works by Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett and James Clifford are of interest as well.¹³³ The works of Verne Harris and Mbembe on archiving are useful tools for examining the archive practices of the heritage managers.¹³⁴ Zygmunt Bauman's thoughts are of interest for examining institutional practices in the context of modernity.¹³⁵ Francis P. McManamon and Alf Hatton give account of a more conventional view on CRM. G. J. Turnbridge and J. E. Ashworth and also B. Graham, G. J. Ashworth and J. E. Turnbridge provide a critical analysis of the contemporary management of heritage in post-apartheid South Africa.¹³⁶

Other critical reviews of the practices of CRM in South Africa focus on the involvement of disciplines of archaeology and architecture.

Interrogating archaeology and architecture in South Africa

The last theme I wish to discuss concerns a series of critiques of the discipline of archaeology and architecture in South Africa. Two key works, written during the last decade of apartheid, regarding the positioning of archaeology in its colonial context are Hall, 'The burden of tribalism: the social context of southern African Iron Age Studies' (1984) and 'Hidden history: Iron age archaeology in Southern Africa' (1990). Hall outlines in these articles the prevalent influence of colonial ideologies in the forming of archaeological research problems and the shaping of answers. He calls for the detailed critique of archaeological practice in differing social environments as a way of understanding how the present shapes the past.¹³⁷ In Hall's article entitled 'Earth and stone: archaeology and memory' (1998) the relation between memory and archaeology is at stake.¹³⁸

Four years after the ending of apartheid, Shepherd articulates in 'Archaeology and post-colonialism in South Africa. The theory, practice and politics of archaeology after apartheid' (1998) that the experience of colonialism was a key formative context for the discipline as a whole. Moreover, he claims that the current archaeological practice in South Africa continues to be informed by a colonial consciousness. Central to Shepherd's argument is the idea that 'colonialism – as a political and economic system, as a way of conceptualising the world, as a working environment, and as an intellectual milieu and territory of imagination – has to a very great extent been the ground upon which the discipline of archaeology has constructed its understanding of

¹³³ Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination culture; Tourism, museums and heritage* (Berkeley 1998) and James Clifford, 'On collecting art and culture', in: S. During, *The cultural studies reader* (London 1993) 57-76.

¹³⁴ Verne Harris, 'The archival sliver: a perspective on the construction of social memory in archives in transition from apartheid to democracy', in: C. Hamilton, V. Harris, J. Taylor *et al.* (eds.), *Refiguring the archive* (Cape Town 2002) 134-159 and Achille Mbembe, 'The power of the archive and its limits', in: C. Hamilton, V. Harris and J. Taylor *et al.* (eds.), *Refiguring the archive* (Cape Town 2002) 19-26.

¹³⁵ Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the holocaust* (Cambridge and Oxford 1991).

¹³⁶ Francis P. McManamon and Alf Hatton (eds.), *Cultural resource management in contemporary society. Perspectives on managing and presenting the past* (London and New York 2000), Brian Graham, G.J. Ashworth and J.E. Turnbridge, *A geography of heritage. Power, culture and economy* (London 2000), and J.E. Turnbridge and G.J. Ashworth, *Dissonant heritage; the management of the past as resource in conflict* (Chichester 1996).

¹³⁷ Martin Hall, 'The burden of tribalism: the social context of Southern African Iron age studies, in: *American Antiquity* 49 (1984) 455-467 and "'Hidden histories": Iron age archaeology in Southern Africa', in: Peter Robertshaw (ed.), *A history of African archaeology* (London and Portsmouth 1990).

¹³⁸ Martin Hall, 'Earth and stone: archaeology and memory', in: Carli Coetzee and Sarah. Nuttall (eds.) *Negotiating the Past: the Making of Memory in South Africa* (Oxford 1998) 180-200.

culture and society, worked out the details of its practice, and formulated its sense of mission and purpose'¹³⁹.

Shepherd discusses in various articles the politics of archaeology in Africa through a social recontextualization of the discipline. In addition, he elucidates the relation between power relations in Southern Africa and the types of knowledge this discipline produced. As such, the archaeologist points at the emergence of an archaeological discourse. In 'Disciplining archaeology; The invention of South African prehistory, 1923-1953' (2002) he asserts 'in broadly metaphorical but also in the most literal of ways, doing archaeology involved looking through present landscapes, with their clutter of political aspiration and cultural change, to find the traces of an imagined past lying below'. Elsewhere Shepherd also addresses the relation between the practice of archaeology and native labour in Southern Africa.¹⁴⁰ In 'What does it mean "to give the past back to the people"? Archaeology and Ethics in the postcolony' (Forthcoming) and 'Archaeology dreaming: Post-apartheid urban imaginaries and the bones of the Prestwich Street dead' (Forthcoming) Shepherd discusses from an ethical point of view the involvement of archaeologist in the heritage management of Prestwich Street.¹⁴¹

Reiterating Grant Farred's notion of a double temporality in South Africa, Lynn Meskell argues in 'Living in the past: historic futures in double time' (forthcoming) that archaeologists in this country must involve themselves in public dialogues concerning the past and imagine their work as part of current socio-political frameworks.¹⁴² In 'Sites of violence: terrorism, tourism, and heritage in the archaeological present' (2005) she writes that an emergent ethics in archaeology must tackle archaeology, heritage, tourism and national modernity as they coalesce in the countries in which we work and live.¹⁴³ In addition she argues that 'by shifting attention from *sites* and *structures* to a more dynamic conception of the past, including its multiple manifestations and uses through time, we might more fully appreciate and accommodate living communities'.¹⁴⁴ Regarding the future questions archaeology could be directed towards in a context of globalization, Meskell suggests in the introduction of *Archaeology under fire. Nationalism, politics and heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East* (1998) a focus on 'the ways in which

¹³⁹ Nicholas Shepherd, 'Archaeology and post-colonialism in South Africa. The theory, practice and politics of archaeology after apartheid', Thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the department of the archaeology at the University of Cape Town (May 1998) 34.

¹⁴⁰ Nick Shepherd, 'Heading South, looking North. Why we need a post-colonial archaeology', in: *Public Archaeology* 3 (2004) 248-254, 'State of discipline: science, culture and identity in South African Archaeology, 1870-2003', in: *Journal of Southern Africa Studies* 29 (December 2003) 823-843, "'When the hand that holds the trowel is black..."; disciplinary practices of self-representation and the issue of 'native' labour in archaeology', in: *Journal of social archaeology* 3 (2003) 334-352, 'The politics of archaeology in Africa', in: *Annual review anthropology* 31 (2002) 189-209, and 'Disciplining archaeology; The invention of South African prehistory, 1923-1953', in: *Kronos: journal of Cape History* 28 (2002) 127-145. See for quote: 'Disciplining archaeology; The invention of South African prehistory', 140.

¹⁴¹ Nick Shepherd, 'What does it mean "to give the past back to the people"? Archaeology and Ethics in the postcolony' (Forthcoming; April 2005), 'Archaeology dreaming: Post-apartheid urban imaginaries and the bones of the Prestwich Street dead' (Forthcoming).

¹⁴² Lynn Meskell, 'Living in the past: historic futures in double time', in: Noeleen Murray and Nick Shepherd (eds.), *Desire lines. Space, memory and identity in the Post-apartheid city* (London forthcoming).

¹⁴³ Lynn Meskell, 'Sites of violence: terrorism, tourism, and heritage in the archaeological present', in: Lynn Meskell and Peter Pels (eds.), *Embedding ethics* (Oxford and New York 2005) 123-14, here 125.

¹⁴⁴ Meskell, 'Sites of violence: terrorism, tourism, and heritage in the archaeological present', 136.

meanings and identities are attributed and negotiated, rather than in the direction of origin'.¹⁴⁵

Regarding a critique of the spatial disciplines, I want, first and foremost, to refer to a work introduced above. In *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* a series of authors reflect on the post-apartheid practice of planners and architects in South Africa. A number of contributions on post-apartheid planning and architecture are of special interest.

Firstly, David Dewar's paper entitled 'Settlements, change and planning in South Africa since 1994' (1998), but also in his article from 1995¹⁴⁶, discusses the extent to which transformation took place in the practice of urban planning and management. In this regard, Dewar speaks of situation of 'business as usual'. The problem, according to him, is that 'the system is based on a reactive, controlling form of planning, which supports the separation of uses, a suburban model of housing and the strict separation of the function of public and private sectors'.¹⁴⁷ Secondly, Robinson writes that 'lines of the city are crossed redrawn, reimagined; outside the conceiving spaces of planning visions. The city of everyday life experience and imagination is already a different space, it is already a space of difference.' According to her, 'planners do well to try to keep up with people's energetic redrafting of city space'.¹⁴⁸ Mabin has written on these matters as well.¹⁴⁹

David Bunn points out in 'White sepulchers: on the reluctance of monuments', that monumental architecture in South Africa was, during apartheid times split, between two contradictory traditions: 'the one, prospective and imperial, achieves its landscape context through an association between vision and care; the other, evoking vertical authority and autochthonous origins, focuses on connections between the spirit of the nation and natural processes such as the movement of light and water'.¹⁵⁰ Today, as Bunn points out, the most powerful influence on architecture and planning is the alliance between certain forms of archaeology and ethnography in the service of African communities who seek a certain rootedness or distinctness.¹⁵¹ Daniel Herwitz writes about the history of public spaces and buildings in South Africa in relation to modernism. Hannah le Roux deliberates on the disciplinary response of architects to the construction of a new South African constitution.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁵ Lynn Meskell, 'Introduction: archaeology matters', in: Lynn Meskell (ed.), *Archaeology under fire. Nationalism, politics and heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East* (London and New York 1998).

¹⁴⁶ David Dewar, 'The urban question in South Africa: the need for a planning paradigm shift', *Third world planning review* 14 (1995) 407-420.

¹⁴⁷ David Dewar, 'Settlements, change and planning in South Africa since 1994', in: H. Judin and I. Vladislavic (eds.), *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* (1998) 368-375, here 370.

¹⁴⁸ Robinson, '(Im)mobilizing – dreaming of change', 170. See also: Jennifer Robinson, 'Transforming spaces: spatiality and re-mapping the apartheid city', paper delivered at the Africa seminar, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town (1995).

¹⁴⁹ Alan Mabin, 'Reconstruction and the making of urban planning in 20th century South Africa', in: H. Judin and I. Vladislavic (eds.), *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* (1998) 269-277.

¹⁵⁰ David Bunn, 'White sepulchers: on the reluctance of monuments', in: H. Judin and I. Vladislavic (eds.), *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* (1998) 93-117, here 109.

¹⁵¹ Bunn, 'White sepulchers: on the reluctance of monuments', 116.

¹⁵² Hannah Le Roux, 'Undisciplined practices: architecture in the context of freedom: in: H. Judin and I. Vladislavic (eds.), *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* (1998) 351-357 and Daniel Herwitz, 'Modernism at the margins', in: H. Judin and I. Vladislavic (eds.), *Blank_architecture, apartheid and after* (1998) 405-421.

Murray thinks through the state of the discipline of architecture in 'Modernism, marginality and apartheid; architecture, planning and urban design in South Africa' (2004). This author suggests that it is time to consider the canon of architectural knowledge and to rethink the analytical categories the spatial disciplines use. She pleads for a reflexive turn, a public debate on the relation between these disciplines and the apartheid regime.¹⁵³

In the context of the theory, the methodology and the literature I have discussed above, I want to proceed to discuss the central matter at hand in this dissertation, that is a critical analysis of the heritage management of Prestwich Street. In the above, I have shown how my research process developed in the context of Cape Town's present. Moreover, I have reviewed the key theoretical, methodological and thematic texts I intend to give shape to my analysis in the context of the postcolony, influenced by the effects of globalization and academic refiguration.

¹⁵³ Noeleën Murray, 'Modernism, marginality and apartheid; architecture, planning and urban design in South Africa', African seminar series, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town (29 September 2004) 1-11. Also Noeleën Murray, 'Spaces of discipline/Disciplines of space; Modern architecture and Uytenbogaardt's Dutch Reformed Church in Welkom, South Africa', seminar series, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town (19 October 2005).

3. Drawing of The Rockwell, Prestwich Street Elevation, MWP architects, 1 February 2005



22 PRESTWICH STREET ELEVATION

3. WAYS OF READING PRESTWICH STREET

'...beneath the visible landscape and the surface of the metropolis, its objects and social relation, are concealed or embedded other orders of visibility, other scripts that are not reducible to the built form, the house façade, or simply the street experience of metaphorical figure of the flaneur.'

Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall¹⁵⁴

Taking my cue from Appadurai's remark, which suggests we use our understanding of the present as a *historical moment* as guidance for the formulation of a problematic, in this chapter I describe three historical moments in Cape Town's present. Thereafter, I trace the origins of these narratives through looking at different ways of reading the Prestwich Street site.

Currently, the foundational structures of the Rockwell, the building on the piece of property bounded by Prestwich, Alfred, Napier and Schiebe Streets (erven 550-555), are under construction. Soon the work on the double floor basement parking will commence. According to the drawings by Messaris, Wapenaar and Philippides (MWP) architects, this underground parking will provide space for 195 cars owned by those living, working and shopping in the above building. The Rockwell, an eight-floor elevation (figure 3), forms not only a set of 103 luxurious apartments, and an office and retail complex, but also a gym, deli, restaurant and swimming pool.¹⁵⁵ The billboard on the construction site, entitled 'The Rockwell: Luxurious de Waterkant living', imagines the new building and refers to the website of the project. For those seriously interested, a take-home brochure is available. The brochure explains the genesis of the R91 million project¹⁵⁶ as follows:

'It was in the beginning of a new era. A time of industry. It was the industrial revolution. And with this era came the music, the freedom of spirit and the romanticism. It is in this spirit that the Rockwell is conceived.'¹⁵⁷

This rewriting of the origin of the building by the advertising agency as commissioned by the developer makes specific reference to the age of New York jazz. The brochure reads:

'At the turn of the previous century, they did design right. Not only because it was classical form and function. Not only because it was the birth of a new age and an explosion of fresh ideas. But because they did it with soul.'

'Situated in the trendy De Waterkant, THE ROCKWELL will be one of the most impressive architectural statements in Cape Town, infusing the surrounding with heart and soul.

With new developments making their way to this area and the already existing mix of upmarket restaurants, fitness centres, clubs and close proximity to the world famous Victoria

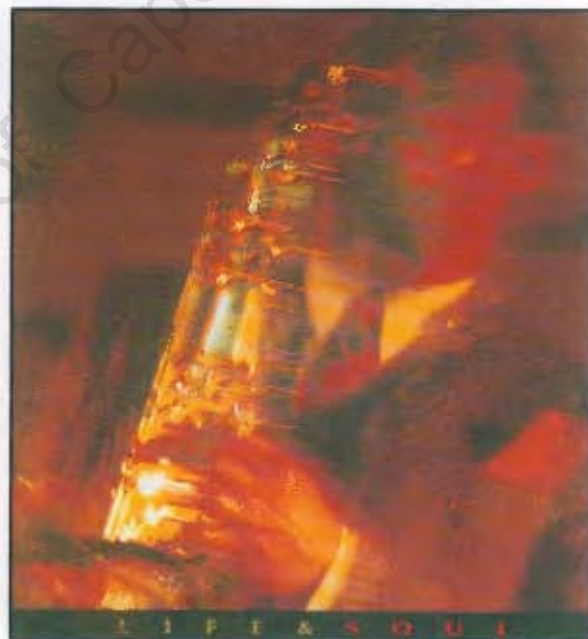
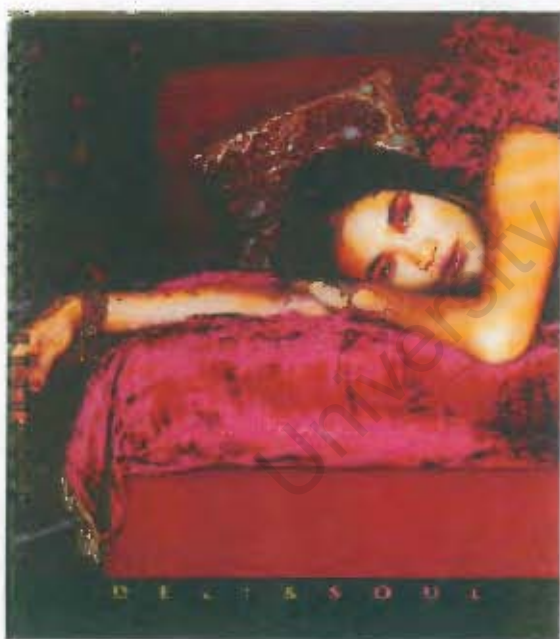
¹⁵⁴ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 363-364.

¹⁵⁵ MWP consulting architects, Project 4902, proposed redevelopment of erven at corner Napier and Schiebe Street – Green Point for Styleprops Ltd. Prestwich Street elevation, 204 (1 February 2005), MAD of UCT, PS, Basement plan – minus two: parking layout, A102 (1 February 2005) and Basement plan – entry level: parking layout, A104/1 (1 February 2005), MAD of UCT, PS, and Brochure of The Rockwell. Luxurious De Waterkant Living, MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁵⁶ Submission to SAHRA council meeting from SAHRA APMHO permit committee (16-17 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁵⁷ Brochure of The Rockwell. Luxurious De Waterkant Living.

'The Rockwell luxury de Waterkant living'



4. Collage of The Rockwell brochure (Manuscripts and Archives Department, UCT)

The slogans 'pure soul', 'rich soul' and 'rhythm and soul', the pictures of women, jazz musicians and food attempt to give the Rockwell its own 'feel' (figure 4). The agency aims to make the building 'one of the most desirable addresses in Cape Town'.¹⁵⁹ The discourse used in this brochure provides an account of a particular way of imagining the history of this area. I argue that it challenges the reader to critically rethink the meaning of the Prestwich Street site historically. Going beyond this commercial text, one is able to come to a deeper understanding of the historicity of this development and the histories of this site. By looking at the construction process since the sale of the property to Styleprops Ltd on 2 October 2002, and the nature of various interruptions of this process, a more complex image of this particular site becomes apparent.¹⁶⁰

The development of the Rockwell is not the only moment in Cape Town that I want to address here however. The City of Cape Town presented, on 1 October 2005, its plan for a memorial park at St Andrews square.¹⁶¹ This project is made up by the 'Prestwich pedestrian framework' and an 'ossuary for the exhumed remains'. The pedestrian framework 'seeks to eternalize layers of history which are almost forgotten.' The City aims via the memorial park to celebrate the heritage of the Green Point area. The poster of the project reads further:

'This rich area once a Khoi-san burial place became the burial ground to many colonial religious denominations and thereafter an extension to the City being the vibrant and diverse District #1'.¹⁶²

The City proposes to memorialize the district's diversity in both past and present. It remains quite vague why there is a need for a memorial place in this part of Cape Town. The 'discovery' of this burial place at Prestwich Place in 2003 and the controversy it caused is not mentioned as such. According to the poster, made by the City's Heritage Resources and Urban Design section, the Prestwich framework 'will educate the City with layers of history unearthed and re-establish historical connections'¹⁶³ (figure 5). This last notion of connections is also central part of a third moment I would like to explore.

Another public institute involved with the Prestwich Street site is SAHRA. This agency recently published a request for tender regarding a 'multi-disciplinary research project' focussing on 'the history, social, cultural and political development of Cape Town's inner city in order to inform the re-interment and memorialization of the Prestwich Street site.' In addition, the letter reads:

¹⁵⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁵⁹ Ibidem and Interview with Micheal Philippides, Cape Town (1 September 2005), recording is part of the collection of the author.

¹⁶⁰ Unsigned copy agreement of sale (2 October 2002), MAD of UCT, PS.

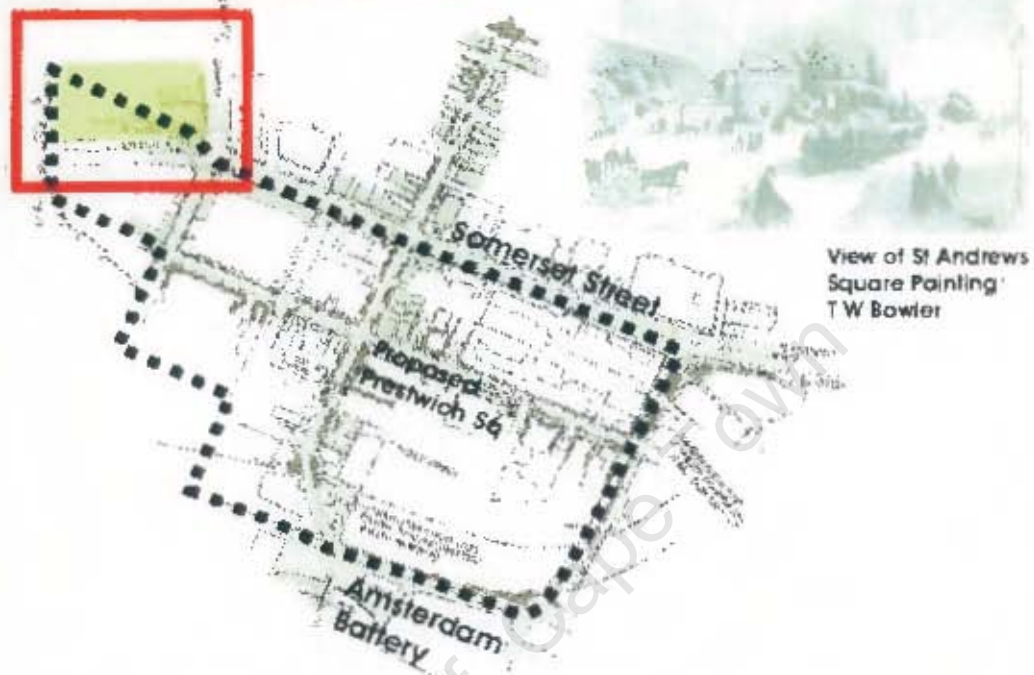
¹⁶¹ During a series of public meetings on 19, 20 and 21 November 2005 the City engaged in cooperation with SAHRA and the District Six Museum with interested Capetonians regarding the plans for this memorial park.

¹⁶² Photograph of 'St Andrews square' poster by Urban Design/Heritage Resources Section of the City of Cape Town (1 October 2005), part of the collection of the author.

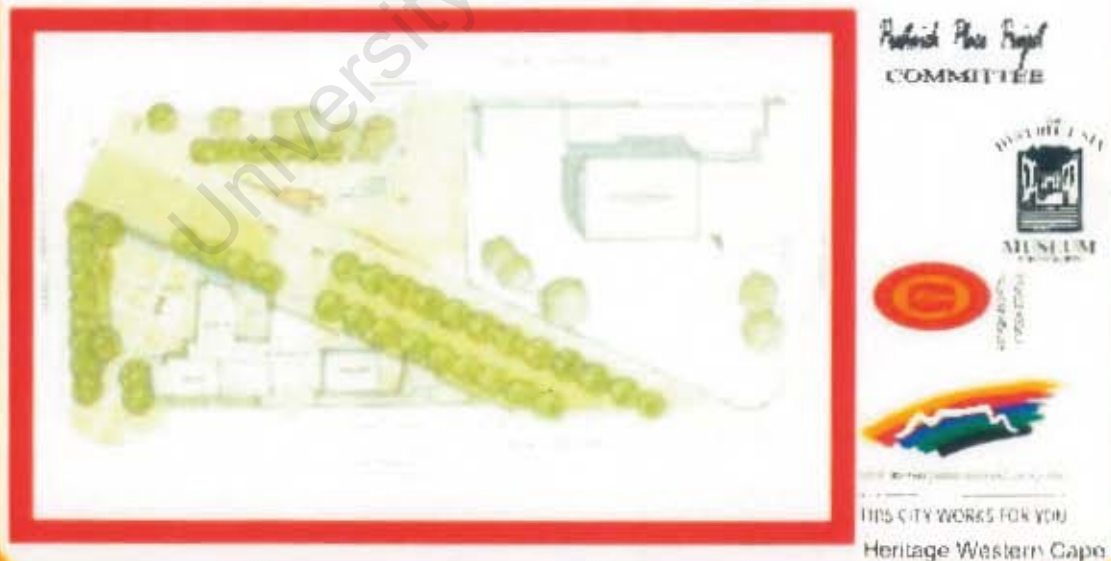
¹⁶³ Photograph of 'St Andrews square' poster.

Application for Consent: Reinterment Ossuary & Memorial Garden

Proposed Ossuary & Memorial Site



Proposed Memorial, Ossuary & Interpretive Center



5. Poster of St Andrews memorial garden as proposed by the City, SAHRA, Heritage Western Cape, the District Six museum and the Prestwich Place Project Committee (Personal archive author)

[The research] should aim to tell the stories of the people who were buried there, and how they connect to current communities.¹⁶⁴

As one of the outcomes, SAHRA expects a summative report regarding the history and significance of the site and its potential contribution to understanding the various layers of Cape Town history. Moreover, in five months a research team has to construct a catalogue of archival material 'in all its various formats on Prestwich and related issues'.¹⁶⁵ The letter does not give reasons for the necessity of a *multi-disciplinary* research strategy. Moreover, both the City and SAHRA seem to stimulate an understanding of Cape Town via the reconciliation of moments of its past with the present by searching for connections. Their management practices produce a particular historical knowledge. Here, as in the case of the Rockwell, I am interested in the historicity of the plans for a memorial park and a multi-disciplinary research team.

The challenge that the erasure of history by the Rockwell and the lack of historicity of a memorial park and the call for a multi-disciplinary team poses, can, in my opinion, and should be addressed. I intend to do so with my first sub-question, namely *What has happened at Prestwich Street since the discovery of the burial ground in 2003?* In what follows, I discuss the historicity of the current developments in relation to this city space.

3.1 Unearthing human remains in Green Point

Mr. Ari Efstathoui - a member of a Greek-Capetonian family mostly associated with the fast-food franchise *Steers*¹⁶⁶ - envisaged in 2001 new career perspectives in the property business. His company, Global Assets Investment Network (GAIN), obtained a city block in Green Point and designed a plan for an upmarket residential and retail complex named 'Prestwich Place'. Efstathoui created a new legal entity to manage the developments on his property, named Styleprops Ltd. In addition, Efstathoui appointed property consultant André van der Merwe as manager of this project. Van der Merwe, who holds office at the Waterclub in Green Point, worked on this project together with Michael Phillippides of MWP architects and Johan Louw, the building contractor of JLK Konstruksie.

On 4 June 2001, Phillippides, who was in charge of the processes and procedures for obtaining the necessary demolition permits and plans approvals, submitted a rough sketch to the City council.¹⁶⁷ The first document in the archive of Van der Merwe dates back to 11 April 2001. On this day the project manager received a fax from Phillippides, who reported back on his visit to various departments of the City council. Concerning the urban conservation aspects of this particular part of

¹⁶⁴ 'Multi-disciplinary research strategy', call for tendering by SAHRA (October 2005), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁶⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶⁶ URL: <http://www.eprop.co.za/news/article.aspx?idArticle=416>: 'Brackenfell redevelopment optimism' (15 February 2002) (accessed 5-5-2005).

¹⁶⁷ Interim draft report Prestwich Place exhumation project public participation process 9 July to 1 August 2003 prepared by Antonia Malan (with assistance of Emmylou Rabe), Cultural Sites and Resources Forum, for submission to the South African Heritage Agency and the Global Asset and Investment Network (4 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS, 2.

Green Point, Phillippides had been in contact with the City official Chris Snelling. The fax reads:

'The buildings are all of Grade 3 classification, which means that they have no architectural heritage, but do contribute to the character of the neighbourhood. The block is also not in conservation area. I went through the plans with [Snelling] and he is happy with the proposal.'¹⁶⁸

The different construction partners worked closely together with the City in what seemed to be a promising project – this is apparent by the fact that many purchasers were interested in buying apartments before the final drawing were available.¹⁶⁹ Moreover, the construction process seemed to be straight forward.¹⁷⁰

After the sale of the property to Efstathoui in 2002, Van der Merwe and Phillippides corresponded with the City Department for Zoning, Electricity services and the Department for Transport, Roads and Stormwater concerning the excavation of the site.¹⁷¹ On 18 November the actual building plans were submitted for approval to the City. Finally in April 2003, the application made by Styleprops to demolish the buildings at the premises was approved by the City.¹⁷² In addition, an investigatory exercise of the soil of the site by a drilling company in the beginning of March had shown nothing unusual. Holes of 12 meters deep were dug, but only sand, gravel, clay, pebbles, rock and stones were found.¹⁷³ Thus, the demolition of the old structures on this site started. Not even a month later though, on 16 May 2003, work was halted as construction workers uncovered human bones.

3.2 How the Prestwich Street dead entered the public sphere

Following the regulations of the NHRA, Van der Merwe reported the discovery of the human remains to the authorities, who in turn notified SAHRA. SAHRA's involvement in the matter meant that, in legal terms, the site changed from a local 'development' into a national 'archaeological' context. At the same time, the site expanded from the private sphere of the developer into the sphere of the general public. On 2 June 2003, head-archaeologist Mary Leslie wrote to Van der Merwe:

'It may turn out that the graves that were here have been exhumed and that demolition has uncovered only a remainder left behind (as was located on a nearby site) or possibly a lens of material not yet exhumed, or it may be that this is an entire burial ground situation such as was encountered at [the] Cobern Street site some years ago. In that case a fairly large scale investigation will be required.

¹⁶⁸ Fax from Micheal Phillippides to Andre van der Merwe (11 April 2001), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁶⁹ Fax from Petra Wiese to Andre van der Merwe (11 October 2002) MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁷⁰ J.D. Betts, 'Preliminary project analysis for redevelopment of erven at corner Prestwich and Alfred Street (21 October 2001) MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁷¹ Letter from Mr. Shuping, Department of Electricity of the City of Cape Town (1 November 2002) MAD of UCT, PS, Fax from N. Boswell, Department of Transport, Roads and Stormwater of the City of Cape Town, to Andre van der Merwe (24 December 2002), MAD of UCT, PS, Fax from Michael Phillippides to Ari Efstathiou (21 February 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁷² Letter from S. Mallie, department of planning and economic development, to Styleprops and MWP architects (30 April 2003), MAD of UCT, PS and Interim draft report Prestwich Place exhumation project public participation process, 2.

¹⁷³ 'Soil investigation: Prestwich Place', report prepared by Rosond Cape (Pty) Limited (13 April 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

The original Cobern Street excavations were done by the Archaeological Contract Office (ACO) (Hart and Halkett) of UCT, who also worked on a site in Cardiff Street, and they may have useful records relating to the area and the nature of the Prestwich/Albert Street site. The analysis of the human remains [was done] by Dr. Allan Morris of the anatomy department of UCT.¹⁷⁴

In the same email Leslie also wrote:

'The archaeologist will advise about the need for basic curation, boxing and analysis and it is important that time and, ideally, funding be allowed before re-interment for a scientific forensic level descriptive analysis of the material. The information could be used by your organization, as was done at the Cobern Street site.

The archaeologist will need to assess the appropriate action in terms of the human remains and discuss this with SAHRA. Reburial is preferred and it may be that a crypt could be included in the basement perimeter into which the material could be placed after study. Otherwise an appropriate resting place needs to be arranged with the authorities.'¹⁷⁵

Attached to the email Leslie sent to Van der Merwe was a list of members the Southern African Association of Archaeologists, who are CRM-practitioners from which the project-manager was required to choose his archaeological team. The project manager decided eventually to appoint ACO.

In an early attempt to give significance to the site, one of the members of ACO, Tim Hart, wrote Van der Merwe on 3 June 2003:

'I have done a little homework and established that the area is an unmarked burial ground that lay immediately west of the VOC formal cemetery. It was used by people during the VOC times that were not affiliated to [the Dutch reformed] church Christianity – i.e. slaves, moslems, Chinese, any foreign sailor, etc.

Be prepared to accept that it has not been exhumed (only the formal yards had that honour) and like the cemetery at Cobern Street was built over by 1820 – the formal exhumations were only done circa 1900. It is also likely that the entire site has been used as a burial ground.'¹⁷⁶

In a meeting held at the SAHRA office with the project manager and SAHRA officials, Hart added that the individual families of the deceased buried at the Prestwich Street burial site would not be able to be traced now, as 'too much time has passed since the burials took place here and the fact that this had been a cemetery that had long since become inactive and had also since been developed'.¹⁷⁷

Hart runs the ACO with a fellow-archaeologist David Halkett. The Contract Office is located at the archaeology department of UCT but functions as a separate legal unit which takes on commercial archaeological work. On 5 June 2003, Hart received from SAHRA, a permit to undertake 'a rescue exhumation of human skeletal remains at Prestwich Place'. One of the conditions of the permit (No. 80/03/06/001/51) was also the organization of a consultation procedure as indicated in the regulations of the NHRA. Leslie, the Chief executive officer of the permit, writes:

¹⁷⁴ Email from Mary Leslie to Andre van der Merwe (2 June 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁷⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁷⁶ Email from Tim Hart to Andre van der Merwe (3 June 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁷⁷ Notes of meeting held on 5 June 2003 at 111 Harrington Street, Cape Town regarding the proposed Prestwich Place development at the block bounded by Alfred, Prestwich, West and Schiebe Streets, Green Point and the burials found during the clearing of the site, MAD of UCT, PS.

'The recommendations for removal of graves and exhumations and for re-burial made in SAHRA's policy "What to do when graves uncovered", section 3, must be observed as far as possible. In cognizance of circumstances preceding the notification to SAHRA of possible remains on this site, SAHRA has advised the proponent to proceed simultaneously with the archaeological investigation and the consultation process.'¹⁷⁸

Interestingly, the archaeologists of ACO were also contracted to undertake the public process. Hart and Halkett liaised here with historical-archaeologist Dr. Antonia Malan of CSRF. Although CSRF used to be constituted by three members, in dealing with the Prestwich Street public process, Antonia Malan was mainly working on her own. As the CSRF is not a legal entity, Malan was contracted via ACO. Following their appointment, the CSRF contacted the press and organized the public forums of the so-called '60-day public consultation period.' This started on 9 June 2003.¹⁷⁹

Initially, the significance of the site was mainly articulated in archaeological terms. On 18 June 2003, archaeologist Halkett said to the *Cape Times* that 'the usefulness of a site like this is that it gives us data to compare with other burial grounds'. In a later press article, Judith Sealy, an archaeologist of the UCT-based Special Focus Reference Group (SFRG), vocalized the expectation that 'material in the bones and teeth would indicate the type of diet the people followed and the physical properties of the bones could indicate whether they performed physical labour.'¹⁸⁰ Moreover, a statement of the SFRG set out that 'it is precisely because human nature encourages us to maximize opportunities during our short lifetimes, regardless of the longer history of our society and culture, that every country had had to promulgate legislation to protect the heritage of its citizens'.¹⁸¹

During the first two months after the discovery, the main actors engaged with the burial ground remained unchanged: the developer, SAHRA and the archaeologists. The script for Prestwich Place was then still fairly straight forward, as articulated in the media: 'the delicate balancing act is to derive maximum cultural heritage potential out of the area while keeping delays to a minimum. [...] the work has to be carried out professional, carefully and as quickly as possible'¹⁸². In other words, after a quick exhumation, the developer would be able to carry on with his work and the public would get the opportunity to decide on what happened to the skeletons.¹⁸³

By the end of June, the archaeologists realized the magnitude of the discovery – that is, this unknown burial ground was far denser than previous findings in Green Point had shown. Estimates of the total number of bodies stood up to a thousand, potentially the largest unmarked burial ground in South Africa (figure 6). An update to an email-based reference group by the CSRF from 20 June 2003 read:

¹⁷⁸ Permit No. 80/03/06/001/51 to Mr. T.J.G. Hart from SAHRA (5 June 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁷⁹ Prestwich Place time line, prepared by the Cultural Sites and Resources Forum, UCT (10 October 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁸⁰ Melanie Gosling, 'Construction workers uncover 35 skeletons near city centre', *Cape Times* (18 June 2003) and Fatima Schroeder, 'Public must decide fate of 300 year old remains', *Cape Times*, (24 July 2003).

¹⁸¹ Interim draft report Prestwich Place exhumation project public participation process, 19.

¹⁸² URL: www.scienceinAfrica.co.za/2003/july/cape/htm, 'Archaeologists uncover 300 year old burial ground' (July-August 2003) (accessed 18-12-2005).

¹⁸³ Schroeder, 'Public must decide on fate of 300-year-old remains'.



6. Panorama of the site bounded by Prestwich, Alfred, Napier and West Streets, 2003 (Photograph: A. Malan).

'Excavation work this week has resulted in the removal of burials from the middle zone of the site in Prestwich Street, Green Point. The archaeologists have now excavated an area of about 100 square meters – roughly a third of the upper construction site. The burials go down to a depth of 2 meters below present ground level, and are laid in roughly three layers, the topmost of which is badly disturbed and jumbled. So far, about 60 individuals have been exhumed, plus a further 32 "burials" which are merely groups of loose bones.'¹⁸⁴

The ACO-team indicated that the skeletons were most likely a cross section of colonial Cape Town's underclass – namely, slaves, free blacks, Khoikhoi, artisans, labourers, fishermen, sailors, maids, washerwomen, executed criminals, suicide deaths and identified victims of shipwrecks. By 22 June, the team had excavated already 'hundreds of individuals' from the 1200m² site. Hart indicated during a meeting with SAHRA officials and the developer, that there was a problem with the storage of the bones. Interestingly, Leslie pointed during this meeting at what she calls a moral issue involved. According to her, 'the modern was situated upon a layering of earlier settlements and that if a development occurred over a cemetery and the human remains were not disturbed, it would be in line with what had been throughout the ages'.¹⁸⁵

On 27 June, the CEO of SAHRA Pumla Madiba wrote a letter to Cape Town's City manager, mentioning a 'crisis relating to slave and other burials in the City-Green Point area'. Madiba indicated to be very disturbed that, given the experience of the Cobern Street burials a repeat appeared to have taken place.¹⁸⁶ Malan of the CSRFB described in an interview how the tidying up operation became then a much more serious operation.¹⁸⁷ From my understanding, the month between the pressing letter of Madiba and the first public meeting, constituted a key period in relation to the future of the site.

The main players at this moment (the developer, SAHRA, ACO and the CSRFB) felt the 'crisis' mostly in terms of a limited archaeological capacity (time, money, human resources and storage), and the focus group debated these scientific implications. Both Halkett and Hart recognized that the Green Point burial area was of international archaeological significance. They were also of the opinion that the costs of exhuming should be built into future development plans.¹⁸⁸ David Hart of SAHRA is reported to have said: 'We would welcome it if this were to become part of larger project looking at the entire area and the question of how to deal with future development in the city'.¹⁸⁹ Clearly, the realization of the magnitude of this heritage was *not* an impulse for an evaluation from different perspectives. Transcending the context of development, and weighting the meaning of this heritage on other scales

¹⁸⁴ Update mail by Cultural Sites and Resources Forum, received by Mary Leslie (20 June 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁸⁵ Tim Hart, Heritage impact assessment of West Street and erf 4721 Green Point, Cape Town. Prepared for Styleprops 120 (Pty) Ltd, (December 2003 Cape Town) MAD of UCT, PS, 11, Antonia Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point, Cape Town. Public consultation process 9 June to 18 August 2003 (Cape Town 25 August 2003) MAD of UCT, PS, 1-17, Minutes of Meeting held at SAHRA on 22 June 2003 regarding the Prestwich Place Slave burial ground, Green Point, MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁸⁶ Letter from Pumla Madiba to Wallace Ngogi, City of Cape Town (27 June 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Antonia Malan, held on 19 May 2005 in Cape Town, recording part of collection of the author and Prestwich Place time line, prepared by the Cultural Sites and Resources Forum, UCT (10 October 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁸⁸ 'Burial site holds international significance', *Monday paper* 22 (21-27 July 2003).

¹⁸⁹ David Yutar, 'Historical city burial site yields its secrets', *Cape Argus* (24 July 2003).



7. Briefing of the Archaeological Contract Office team on the site by Dave Halkett (second from left) and Tim Hart (first from right) in 2003 (Photograph: A. Malan).

(political, historical and postcolonial), might have in fact triggered a whole new set of questions, shedding new light on the significance of the site. Instead, archaeology remained the central academic gaze and development the main field of concern.

Moreover, the rescue exhumation developed into a full scale archaeological exercise: a total disinterment. An update by the CSRF on 4 July 2003 set out:

'The Archaeological Contracts Office reports that well over 130 individuals have now been exhumed from the slave burial ground in Prestwich Street, Green Point. Tim Hart estimates that there may be as many as 1000 people buried on this proposed development site – let alone elsewhere in the neighbourhood. The burials are deep, in about a met[er]'s depth of soil. Each individual tells a new story: age, gender, cause or context of death, state of health during life, geographical origin and mode of burial. The implications of the sheer scale of the project for developers, local authorities and the archaeological community are reaching crisis proportions.'¹⁹⁰

At a meeting with SAHRA and City officials on 7 July, Hart explained that there were approximately 6-10 archaeologists on the site per day and that they were only able to excavate 1,5-2 bodies per persons a day (figure 7) He prophesized that the pace at which the excavation was proceeding suggested that the time required to remove all the bodies from the site would take approximately 30 weeks.¹⁹¹ Beverly Crouts, provincial manager of SAHRA explained later in 2005 that 'moving from a rescue mission to a disinterment changed the view of people on how they could deal with it [...], because disinterment is seen as something that is legislated. There's a policy on it and there a guideline on it'.¹⁹²

At this crucial meeting, a month before the first public meeting, where all the main official actors were present, a number of key issues came to the fore. The necessity of excavation though was not questioned. According to the minutes of this particular meeting, Malan indicated that 'the site was accidentally discovered and the 60 day public participation period was put aside to run concurrently with the excavation'. She urged for 'a more proactive approach to seeking out interested and affected parties'. Moreover, from the minutes the uncomfortable positions of both the City and SAHRA regarding this heritage and the public participation process is also seen to emerge. The management of the public process is mainly considered from a financial point of view. Madiba pointed out that in terms of public participation they would firstly have to seek public opinion and secondly seek financial help. The head of the HRS, Clive James, is reported to have said that 'local competence in terms of archaeology and heritage was not within the City's scope at the present'. A remark of Halkett 'that the issue at hand was an archaeological issue, [...] but due to its sensitivities, that have political implications, they would have to be very careful how to handle the outcome', makes very clear that the naming and framing of this heritage resource took place in archaeological terms.¹⁹³

In SAHRA-documents the significance of the site in terms of the NHRA was described as follows:

¹⁹⁰ Update mail by the Cultural Sites and Resources Forum received by Mary Leslie (4 July 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁹¹ Minutes of Prestwich Place development meeting organized by SAHRA (7 July 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

¹⁹² Interview with Beverly Crouts held on 17 May 2005 in Cape Town, recording part of collection of the author, Interview with Antonia Malan and Video footage of Interview with Tim Hart by Thulani Nxumalo held on 23 July 2003, Cape Town, part of collection District Six Museum.

¹⁹³ Minutes of Prestwich Place development meeting organized by SAHRA (7 July 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.



8. Site visit by the deputy Vice-Chancellor Martin Hall (second from right) and Vice-Chancellor Njabulo Ndebele (first from right) of the University of Cape Town, September 2003. (Photograph: A.Malan).

- 'It is a place of high cultural significance, as it is the only well-attested slave burial ground in the City and has a strong association with the people of Cape Town, particularly those who celebrate their slave ancestry and identity with those who "built" Cape Town;
- It is an integral component of the Somerset Road complex of burial grounds, hospitals, prisons, churches, and other institutions associated with colonial trade and labour networks;
- It has enormous potential for contributing towards a greater understanding of colonial health, disease, etc;
- It is a site related to the history of slavery, and of the life histories of undocumented men, women and children;
- It is an archaeological site of local, national and international scientific and historical interest, with excellent potential for public interpretation;
- It is very important in the pattern of Southern African history, representing a slave-owning society and its historical connections to other forms of coerced labour practices in the region.'

Local journalist and other media persons who visited the Prestwich Street site on 23 July were informed in these terms as well.

In this early period of the exhumation, distinguished visitors as Professor Njabulo Ndebele and Professor Martin Hall, respectively the Vice-Chancellor and the deputy Vice-Chancellor of UCT, but also Professor Richard van der Ross, the former Rector of UWC, visited the site. They encouraged the archaeologist although Hall raised also concerns regarding the maintenance of dignity at the site (figure 8).¹⁹⁴

As I discuss in the next chapter, the City and SAHRA's lack of knowledge regarding public processes, became apparent, amongst others, in the organization of the public meetings. The necessity of excavation and the nature of the knowledge project in general became contested during the public meetings. Hereafter, I reconstruct these contestations.

3.3 Consultations and contestations

Early in the period of the public consultation - namely between 6 June and 29 June 2003 - a considerable group of people approached Malan with their comments regarding the activities at the site. Reverent Michael Weeder, for example, proposed to organize a memorial service. Hanief Haider, who was forcibly removed from Green Point in 1978, is reported to have said that he had memories of skeletons dating back to the 1960s. James Eckley of the Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture was of the opinion that the burial site should remain where it is and be developed into a national heritage site.¹⁹⁵ Between 29 July and 29 August 2003 three public meetings were held related to the heritage of Prestwich Street. The first public consultation and the second so-called 'report-back meeting' were arranged by Malan's CSRF. The third meeting was organized by SAHRA.

Interestingly, in her report to SAHRA and the developer after the first meeting, Malan gives an account of a number of key questions that came forward during these meetings. Many issues were raised in response to the way the heritage managers and the archaeologists approached and dealt with this project. These were, amongst

¹⁹⁴ Interim draft report Prestwich Place exhumation project public participation process, 8-9.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibidem*, 10.

others: 'It was *known* that graves were in the area. What happened? Is exhumation necessary? *Who* is the public?'¹⁹⁶ In the following sub-section, I will show how these issues were vocalized, became recurrent during the public process and can be seen as different ways of reading this site.

Critiquing the archaeological project

The first public meeting at St. Stephen's Church on 29 July 2003 started with a series of presentations. A number of these speeches and other public comments through the course of the consultation process gave a clear account of the archaeological character of the research project on the Prestwich Street heritage. Sealy, for example, was one of the speakers who clarified the archaeological point of view. She said: 'If we want to recover that history... and that is one of the questions we need to think about very seriously here this evening. If we want to recover that history and commemorate the contribution that these people have made to the building of Cape Town then one of the most powerful ways of doing that is through studying these skeletons'.

Sealy framed the archaeological research as one of serious urgency; not studying the remains would mean a great loss. Moreover, she emphasized the contribution made by these people to the building of Cape Town, instead of the personal reminiscence associated with the remains. Using the same tone of voice she referred to the African burial ground in New York: 'sadly there was also a lot of confusion and hard feelings, because of factions that developed in the work that had been done at the African burial ground. And that is a situation we want to avoid here in Cape Town. [...] We Capetonians can get this right if we proceed with due considerations to all point of view here.'

Besides 'recovering history' many archaeologists framed their vision of dealing with the heritage – like Belinda Mutti who said: 'I'm in favor of continuation of exhumation as a means to give people back a history which is really important.'¹⁹⁷ During the second meeting on 16 August 2003 at the Alexander High School in Crawford, Antonia Malan explained the archaeological procedure as it was followed through to the public: 'it was an accidental discovery. There was a site with exposed bones. It was a large site with very vulnerable skeletal material everywhere, which had to be dealt with immediately. It was an emergency to deal with that material. Apart from the Act there was also a practical reason to move the bones.' Malan described the discovery of the burial ground as 'accidental' and an 'emergency'.¹⁹⁸ According to archaeologists, the heritage could be 'recovered', 'rescued' and given back to the people.

Many individuals in the public challenged the archaeological project and criticized the management of the public process in these terms throughout the whole consultation period. Rassool, a member of the SAHRA council and also one of the introductory speakers, pointed out that this matter is too important to be left to the 'private relationship between the developer and the archaeologist as mediated by SAHRA'. Moreover, he indicated that the discipline of archaeology was in crisis.¹⁹⁹ Yvette Abrahams said: 'Is this a public participation process or a rubber stamping

¹⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, 12.

¹⁹⁷ Comment by Belinda Mutti, Video footage of the second public meeting.

¹⁹⁸ Comment by Antonia Malan, Video footage of the second public meeting.

¹⁹⁹ Comment by Ciraj Rassool, video footage of the first public meeting held at St. Stephen's Church, Riebeeck Square, Cape Town, made by Thulani Nxumalo (Cape Town 29 July 2003).

exercise?' Getrude Fester added: 'the whole process is back to front'. An unnamed member of the public stated: 'When a grave site is discovered, you find out who was buried there. You can't just remove 30%!'²⁰⁰ Jayson Orton wrote from Noordhoek: 'Why was [the] public meeting held so late in the 60 days?' A statement of Imam Davids, on behalf of the Retreat Muslim Forum read: 'We [...] view the work and approach of the CSRF [...] with dismay, carrying out the delegated function of exhumation without prior consultation with the broader Cape Community.'²⁰¹

Numerous individuals became angry because of the terms 'accidental discovery' and 'unknown burial ground'. Joe Marx claimed: 'these bones are not unknown, they're known. These people were descendants of people in the Cape'. Zuleigh Worth said: 'I went to school at Prestwich Primary School. We grew up with haunted places; we lived on haunted ground. We knew there were burials there'. Haider wrote: 'I can still faintly remember before any building foundation was laid we used to play often on that site. There were lots of skeletons bones scattered around the place.'²⁰²

Some individuals in the public saw clear connections between the archaeological treatment of the remains and a history of (colonial and apartheid) repression. Weeder, who later played a role as member of the HOPSAHC said: If we talk about archaeology here we must assume that it is not neutral. [...] *Unknown to whom!?* If we're living in a colonial context *who's going to know* where the poor are burying their poor!? It will be known to the underclasses of Cape Town and not necessarily to the colonial administration. *I want us to be clear about who owns the knowing.*²⁰³ Many speakers in the public were inspired by personal reminiscence. Others were professionally involved, but nevertheless some voiced the same sentiments.

Andy Smith, for example, who is an archaeologist from UCT, tackled this conceptualization as well: ...This is not accidental we know that they were there. You know that they are there! The City is not pro-active, they're *re-active*! Any time they find something: they have to react to it. *Why don't we do an environmental impact assessment for the whole area of that part of Cape Town?* Architect Lucien le Grange demanded a more creative attitude of the officials: 'We need more community participation. [...] The City and SAHRA needs to guide us in that. SAHRA should also be to act as a parent for those orphans in this country and city's history. It's not just a regulating and promulgating body, it should deal with all forms of heritage for everybody [...].'²⁰⁴

Interestingly, the concept of time is interpreted in different ways by those contesting the management of heritage. People spoke about time for broadening up the public involvement, 'time for the dead', but also about giving the archaeologists more time to do research on the human remains to determine their identity. 'Mary

²⁰⁰ Video footage of the first public meeting.

²⁰¹ Submission (email) by Jayson Orton, Prestwich place burial ground comment sheet (8 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS and Submission (fax) by Retreat Muslim Forum, Prestwich Place project public participation process (15 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²⁰² Comment by 'women at back' and comment by Joe Marx, Video footage of the first public meeting and Submission (email) by Hanief Haider, Burial site in Green point (30 July 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²⁰³ Comment by Michael Weeder, Video footage second meeting. Emphasis indicates shouting.

²⁰⁴ Comment by Andy Smith, Video footage of the second public meeting and comment by Lucien le Grange, Video Footage second public meeting.

Patrick says: 'Sixty days is simply not enough time to do academic research and analysis.'²⁰⁵

Other critical comments of members of the public revealed sharp divides and different world views: 'Only scientists are going to benefit from picking over these bones – [...] And who is yet again the subject of such investigation?' 'Khoisan custom is that first things that happens is a price must be paid for disturbing a burial. Here's a figure – 7 million – [...]. *Close the hole!*' Zenzile Khoisan shouted: '*...these archaeologists, all they wanted to do is to dust off the bones and check them out with their scientific tests and the put them in the cupboard!*' '*Stop robbing graves – stop robbing graves!*'²⁰⁶ Dr. Anthony Holiday of UWC wrote in the *Cape Times* after this first public meeting:

'The study of slavery in this country [...] is unlikely to yield the sort of hard and fast answers some social scientist and nearly all politicians crave. What it might do is to pose some pertinent questions. How far has the alienating legacy of slavery afflicted us with one of the highest crime rates? Is the beguiling intimacy of slave sexuality, in which masters, mistresses and their human "property" share a forbidden fruit, at the bottom of our special inability to deal with Aids pandemic? Has the "miracle" of the birth of the new South Africa perhaps less to do with the "magic" we superstitiously attribute to Nelson Mandela than with the street wisdom and willingness to strike a deal which our enslaved ancestors in order simply to survive? The dead slaves at Green Point gesture wordlessly towards such enigmas.'²⁰⁷

The critique on the archaeological project shattered the confidence of the researchers working on the site. In an email to the developer, Hart expressed his surprise, concern and discomfort with the new situation. He wrote that taking measures to increase security on site, and a fast-response security arrangement with the police, might be necessary, because of what was 'proving to be very undesirable circumstances'. Nevertheless, the archaeologist articulated that his team, 'despite yesterday's meeting (racial slurs and accusations of dishonesty and grave robbers)', remained committed. In addition, he wrote: 'I want to visibly demonstrate [...] the despicable way in which the people have been buried and allow them to judge whether this is a place of rest or a place of uncomfortable disarray. (My personal opinion is that the site as it is, [is] undignified, and the remains are deserving [...] greater dignity and [I] would like to demonstrate this. We will video the procedure so that we cannot be accused of staging this.'²⁰⁸

Hart expressed his anxiety parallel to SAHRA's decision on 30 July 2003 to suspend the exhumations. 'The ghost of thousands of slaves must be amused', reacted Gill Moodie in the *Sunday Times* four days later, 'centuries ago they were anonymously buried in shallow graves in Cape Town. Now their final resting place is in the middle of an upmarket development on some of the most sought-after real estate in South Africa.'²⁰⁹ SAHRA postponed the decision-making deadline until August 31 for wider public consultation (the original six week period had come to an

²⁰⁵ Video footage of the first meeting, SAHRA, Minutes of South African Heritage Agency public meeting held on 29th of August 2003 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian church, Somerset road, Green Point, MAD of UCT, PS, 1-21 and Video footage of the second meeting.

²⁰⁶ Submission (email) by Marvis Smallberg, Prestwich Place burial ground (16 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS and Video footage first meeting.

²⁰⁷ Anthony Holiday, 'The living dead return to haunt the 'new' South Africa', in: *Cape Times* (30 July 2003).

²⁰⁸ Email from Tim Hart to Andre van der Merwe and Ari Efstathoui (30 July 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²⁰⁹ Gill Moodie, 'The people underfoot', in: *Sunday Times* (3 August 2003).

end). In the meantime the CSRF collected submissions by telephone, email and fax and held a second public meeting.

Patricia O'Dea, who stayed in Sea Point, for example, wrote: 'I'm puzzled by the furore created about this specific find. The entire planet is a burial ground.' Further on she asked: 'Has [this site] been hi-jacked for political purposes? In a letter published in the *Cape Times* A. Harold said: 'I find it extremely odd that so much is being written about the re-interment of the bones found in Green Point of these unknown people. Why this sudden display of righteous indignation? ...why are these bodies more important than those [removed from other cemeteries]?'²¹⁰ Mogemat Kamedien, who associates himself with black Capetonians, argued that the connections with marginalized people and the city are broken. 'Through DNA research on every body we can bridge the gap between ourselves in the 21st century and two or three hundred years ago.'²¹¹ Mohamad Fahmi Williams wrote in the *Cape Times* 'the bones cannot talk nor sing, so let them be laid to rest. And not in a museum storeroom awaiting DNA or chemical analysis, for they have had enough indignity heaped upon them already'.²¹²

I think the reconstruction I created shows that the Capetonian memory landscape is an irregular one, providing many different sentiments for contesting the Prestwich heritage management. Clearly, a great number of individuals did not appreciate the archaeological knowledge concerning the burial place and they questioned the need for exhumation. The fierceness of their reactions surprised the archaeologists and the heritage managers. Their critics spoke of other ways of reading this heritage site. One of these ways was claiming an historical connection in opposition to the concept of 'direct descent' as mentioned in the NHRA. These claims triggered comments related to issues of identity and community.

Direct descent or historical connectedness

After the second public meeting - the so-called report-back meeting - it was up to SAHRA to balance the variety of public reactions. One central element in the responses had been questions as to who was the public? Who had the right to speak? In this next section I want to examine this debate in terms of the way it presented itself during the meetings and individual submissions. Firstly, I explain in which way the NHRA deals with this issue.

Concerning unknown burial grounds, the NHRA mentions that the relevant heritage resources authority has to 'carry out an investigation for the purpose of obtaining information on whether or not such grave is [...] of significance to any other community; and [...] assist any person who or community which is a direct descendant to make arrangements for the exhumation and the re-interment of the contents of such grave [...]'. Moreover SAHRA has to invite 'any interested person who might be adversely affected to make submissions to or lodge objections with SAHRA within sixty days from the date of the notice'.²¹³ Obviously, the act tackles the problematic of heritage issues in general terms. As I want to show the different interpretations of this notion of descent created great controversy.

²¹⁰ Submission by Patricia O'Dea, Prestwich Place burial ground (14 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²¹¹ Video footage of the second public meeting.

²¹² Mohamad Fahmi Williams, 'Let us restore the people to whom these bones belonged to the proper place in our history', in: *Cape Times* (6 August 2003).

²¹³ National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999). See Sections 32 and 36.

Concerning issues of descent, community and ownership, I refer, first of all, to statements such as: 'I'm trying to speak clearly even though my heart is also speaking with my head' and '...it's very difficult not to talk with the emotion but we will balance it also with the intellect.'²¹⁴ I think that these fragments are indicative of how some people struggled to define and translate their thoughts and feeling into 'logical' constructions of identity, descent and heritage. A member of the public stated during the third meeting: 'I think that symbolically and really this burial ground has unleashed a ton of emerging realization that the bones that we walk over every day can no longer be denied'.²¹⁵

Other speakers displayed a more technical way of reasoning. Le Grange said: 'Why the importance of lineage and genealogical connections? Is it because of the National Resources Act? We know that those people who were buried there were from the city. They didn't come from 'somewhere else. [...] We know that those things due to violent colonial history were very often contested and destroyed.'²¹⁶

An interesting remark concerning the relationship between identity and heritage was made by Regina Isaacs: 'Many citizens of Cape Town from all walks of life claim those remains as their own precisely because we don't know who they were and what their cultural or religious affiliations were.'²¹⁷ She describes this burial ground as an undefined public space; a place for creating identities. That might be the reason that different marginalized groupings struggle to claim it as theirs. Bonita Bennett, a member of the HOPSAHC wrote in the *Cape Times*: 'Our strong feeling is that the marginalized social memory of the city as symbolized by these bones, will continue to be marginalized by the brushing over these issues relating to this, and rushing into a decision to exhume'.²¹⁸

Different individuals, denoting specific characteristics of their identity, made claims to the burial ground at the first meeting. Zuleiga Worth said: '...communities are defined variously and for myself personally if a person is a Muslim, it's my responsibility to bury him properly. This shouldn't just be ignored'. Henny van Wyk said: Today I speak as a Khoisan person... [...] the discovery of this particular site is historical. As you know Khoisan people, especially in Cape Town, even at this point of time is a very fragmented people. Even after ten years of democracy there has been polarization taking place. It is unbelievable! This discovery is so important to start a process of talking to them. To be able to unite *the broader city!!*'

Weeder further articulated his sentiments: 'I know from my own family there's Khoi, there's San, there's Indonesian and there's the odd Caucasian. But for me it's irrelevant really. I need to know the general information about that association. [...] This is about people's right to participate, people's right to associate, people's right to *claim* identity and community. [...]' Yvette Abrahams revealed herself: 'as an African, a native Capetonian, and a descendant of the Khoi and slaves...' She wrote: 'I am tired of being made to feel as if my traditional values and culture are of no importance in an African nation for whose liberation I fought.'

²¹⁴ SAHRA, minutes of the South African Heritage Resources Agency public meeting 15 and 18, and Video footage of the second meeting

²¹⁵ Unidentified speaker, Video footage of the second public meeting.

²¹⁶ Lucien le Grange, Video footage of the second public meeting.

²¹⁷ Submission (email) by Regina Isaacs, Public Participation? (12 August 2003).

²¹⁸ Bonita Bennett, 'Reburial insensitive', *Cape Times* (9 October 2003).

The comments above seemed radiate with the wish to denounce the Prestwich burial ground as a 'vrijplaats' – an open space for memory and identity.²¹⁹ Secondly, concerning issues of identity a number of comments referred to the necessity of reconciliation and restoration of dignity. For example: 'We're talking about this rainbow nation, what ever...how to build South Africa and yet we failed to see that here is the perfect opportunity for us to stop the economic wheels of development to come in terms with who we are. [...] This is our history were with have to become in terms with here!!!' and 'We running out of time, where we are all trying to build a new nation. We are in a time where we are trying to restore the dignity of all people in the city: living and dead.'²²⁰

Other members of the public attempted to claim the heritage for specific groupings. Vincent Kolbe said: 'There's a wealth of history, social, political and economical, that can be brought to the community. One of the details I want to tap on is the Muslim resistance [...]. Maybe these riots were significant and that's political history. Long before there was a Johannesburg and long before there was an ANC. We had this political history in this country.' This comment claims the heritage for a particular purpose.

Some people's relationship to the Prestwich heritage was vague. Lyn Honeyman wrote for example: 'In as much as these skeletal remains represent a cross section of the population of the Cape at a period in time they are important to our present diverse population and should not be claimed by any one section of the population.' Others gave evidence of ambiguous attitudes regarding the remains, stressing the educational value of the remains for children and academic training programs.²²¹ Van Der Merwe, the project manager, stated in an interview that his ancestors might too be buried at Prestwich Street. Nevertheless, he did not feel represented by the PPPC as he criticized them for having a small constituency.²²²

Interestingly, many comments give accounts of other than proved scientific relations to this heritage. Some Capetonians gave significance to this site based on personal reminiscence of a pre-forced removals society. Moreover, these remarks of a different rationale are often made against the backdrop of a critique of the 'new' South Africa. In conjunction with this, Malan writes in her final report regarding the public participation process - submitted to SAHRA on 25 August 2003 - 'cultural groups and individuals commented that once again, respect for acknowledgement of past injustices seemed to be failing, and that authorities and institutions were deliberately or inadvertently repeating the past'. One of her recommendations to SAHRA reads: 'acknowledgement and respect for the dead has to be reconciled with the present need and wishes of the living'. She adds: 'no direct claims were made, and no consensus was reached on destination of individual exhumed remains'.²²³ Finally, on basis of this report, SAHRA decided to call for a final meeting on 29 August 2003.

²¹⁹ The Dutch word means something in between the English shelter and free zone, a space of security and creativity at the same time.

²²⁰ Video footage of the first and second public meeting respectively.

²²¹ Submission (email) by Lyn Honeyman, Public participation process for Prestwich street (5 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS, Submission (email) by Lourieke Haller, Prestwich place report back (11 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS and Comment by Samantha Morgan, Video footage of the first public meeting.

²²² Interview met André Van Der Merwe, held on 19 May 2005 in Cape Town, recording part of the collection of the author.

²²³ Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point, Cape Town. Public consultation process 9 June to 18 August 2003 prepared by Dr. Antonia Malan Cultural Sites

In defense or defiance of development?

The *Mail&Guardian* reported on 21 August 2003, quoting Malan that the heritage of Prestwich Street 'is a test case and will have implications for other cities'. The question, according to her is 'how do you deal with a site that involves human remains in a city renewal context?'²²⁴ Besides the archaeological project and personal reminiscence of the site, there was a third way of reading this site, namely in terms of development and the necessity for renewal.

Van Der Merwe articulates in his report on the development perspectives submitted to the CRSF, dated on 14 August: '...a sensible solution taking into account as many possible of the concerns needs to be found. We believe that these common interests need not to be conflicting as long as mutual respect and good sense prevails'. Interestingly, Van Der Merwe reminded the reader *twice* about the need be sensible in regard of all concerns. 'Sense' in his context meant ratio, logic and care in entrepreneurial terms. To exclude irrational considerations and options that might damage his interest Van Der Merwe presented, as part of the submission, a financial overview of the costs of the development as well as the exhumation and the public process. Moreover he situated the outcomes of the public consultation process in the context of the development of the entire Green Point area. He wrote: 'Ambiguity is simply not an option if investor confidence around development in the area is a priority: a clear cut decision that is fair and equitable to all concerned with clear guidelines is imperative.' Referring to the findings of remains in other block in Green Point, Efstathiou affirmed: 'I can't give up the land, because then everyone should.'²²⁵

At the second public meeting Van Der Merwe underlined that he thought that the process was fair as 'people get to speak out'. The logic and fairness in terms of the developer was probably measured on a scale of profit. On the scale of Joe Marx, though, this was intrinsically unfair: 'If they were honest and said yes we want to develop the site and get the bones out the ground and then we're going to make a lot of money out the process...' Zenzile Khoisan introduced an opposing logic: '...we failed to see that here is the perfect opportunity for us to stop the economic wheels of development to come into terms with who we are.'²²⁶ Like the archaeologists, Van Der Merwe warns the public and the institutions to make the right decision; because a development rules out ambiguity as an option. Effectively this meant that a stoppage of development was dangerous for all.

Also, the SAHRA managers urged for a responsible and sensible attitude. During the last meeting on 29 August 2003, Madiba said 'there was a lot of emotion on the 29th, a lot of anger. I remember speaking to somebody who said I'm thinking from here (indicating to her heart) and I'm saying that there are other levels of thinking.' The SAHRA CEO referred to public participation as 'bringing people into some studentship [*sic*: stewardship] for developing responsibility'. Moreover, she said 'I think we are moving slowly away from the culture of mass meetings and rallies. We are getting into dealing with issues head-on.' 'SAHRA has a responsibility to take a decision so that life continues on the 1st of September.' Going into research and revisiting the history of Prestwich Street, was, according to Madiba, one of these

and Resources Forum for South African Heritage Agency and the developer 25 August 2003, MAD of UCT, PS, 12.

²²⁴ Wendell Roelf, 'Digging into Cape Town's past', in: *Mail&Guardian* (21 August 2003).

²²⁵ Report (email) of Andre Van Der Merwe, as part of Ari Efstathiou, Prestwich Place Development (14 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS and 'The issue "is about us as South Africans"', *Cape Argus* (5 November 2003).

²²⁶ Video footage of the second public meeting and Video footage of the first public meeting.

responsibilities. She pleaded for research using the right methodologies, namely multi-disciplinary research.²²⁷

I assert that the arguments for development ultimately proved itself most influential. Members of the public also felt this particular responsibility, they stated: 'the developer can't wait for ever' and 'many people would get outrageous if you stop commercial development in that area completely.'²²⁸ J. Z. Matthews wrote in *Cape Argus*: '... given that the bulk of the properties in that Green Point precinct once held the city's dead, the idea that the digging should stop and the property be enshrined as some form of "memorial to the undiscovered" is laughable'.²²⁹ Andrew Jones of Cape Heritage Tours stated: 'Since the area is not at the centre of modern Cape Town, and it is not economically, morally or practically possible to halt all further development to the site, surely it is the best to remove the remains...'²³⁰

On 2 September 2003, a press release of SAHRA read that the agency had decided that archaeological work would resume. Dr. Janette Deacon, chairperson of the SAHRA permit committee, wrote: 'disinterment from Prestwich Place and temporary storage should continue out of respect for the human remains'.²³¹ Moreover, in the absence of formal claims from direct descendants in the 60-day public period, SAHRA said that it would enter into a wider consultation with communities on the future of the site. Madiba announced that an appeal to this decision was a possibility within 14 days.²³²

The oppositions in reading the Prestwich Street site, as I have showed above, were not reconciled during the public meetings. According to a number of Capetonians, the questions regarding the production of knowledge concerning the site, its ownership and the necessity of exhumation, were not dealt with in a satisfactory manner. Therefore, there were appeals against the SAHRA decision.

3.4 Appeal, memorialization and research

On 12 September 2003 the HOPSAHC appealed against the resuming of exhumations on site. The committee was, amongst others, of the opinion that SAHRA's decision did 'not promote the interests nor values of reconciliation with the pain of our past according to its mandate'. They believed, therefore, that 'redevelopment should take place within the context of people's rights. The significance of the discovery of the skeletons and the associated complexities presents Cape Town with an opportunity to deliberate beyond "consultation"'.²³³ Their submission to the appeal committee read:

²²⁷ SAHRA, minutes of the South African Heritage Resources Agency public meeting, 7 and 9-10.

²²⁸ Video footage of the second public meeting.

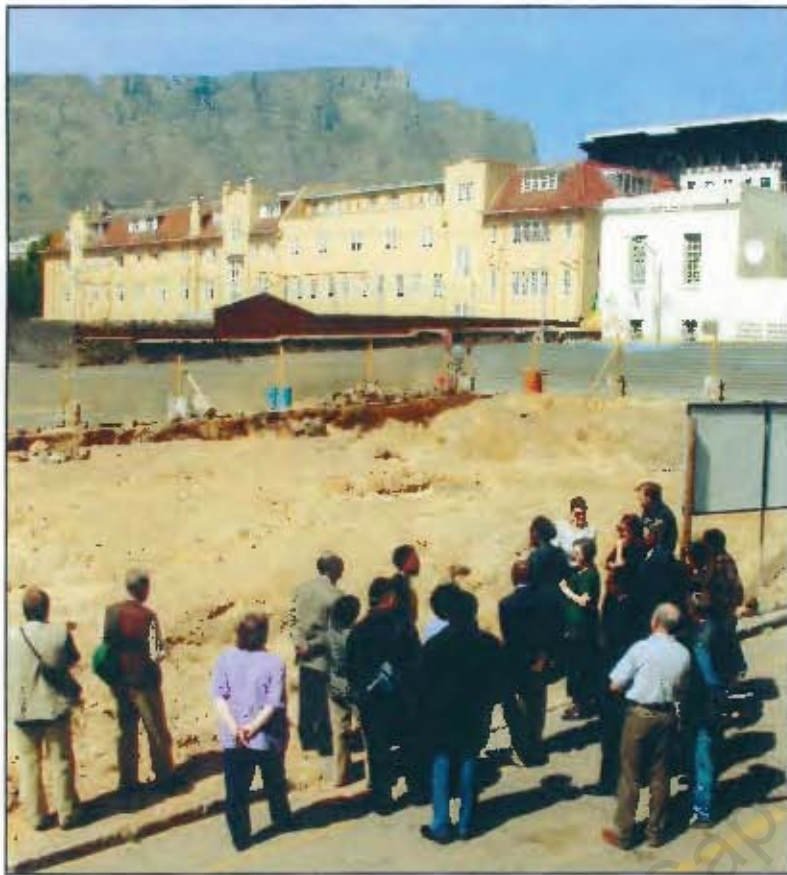
²²⁹ J. Z. Matthews, 'Secrets of Prestwich Street remains may be lost while debate rages on, *Cape Argus* (15 October 2003).

²³⁰ Submission (email) by Andrew Jones, Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Prestwich street, Green Point, Cape Town (12 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²³¹ Permit letter from Janette Deacon to Tim Hart (1 September 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²³² Prestwich Place: Table of meetings and events, Prestwich Place: Report of SAHRA permit committee: appeal (October 2003), MAD of UCT, PS, 1 and Letter from Pumla Madiba 'To whom it may concern' (2 September 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²³³ Letter from Father Michael Weeder for the Hands Off Prestwich Street Ad Hoc Committee to Beverly Crouts (12 September 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.



9. 'Ghost Town'. Appeal meeting on the site, 23 October 2003 (Photograph: A. Malan).



10. 'Stop the exhumation! Stop the humiliation!' Billboard by the Hands of Prestwich Street Ad Hoc Committee, October 2003 (Photograph: A. Malan).

*'We, as part of the descendant community of the people represented by the skeletal remains at the Prestwich Street burial ground claim them as our ancestors and as the ancestors of the City of Cape Town.'*²³⁴

During the appeal meeting on the site on 23 October, Weeder pointed out that the Prestwich Street site had always been referred to as 'ghost town by those who grew up in the area in the 1950s and 1960s as they were told by their parents that the site had previously been used as a burial site (figure 9). He said also that 'eventually the black people were moved out of this area', but 'oral tradition and other evidence proved that this area used to be inhabited by black and Khoisan people'. Weeder added further that the committee's appeal drew on the spirit of healing within, which the NHRA took cognizance of South Africa's past. As such, the Prestwich Street site could provide a sharing in nation building and healing.²³⁵

HOPSAHC lodged its appeals with a series of public actions and a bill board at the site, with the slogan: '*Stop the exhumation! Stop the humiliation!*'²³⁶ (figure 10). In a press statement the committee stated that the Prestwich Street burial ground represented 'a site of genocide'. They called upon this ground to be acknowledged as a 'keeping place of identity and memory of 18th century Cape Town's slaves and marginalized people'.²³⁷ Nevertheless, SAHRA rejected HOPSAHC's appeal on 18 November. Instead, in addition to the multi-disciplinary research, the letter of the Appeals Committee stressed now the need for a cleansing ceremony 'to facilitate healing and reconciliation' and the creation of a burial ground 'to memorialize [...] and establish a pilgrimage for all South Africans' as well.²³⁸ Weeder was asked to be involved in the formation of a Working Group with the task to think about the multi-disciplinary research, the cleansing ceremony and a place of memorialization.

In December 2003, Weeder's committee, now renamed into PPPC appealed to the Arts and Culture Minister – the last legal step it could take. In the document the Committee submitted, it referred to Cape Town's history of forced removals. 'The refusal to re-inter the skeletal remains is to make cause with the present-day variation of forced removals. It will constitute a continuation of the erasure of memory which accompanies the destruction of familiar landscapes.'²³⁹ In their new submission PPPC made reference to the International coalition of historic sites of conscience and argued:

'[The Prestwich Street site] represents to us a "site of conscious" which has a "unique power to inspire social consciousness".'²⁴⁰

They also stated:

²³⁴ Substantiation of appeal by the 'Hands off Prestwich Street' *ad hoc* committee (15 October 2003), MAD of UCT, PS, 9.

²³⁵ Minutes of the Prestwich Place burial ground appeal meeting held at 111 Harrington Street, Cape Town (23 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS, 3-4.

²³⁶ Copy of photo in SAHRA archive, No. P1010042.JPG, MAD of UCT, PS.

²³⁷ Press statement by the Hands Off Prestwich Street Ad Hoc Committee (9 September 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²³⁸ Written ruling by the SAHRA Appeals Committee subsequent to an appeal hearing at 111 Harrington Street (23 October 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

²³⁹ Prestwich Place Project Committee, Submission to DAC Tribunal (20 May 2004), MAD of UCT, PS, 1-10, here 6.

²⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, 5.

'Prestwich Place is firmly located within the precincts of the Waterfront, a recognized centre of development skewed towards the historically advantaged. The only visible presence of black economic advancement is *Manenberg*, a place to dance and to listen to jazz: a traditional role afforded to black people in this city.'²⁴¹

The Minister of Arts and Culture, Pallo Jordan, appointed a tribunal to hear the Committee's appeal on 20 May 2004. In the interim, SAHRA organized a cleansing ceremony and a procession to relocate the Prestwich Street remains – all of them were by then exhumed - to the Woodstock hospital²⁴² (figure 11-12). The *Cape Argus* entitled it the 'ceremony to move the City's silent ancestors'.²⁴³ On 20 July, the Minister ruled that the appeal failed. Jordan supported the recommendation that the City of Cape Town in consultation with SAHRA should construct a suitable memorial park or garden on an appropriate site in Green Point, 'where the Prestwich Street remains can be interred and any other further findings of skeletal remains, and that such a park could become the focus of the community's memory and learning about the past'.²⁴⁴ Van der Merwe received a copy of the letter of the Minister the same day and the construction of The Rockwell continued. In a press release on 19 August 2004, PPPC stated:

'Today restitution is timeously encroaching on the rights of the historically privileged. The human remains of the Prestwich dead have been forcibly removed from property whose value has considerably increased because of political generosity of a government guided by a Freedom Charter which declares that the emoluments of freedom is for all South Africans.'²⁴⁵

Nevertheless, PPPC mentioned also to remain committed regarding the memorialization of the remains.²⁴⁶

As such, PPPC became closely involved, together with the City and SAHRA in the planning of a memorialization project and the destiny of the bones. The *Cape Times* reported on 14 November 2005, that the remains will be reburied as part of a R4 million Prestwich Memorial Park in Somerset Road funded by the city council.²⁴⁷ The reburial remains contested though. On 6 April that year, two PhD candidates in human biology supervised by Professor Alan G. Morris, Louise Jacqui Friedling and Thabang Manyapelo, presented proposals for a combined SAHRA/PPPC committee regarding research on the human remains.²⁴⁸ SAHRA, in cooperation with PPPC, decided against these proposals. The students commented afterwards that 'SAHRA has denied all South Africans the right to know about their heritage'. Friedling said:

'The information we can get from these bones will *make these people alive again*.' [my emphasis]

As such her comment regarding was a clear account of troping, align to earlier ones by archaeologists as recovering and giving back history. Bonita Weeder of PPPC,

²⁴¹ Ibidem, 9.

²⁴² David Yutar, 'Ceremony to move the city's silent ancestors', in: *Cape Argus* (22 April 2004).

²⁴³ Yutar, 'Ceremony to move the city's silent ancestors'.

²⁴⁴ Letter from Minister Z. P. Jordan to SAHRA chair person S.M. Ndlova (20 July 2004), MAD of UCT, PS.

²⁴⁵ Prestwich Place Project Committee's press release (19 August 2004), MAD of UCT, PS.

²⁴⁶ Ibidem.

²⁴⁷ Melanie Gosling, 'Prestwich skeletons to be reburied, but no research allowed', in: *Cape Times* (14 November 2005).

²⁴⁸ Minutes of presentations and discussion for proposed research proposals on the Prestwich Place human remains, meeting held at District Six museum (6 April 2005), MAD of UCT, PS.

A 'ceremony to remove the City's silent ancestors'



11. Procession of Prestwich Street burials to the Woodstock hospital, 22 April 2004. Guard of honour in front of City Hall (Photograph: SAHRA)



12. Procession of Prestwich Street burials to the Woodstock hospital, 22 April (Photograph: SAHRA).

instead, said she wanted to find out about the people of Prestwich Street through research on written and oral records. A team from the District Six Museum tendered successfully for SAHRA multi-disciplinary research project. Clearly though, the ghosts of the Prestwich dead are still haunting Cape Town's present, and perhaps one could say that their presence connects the three historical moments I started with.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I undertook to address the question of what happened at Prestwich Street since the discovery of the burial ground in 2003. In response I described different ways of reading this cityscape. More precisely, I showed how the archaeological knowledge project determined the way the dead of Prestwich entered the public sphere. Concerning the public consultation process, I elucidated, why and how this project was contested. I also pointed at two other ways of reading this site. Firstly, by outlining the critique of the concept of direct descent and, secondly, by articulating the nature of the critique on the discourse of development. Finally, I described how in the appeal documents the PPPC referred to Cape Town's history of forced removals. As such, I made clear how these developments led to the moments in Cape Town's present, which I introduced above, namely, the construction of The Rockwell, the memorial park and the multi-disciplinary research project. As such, I explained what happened at Prestwich Street since the discovery of the burial ground in 2003.

I assert here that from the historicity of Prestwich Street an interesting juxtaposition emerges between a historical claim of connectedness and scientific proven direct descent. An extra dimension is added by the annihilation of history by the The Rockwell brochure. The connections between present-day Cape Town and the city's pasts seem inherently contested. The dynamic of the public consultation process points to questions concerning the ownership of knowledge of Green Point's social history in relation to the future of the Prestwich Street site. The multi-disciplinary research as commissioned by SAHRA is directed at finding the stories of the people of Prestwich Street, but it seems that the individual memories coming forward during the meetings are – certainly legally - ignored. The City's aim to eternalize this history, which is almost forgotten, appears to be focused on a redirection of the past adjusted to the spirit of Cape Town's present.

In response to my opening quote by Mbembe and Nuttall, I argue that the form and character of the three historical moments at the site - The Rockwell, the memorial park and the multi-disciplinary research project - the meaning they give to this cityscape, the materialities they 'produce' and the imaginations they evoke, are pervaded by the colonial scripts and patterns underlying and surrounding present-day Cape Town. I assert that one could describe the images of the past produced by these moments as the result of specific reappropriations of site's history by certain actors. As such, the present situation is an account of dream topographies of this cityscape, which entails to a certain degree a form of annihilation and recreation of its social history. The character of these new ways of writing of Prestwich Street are, in my opinion, based on a specific relation between knowledge and power.

In this following chapter, explore this in more depth by taking a closer look at how SAHRA, the City's HRS and CSRF managed and imagined the Prestwich Street heritage and dealt with this haunting problematic of the bones.

4. MANAGING A PUBLIC HISTORY FOR PRESTWICH STREET

'Having a past, a history, "folklore" of your own, and institutions to bolster these claims, is fundamental to the politics of culture: the possession of national folklore, particularly as legitimized by a national museum and troupe, is cited as a mark of being civilized.'
Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett²⁴⁹

In this chapter I discuss the praxis of three actors involved in the heritage management of Prestwich Street – namely SAHRA, HRS and CSRF. Moreover, I attempt to display the different types of 'knowledges' they produced about this cityscape. A reflection on the nature and the products of their engagements should start, I think, with a clarification of the restrictions of this particular approach.

The historical moments I choose in the previous chapter entailed, to a degree, the perpetuation of a certain dominant way of writing history in Cape Town. Actors such as SAHRA, the City, CSRF, but also the developer, the architect and ACO do not necessarily create records, which allow fundamentally new ways of interpreting the histories of the Green Point area. In addition to this, Mbembe remarks that post-apartheid architecture constitutes a mode of erasure of memory, which in combination with a global homogenization of urban space, leads to the annihilating of the South African urban histories.²⁵⁰ As such, the voices of many remain unheard. I want to emphasize here the memories and stories of those referred to as the 'imaginary' or 'imagined' community of Prestwich Street.²⁵¹

Thus, my discussion of the records of produced by SAHRA, HRS and CSRF does not automatically 'repair' the reluctance to hear these stories. James Clifford describes that collections contain what 'deserves' to be kept, remembered, and treasured.²⁵² Moreover, he says: 'the collection and preservation of an authentic domain of identity can be natural or innocent. It is tied up with nationalist politics, with restrictive law, and with contested objects of past and future.'²⁵³ Aligned to this, I argue that to challenge the dominant readings of Prestwich Street one needs to go beyond the heritage management collections. The difficult task to determine the so-called 'intangible' heritage associated with the site potentially leads to a project of disrupting and jamming the dominant imaginings of Africa. As such, in search for new images, a new problematic unfolds, in turn producing a set of questions: Where is this intangible material? Why and how should these memories, forms of knowledge, stories and experiences be collected?

I will not be able to answer these questions here. Instead I have chosen to interrogate the praxis of the heritage managers while being aware of the ways in which my project is restricted by the character of their archives. I intend to consider the nature of the heritage management collections as an extra informative layer to study the relation between knowledge and power at Prestwich Street. By examining the records in these archives, I argue, one is able to come to an understanding of a particular process of re-appropriation and annihilation of the past as it occurred at Prestwich Street. Moreover, the irregular of character of this process, I set out to

²⁴⁹ B. Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination culture; Tourism, museums and heritage* (Berkeley 1998) 65.

²⁵⁰ Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of superfluity', 402.

²⁵¹ 'Multi-disciplinary research strategy', call for tendering by SAHRA and Personal communication with Bonita Weeder, Cape Town (6 October 2005).

²⁵² Clifford, 'On collecting art and culture', 67-68.

²⁵³ *Ibidem*.

explain, can be understood by a diversity of, in Appadurai's words, deeply perspectival constructs formed by a local and global sentiments.

Against the backdrop of a reflection on the nature and the restrictions of the archives, I attempt to develop an understanding of the institutional atmosphere(s) in which decisions were made, heritages were imagined and politicized. I also address the management of the Prestwich Street dead in the context of the NHRA. By analyzing the praxis of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF, I assert, ways of understanding and representing Cape Town will become evident. Here, then, I intend to ask my second sub question: *In what way can the praxis of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF related to the heritage of Prestwich Street be characterized?* As a point of departure, I discuss the Prestwich Street archives, after which I introduce the three organizations and their praxis in more depth.²⁵⁴

4.1 Record by Prestwich Street's heritage managers

The characters of the archives of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF are, amongst others, determined by the specific involvement of the different organizations with the Prestwich Street heritage, as well as by the politics of the new South Africa, the heritage legislation and the traditions of heritage management in this country. More practically, my research regarding the practices of the heritage managers was determined by the ways in which the organizational records are systemized and protected.²⁵⁵ Hereafter, I discuss this last matter.

The SAHRA archive, which constitutes the bulk of my research material, is determined by the fact that the organization has managed, and still is managing, the Prestwich Street heritage from a national and provincial level. The head office is dealing with the permitting and the archaeological side of this heritage.²⁵⁶ The Western Cape office was responsible for the day-to-day management of the site and, subsequently, the memorialization project.²⁵⁷ As the head office keeps all the original files related to Prestwich Street, I have chosen to consult their archive.²⁵⁸ Interestingly, SAHRA implemented in December 2005 a new archive policy regarding UCT-based researchers, because of the 'sensitivity' of the Prestwich Street

²⁵⁴ Next to SAHRA, HRS and CSRF a fourth organization was involved in the management of Prestwich Street heritage, which is the Western Cape Heritage Council (WCHC). This provincial organization was only established in January 2003, their engagement in the Prestwich Street case therefore is mostly related to the recent developments concerning the memorial park. Individual members though – notably, the current chairperson of WCHC Janette Deacon who was part of the SAHRA council – were involved in earlier stages of the heritage management of Prestwich Street. Because of the relative newness of this organization and due to the restricted space in this dissertation, I won't discuss the praxis of WCHC here. See for more information on WCHC: URL: http://www.capegateway.gov.za/eng/directories/public_entities/1063/72512.

²⁵⁵ As I addressed in chapter 2, I did not only focus on the archives of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF, but made use of a great number of other sources, amongst others interviews, as well. Nevertheless, the organizational records form a substantial part of my research material.

²⁵⁶ The persons dealing with these issues are Mary Leslie (head-archaeologist) and Scheermeyer (assistant-archaeologist).

²⁵⁷ Beverly Crouts is, as manager of this office, responsible for these Prestwich Place files.

²⁵⁸ Personal communication with Collette Scheermeyer of the SAHRA head office, Cape Town (24 October 2005).

heritage. Students and lecturers have to produce a letter stating the purpose of their research and the records they wish to view.²⁵⁹

In my case, a SAHRA official decided on a selection of reports, minutes, and emails. Email correspondence between SAHRA CEO Mudiba and councillor Janette Deacon, head-archaeologist Mary Leslie and other SAHRA officials was not available to me. In an earlier phase of my research process, I could not access SAHRA's video footage of the public consultation meetings as it appeared to be 'lost'. Moreover, digital copies of photographs of the exhumation process disappeared after an employee of SAHRA's Western Cape left the organization. I argue that SAHRA's attitude regarding the records of the heritage of Prestwich Street can be characterized as secretive and silencing. In my experiences, SAHRA certainly did not appear to stimulate research on its collections. Interestingly, Mary Leslie's arguments against research on the human remains were mystifying as well:

'... at the [...] meeting of the 17 September 2005, one of the issues discussed was the appeal relating to basic anatomical analysis of the human remains from the site, Prestwich Place [...].

The Executive Committee passed a resolution not to accede to the appeal and that it will not approve basic anatomical research of the human remains exhumed from the Prestwich Place site. In balancing the matter at hand, it was decided that the cultural remains may however be studied.'²⁶⁰

The heritage organization does not clarify in what ways the sensitive character of the bones and memories of Prestwich Street contributed to their decision. Highly relevant for the Prestwich Street case Mbembe remarks that archives are by nature fundamentally about finding a place for the dead, which prohibits them from 'stirring up disorder in the present'.²⁶¹

The Prestwich Street records of HRS, the second public institute, are completely accessible. Unfortunately, though, HRS does not keep many records regarding this heritage. As the HRS, in cooperation with the City's Urban Design Unit, is directly involved with the new memorial park, there are a considerable amount of records regarding this aspect of the heritage management of Prestwich Street. The records of CSRF are currently located at the UCT Manuscripts and Archives Department, which is open to the public. Malan voluntarily donated her records to this archive. As part of her collection, I encountered, amongst others, an extensive collection of documents and reports of the public process. Moreover, Malan collected a great number of press articles, and photographs.

In the next section, I introduce these three organizations in more depth and I explain, amongst others, their practice in the context of the NHRA.

²⁵⁹ Personal communication with Qunita Samie of the SAHRA Western Cape Office, Cape Town (9 January 2006). After Dr. Nick Shepherd of the Centre of African Studies, University of Cape Town requested access to the Prestwich Street records for writing a paper, which he would deliver at the World Archaeological Congress 2005 in Osaka, SAHRA decided to install a formalized procedure.

²⁶⁰ Letter from Mary Leslie to Christian Ernsten (24 October 2005), MAD of UCT, PS.

²⁶¹ Mbembe, 'The power of the archive and its limits', 22.

4.2 SAHRA, HRS, CSRF and the 'dream passages' in the NHRA

In 1999 the National Heritage Resources Act No. 25 of 1999 replaced the old National Monument Act No. 28 of 1969. The new act was more in tune with ideals and beliefs of the new South African nation. As such, its preamble reads:

'Our heritage is unique and precious and it cannot be renewed. It helps us to define our cultural identity and therefore lies at the heart of our spiritual well-being and has the power to build our nation. It has the potential to affirm our diverse cultures, and in doing so shape our national character.

Our heritage celebrates our achievements and contributes to redressing past inequities. It educates, it deepens our understanding of society and encourages us to empathize with the experience of others. It facilitates healing and material and symbolic restitution and it promotes new and previously neglected research into our rich and oral traditions and customs.²⁶²

This opening note gives a particular account of an understanding of heritage in South Africa in terms of keywords such as education, empathy, healing, restitution and uniqueness. These 'dream passages'²⁶³ in the NHRA can be seen as examples of the official discourse of reconciliation introduced since the end of apartheid by the ANC government.

Further on the act states that heritage resources – meaning places or objects of cultural significance – have 'the capacity to promote reconciliation, understanding and respect, and contribute to the development of a unifying South African identity'. The term heritage *resource* was introduced for the first time in the NHRA and is a direct offspring of CRM discourse.²⁶⁴ In addition, heritage resources contribute significantly to research and tourism and must be developed for these purposes.²⁶⁵ Therefore, 'heritage resources management must guard against the use of heritage for sectarian purposes or political gain'.²⁶⁶ Regarding the identification of heritage in particular an assessment of resources in terms of 'social and economic development' is possible according to the NHRA.²⁶⁷ In my opinion the act presents the notion heritage as a guarantee for the reconciliation of the wide variety of (opposing) interests, opinions and incentives in the new South Africa.

As one of the heritage management mechanisms, SAHRA is the statutory organization established under the NHRA. Central to the SAHRA mission are its mandates to 'encourage public understanding and enjoyment of the national estate and to promote public interest and involvement in the identification, assessment, recording and management of heritage resources'.²⁶⁸ Beverly Crouts, the Western Cape manager of SAHRA, described the NHRA as an 'act under dispensation'. As such, the act is based on other heritage acts from all over the world. Crouts revealed that this means that the NHRA does not necessarily apply to the South African context.²⁶⁹ Thus, I

²⁶² National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) Preamble.

²⁶³ With the notion of dream passages I refer to passages where the written style loosens up due to elements of imagination and fantasy in text. Personal communication with Nick Shepherd, Cape Town (20 January 2006).

²⁶⁴ Personal communication with Nick Shepherd, Cape Town (20 January 2006).

²⁶⁵ National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) Definitions and section 5 (5)

²⁶⁶ Ibidem Section 5 (4c) and (4d).

²⁶⁷ Ibidem Section 5 (7d).

²⁶⁸ URL: <http://www.sahra.org.za/what.htm>: 'What you never knew about South African heritage' (accessed 3-1-2006).

²⁶⁹ Interview with Beverly Crouts.

assert, the realization of the dream passages depends in concrete situations on the creativeness, inventiveness and imagination of the managers of SAHRA.

To offer guidance to the managers the NHRA refers to a series of criteria to assess the 'intrinsic, comparative and contextual significance of a heritage resource and the relative benefits and costs of its protection'.²⁷⁰ In terms of the act a place or an object can have cultural significance because of:

- a) 'its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- b) its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- d) its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
- e) its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
- g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- h) its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organization of importance in the history of South Africa; and
- i) sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.²⁷¹

Importantly, these criteria make no explicit remark as to how heritage resources can evoke a sense of healing, self-worth or wholeness, or, how heritage can be a tool in manufacturing restitution. Nevertheless, on basis of these descriptions the appropriate level of grading of the resource (I: national significance, II: provincial or regional significance and III: worthy of conservation) and, subsequently, the responsible authority (national, provincial or local) has to be allocated.

In the case of Cape Town the local authority is the City's HRS. This Section falls under Environmental Management within the Planning & Environment Directorate of the City. The heritage management body used to be named the Urban Conservation Unit (UCU), which was established in early-1987, as part of the Town Planning Department.²⁷² Clive James is currently the acting head of the branch. The urban conservation zones constitute the regulating system on the basis of which the managers of the HRS make decision regarding the protection of certain parts of the city from rigorous regeneration. In case of Green Point a conservation zone is established in 1988.²⁷³

A former head of UCU, Stephen Townsend, writes with regard to the new act that: 'the essential relationship between conservation controls and development rights remains unchanged, even though the new legislation completely reorganizes the mechanisms for dealing with the management of heritage resources as well as the structures and responsibilities of the agencies responsible for the administration of the controls and enables the authorities to demand a wide range of impact assessments'.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁰ National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) section 7 (1c).

²⁷¹ Ibidem section 3 (3a-i).

²⁷² Townsend, 'Development rights and conservation constraints' 80.

²⁷³ Derek Japha *et al.*, 'Green and Sea Point conservation study', prepared fro the town planning branch of the City's planner's department of the Cape Town city council (1988-1989).

²⁷⁴ Townsend, 'Development rights and conservation constraints', 55 and 62.

According to Townsend, throughout the past 25 years there have been two separate debates about urban conservation, which influenced heritage management in Cape Town. 'The first debate has taken place in those instances in which the urban governance regime has focused on the development project as an architectural conservation project.' A 'second debate [...] has arisen in those instances in which the scrutiny and negotiation process has focused on the development project as an integral part of its precinct and its contribution to the revitalization of the city itself [...].'²⁷⁵

Thus, although the Act of 1999 drastically changed the mechanism for heritage management, the HRS inherited its institutional knowledge mainly in the field of architecture and urban planning – importantly, in relation to development. James, who gave the branch its new name, underlines this. Regarding the function of the HRS he notes:

'[Our task is] essentially to look at the urban conservation areas that are in the zoning scheme. That is, looking at developments in urban conservation areas, and to look at the local authority's responsibilities and the national authority's responsibilities. That is on the statutory side, so that's basically looking at development applications and then we have also a project side which deals with identifying local community projects.'

'The main focus, I would say, 60, 70% of it, is development applications driven. Those are people with rezoning land-use applications, building plans; that is development driven – 70% of the time. The other 30% is project driven; it's primarily in the poverty zones. In the poverty zones, because there isn't a development drive in those areas that initiates heritage surveys.'²⁷⁶

In the beginning of 2005, the HRS drafted - under James' leadership - a Cultural Heritage Strategy for the City of Cape Town.²⁷⁷ This strategy is strongly based on the new NHRA. The strategy document underlines that 'places and objects of cultural significance are important because they link society through memory to a sense of social and individual identity.'²⁷⁸ Further it reads:

'Heritage and heritage resources contribute significantly to the sense of identity and history of Capetonians. The recognition of significance of heritage resources and their inclusion into City management and planning is vital if such resources are to be conserved for future generations to know and understand the past history of their environment and the struggles and developments that shaped it. History, diversity and cultural heritage also adds to the unique qualities of the City and should be sensitively accommodated in development and planning of the City in order that such qualities may be retained as economic generators for tourism and business.'²⁷⁹

In both the NHRA as in the Cultural Heritage Strategy for the City of Cape Town the definition of heritage remains vague. Clearly, though, both documents define heritage as the uniqueness of the country, its cities and its peoples in relation to its past, but also in relation to tourism and development.

The dream passages in the act and the City document do not incorporate a sense of, what Hall refers to as, the incompleteness of cultural identity. The theorist mentions that there is always something 'imaginary' or fantasized about its unity.

²⁷⁵ Ibidem, 254.

²⁷⁶ Partial transcript of interview with Clive James.

²⁷⁷ Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy – Cultural Heritage Strategy for the City of Cape Town, City of Cape Town, Environmental Management Branch: Heritage Resources section, April 2005.

²⁷⁸ Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy – Cultural Heritage Strategy 6- 7.

²⁷⁹ Ibidem, 7.

Cultural identity always remains incomplete, is always 'in process', always 'being formed'.²⁸⁰ Instead of conceptualizing heritage as shaped through unconscious processes, the act gives account of a desire for an overarching narrative of a national past of the new South Africa. As such the act's primary focus is, according to my opinion, not for South Africans to recapture their destiny and to create a sense of knowing of the self. Instead, I argue, it functions first and foremost as a mechanism for the management of South Africa's troublesome historical condition, - namely as constituted by slavery, colonization and apartheid. As such, heritage management is framed in terms of the discourse of reconciliation and the development of the rainbow society.

Consequently, heritage managers are not really capable of defining alternative ways of reading the city and dealing with the variety of trajectories of emerging time and appreciations of the past. Not surprisingly, the approach of the heritage managers is based on past practices and improvisatory new projects. The work of HRS, for example, still consists mainly of the methodology of the UCU. James explained how the new strategy is designed to be implemented:

'Primary in areas which have been surveyed and of which we have registers. A lot of places have had surveys done on the architectural assets of the area, where buildings have been graded; and, we got maps of all the graded buildings on our computer system. So, when a building comes in we check it on our computer system whether it [has] been graded.'

'More recently, in the last year or two, we have got the 1945 aerial photographs, digitized and scanned in. So, we picked up on a site whether a site is developed 60 years ago or not. It will not tell us how old a building is, but it tells us if a building is older than 60 years. Those we can pick up.'²⁸¹

Regarding surveys of the intangible heritage, James said though:

'We started that in the last 4, 5 years. All the surveys we have done in the 1980s and 1990s, before I came to the branch, were almost exclusively architectural. So, things like places of memory, cultural landscapes, places where particular events took place, are reported in those building grading and into the architectural landscape. All the urban conservation areas are based on architectural [...] surveys until 1999.'²⁸²

Project-manager Bridget O'Donoghue added:

'The information about the intangibles is more difficult and often we don't have that information. In terms of assessing a plan, it's usually on a private land that is owned, so it's not necessarily a public space.'

'We work with the communities and they say to us we want this to be upgraded in the following way. Some things are obvious such as dumping removal, but other things, like such as they want some water points for the initiates. I mean, we wouldn't initially come up with that idea.'²⁸³

In the following conversation with O'Donoghue I discussed the notion of significance concerning a heritage site or object.

Q: 'How do you as heritage section establish the importance of a heritage resource?'

²⁸⁰ Hall, 'The question of cultural identity', 287.

²⁸¹ Partial transcript of interview with Clive James.

²⁸² Ibidem.

²⁸³ Partial transcript of interview with Bridget O'Donoghue, held on 27 July 2005, Cape Town.

A: We got specialist advice. From a specialist.

Q: How do you choose the specialist?

A: Well, a person who has experience with those types of structures. Someone who is able to say: well, that's not a particularly good one; there are other examples in a much better condition.²⁸⁴

The policy to outsource knowledge production is an essential part of the heritage management praxis. As such, CSRFB, the third heritage management actor of the Prestwich Street, functioned as consultant.

CSRFB was originally set up by three UCT-based scholars in the context of the St Cyprians School development dispute in 1999-2000. Noëleen Murray (architecture and planning), Abdulkader Tayob (religious studies) and Antonia Malan (archaeology) organized a seminar at UCT in this period. Out of this seminar the CSRFB was born. 'Its role since then has been to provide a forum for public debate over issues of sensitive, sacred and contested sites in particular and to respond to requests for consultation/ advice on cultural heritage practice in general.'²⁸⁵ Interestingly, CSRFB's involvement in the heritage management of Prestwich Street was based on its status as an expert organization. In my understanding the complexity of the heritage management focuses on the question who has agency in the interpretation and production of the past. The intermediary figure of the 'facilitator' or the 'specialist' seems, on the one hand, to open up ways of collecting knowledge and, on the other hand, legitimize an authentic interpretation by the HRS or SAHRA.

Interpretation and identification seem to be used in the official documents as equivalents in a context of development. The strategy document mentions, for example, that the City will ensure that the identification, protection and enhancement of heritage resources is integrated into the economic, environmental and planning processes, as required by law. 'The management of heritage sites and structures is most successful when integrated into general conservation and development strategies for urban regeneration.'²⁸⁶ How and why significance is measured, balanced and decided upon, remains vague. James explained that policy was a political issue and the strategy document reads that 'the Mayoral Committee Member for Planning & Environment Portfolio is responsible for Heritage Resources Management at a local political level.'²⁸⁷ I want to suggest, therefore, that decisions of significance concerning the heritage of Cape Town's management are inherently connected to a struggle for political control over the past.

Through unravelling the discursive practices in the NHRA and the city's cultural heritage strategy one comes to an understanding of the ways in which these official documents justify the actions of those in power. Though concepts as empathy, healing, and restitution are central to the 'spirit' of the heritage policy, it seems that to a certain extent these notions are co-opted by the official discourse of a society of many cultures and a history of great lives of resistance and reconciliation. Terms as resources, stakeholders and public participation suggest a whole new set of

²⁸⁴ Ibidem

²⁸⁵ Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point 3.

²⁸⁶ Ibidem, 17-18.

²⁸⁷ Partial transcript of interview with Clive James and Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy – Cultural Heritage Strategy.

management means. In addition, I suggest that this official discourse - as a whole - has been co-opted by and enables those actors who re-appropriate the past focused on economic growth and urban gentrification. The heritage managers - as SAHRA, HRS and CSRF - as such, act to facilitate this process. Meskell articulates that 'heritage consultants and archaeologists could be said to invent culture and, in the process, constitute heritage'.²⁸⁸

In the next section I discuss the ways in which these heritage managers dealt with the heritage of Prestwich Street.

4.3 Managing bones and memories of Prestwich Street

Giving Prestwich Street's bones a place in the present

As I pointed out in the previous chapter, the Prestwich Street knowledge project was dominated by archaeologists. Next to the exhumation undertaken by the ACO team, the archaeologists used also historical methods to understand the meaning of this cityscape. Both the reports of Malan and Hart can be seen as directive for SAHRA and HRS practice.

In her report concerning the public consultation process Malan refers to a 'large collection of original and facsimiles maps, photographs and drawings in the national archives, national library of South Africa, and [...] the historical map collection at the City Council' of the Green Point area.²⁸⁹ Moreover, she also mentions earlier archaeological exhumation of 'accidentally' discovered burial grounds, for example, at Cobern Street in 1994-1995, and, at Marina Residential (V&A Waterfront) in 2000. Interestingly, the registrar of SAHRA added the Cobern Street files to SAHRA's Prestwich Street collection. These documents date back to 1994, the year of the first general election in the new South Africa.²⁹⁰ In a letter to the director of NMC of 11 October 1994, the earlier introduced professor in human biology, Morris, writes regarding the unearthed human remains in just a few blocks away from Prestwich Street:

'The earlier history of Cape Town is an extremely important component in the modern history of South Africa. The mother city not only provided the first fully urban environment in the sub-continent, but it also marks the ancestral home of people who are biologically and culturally unique to South Africa.'²⁹¹

Morris states also that professional interest in the Cobern Street cemetery among archaeologist is very great.²⁹² This letter is of interest as it presents a first attempt to giving meaning to the human remains of Green Point, namely by stressing their uniqueness.

In her report Malan speaks of 'a history of complicated and disordered sequences of burials and reburials, and on top of these, layer after layer of redevelopment episodes are laid down'.²⁹³ Hart articulates in more definitive terms that the Prestwich Street site is 'part of an informal paupers burial ground, long

²⁸⁸ Meskell, 'Sites of violence: terrorism, tourism, and heritage in the archaeological present', 127.

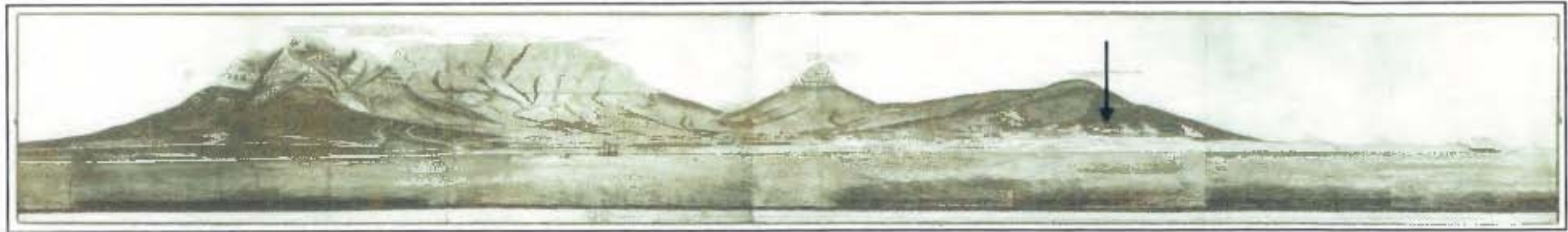
²⁸⁹ Antonia Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point, Cape Town. Public consultation process 9 June to 18 August 2005 (25 August 2005) 6.

²⁹⁰ Davenport and Saunders, *South Africa. A modern history*, 564.

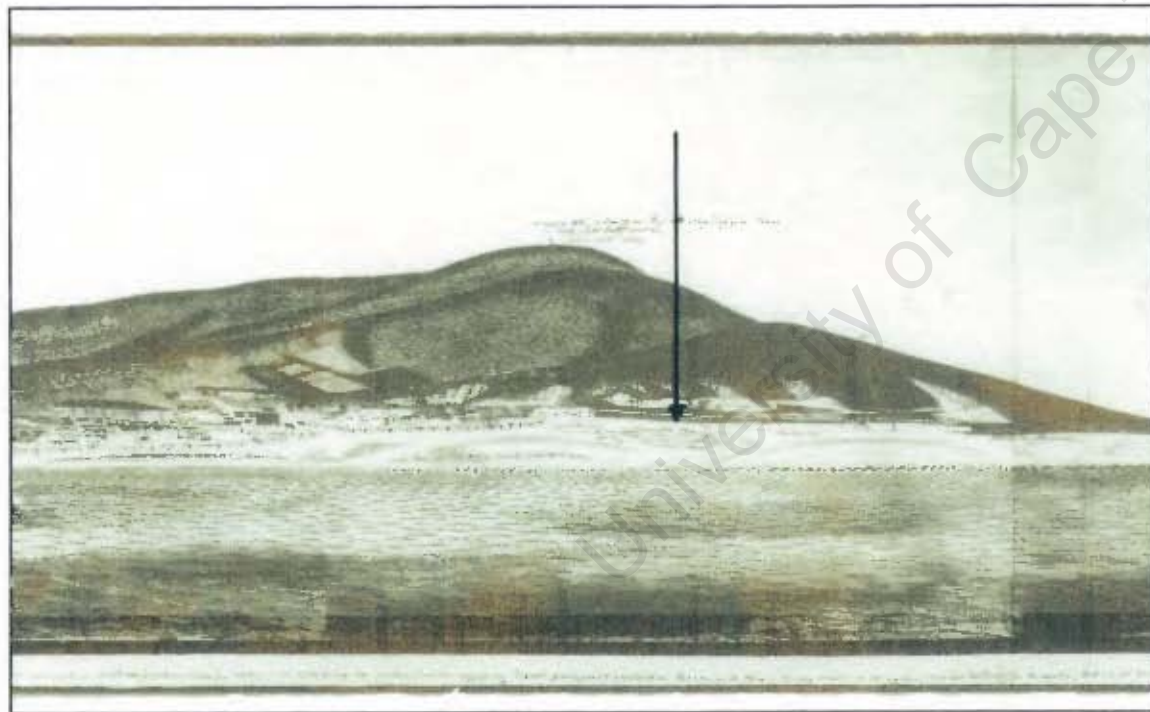
²⁹¹ Letter by Alan G. Morris to the director of the National Monuments Council (11 October 1994).

²⁹² *Ibidem*.

²⁹³ Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point, 6.



13. c1790 Gordon's panorama shows two walled cemeteries with area alongside marked as 'slaaven begraafplaats' [CA AG7146.38].



forgotten and completely developed since the mid 19th century'.²⁹⁴ 'The setting of the Prestwich Place and Cobern Street sites is clearly shown in picture by Johannes Schumacher, in about 1776, and marked as a "slaaven begraafplaats" [burial place of slaves] on the Gordon panorama and a map of circa 1790', writes Malan (figure 13).²⁹⁵ People buried on the outskirts of Cape Town were 'slaves, non-Dutch Reformed Church members, free blacks, executed criminals, suicide victims, unidentified shipwreck victims, smallpox victims and persons who died in either the Company or old Somerset Hospitals who's bodies were not claimed'.²⁹⁶

Hart writes that during the early 18th century, Green Point was largely undeveloped - the closest permanent structures being the gallows and a place of torture situated where the V&A Waterfront is today. He speaks of a 'bleak area characterized by the graveyards of the Dutch Reformed Church, the military graveyard and a great many informal graves of *unknown* [my emphasis] persons'.²⁹⁷ According to the reports of the archaeologists, in 1827 the Burgher Senate eventually subdivided Green Point and sold plots to private owners for building purposes for a fast-expanding town. Another map the researchers used was Snow's Municipal Survey, which shows buildings on the Prestwich Street site by 1833. By the end of the 19th century the formal cemeteries had been closed, graves exhumed and removed to Maitland. Malan articulates that the unmarked burial grounds were 'forgotten'. And after the Group Areas Act of 1965 was implemented - which meant the removal of all black and Coloured property owners and occupants - industrial buildings, which 'had basements and pilings dug down into the burials to reach solid ground', were constructed.²⁹⁸

Malan clarified that this historical information was available since the unearthing of the human remains at Cobern Street. Due to the fact that nothing was publicized on this matter, the knowledge concerning the informal Green Point burial grounds remained in the private sphere of researchers. The report on Cobern Street, though, was also submitted to SAHRA.²⁹⁹ The discussions concerning this subject within the archaeological community did contribute, according to Hart, 'to understanding the *archaeology* [my emphasis] of slavery and the underclass in Cape Town'.³⁰⁰ Interestingly, both reports do not clarify why the burial ground were considered forgotten or why the dead buried at the site were unknown. The archaeology of these human remains did not make the linkage between being unknown and being unwanted or being forgotten and being repressed. As such, the archaeological knowledge production did not conceptualize the power and knowledge relation, which excluded groups of people in the past (amongst others on basis of racial grounds) and laid the foundation for the fragmented society of the present.

²⁹⁴ Hart, Heritage impact assessment, 3.

²⁹⁵ Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point, 6.

²⁹⁶ Hart, Heritage impact assessment, 4.

²⁹⁷ Ibidem, 5.

²⁹⁸ Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point, 7.

²⁹⁹ Personal communication with Antonia Malan, Cape Town (5 January 2006). Available material in the library of UCT is, amongst others, G. Cox, 'Cobern Street burial ground: investigating the identity and life histories of the underclass of the 18th century Cape Town', unpublished MA dissertation, Dept. Archaeology, University of Cape Town (1999), H. Apollonio, 'Identifying the dead: eighteenth century mortuary practices at Cobern Street, Cape Town', unpublished MA dissertation, Dept. Archaeology, UCT and A.G. Morris and D. Constant, 'The Cobern Street cemetery: using cranial variation to reconstruct the biological diversity of the common people of 18th century Cape Town', paper presented to the World Archaeological Congress (1999).

³⁰⁰ Hart, Heritage impact assessment, 7.

Seeing the burials in the framework of the history of political repression and cultural domination - in so many ways determining for South Africa's urban forms and shapes³⁰¹ - sheds a different light on their current significance. Situating the construction of the buildings on the site - Napier House, for example, was built in circa 1957³⁰² - in the context of the politics of apartheid, can be seen as explanatory for the treatment of the human remains in this period. Hart articulates that 'the burial may have been disinterred when the building was erected [...], although it is more likely that they were simply removed from footings and deep foundations with the result that partially disarticulated skeletons and human bones lie strewn below the cement floor of the existing building'³⁰³. Another archaeologist, who was a member of the ACO team during the Prestwich Street exhumation, stated that he excavated skeletons, which were folded backwards to make space for foundation walls.³⁰⁴

Clearly, the burial ground was not considered significant during the years of apartheid. Not only, though, did architects, planners and developers consider the human remains unworthy of conservation, they ignored and disgraced them in the process of planning, design and construction. Crucially, the forced removal of black and Coloured people paralleled the replacement of dwellings and small business by new industrial buildings with deep foundational structures.³⁰⁵ As such the disruption of Prestwich Street's dead can be seen in directly relation to the damages of Cape Town's recent history. The forced removals cleared the area of the people who associated themselves with Cape Town's 'unknown' ancestors buried beneath their houses.

Hart's remark that 'the heritage significance of the site is closely associated with the age and identity of who ever was buried there in these areas' seems somewhat bleak in the light of the previous discussion on the dream passages of the NHRA.³⁰⁶ Instead, I suggest seeing the surfacing of the human remains as an opportunity to come to understand the discrepancies on which the city is built and the discursive formations which give shape to its futures. Moreover, in the light of the relation between knowledge and power, one comes to understand the nature of the counter discourses regarding the public history and the memories of Green Point.

Interestingly, though Malan mentions in her report that in local oral history the memory of the Prestwich Street burial ground continued after the 19th century, oral history interviews were not considered by heritage managers as instruments to establish the significance of the site until the decision was made to continue with the construction of the Rockwell.³⁰⁷ In addition, no references were made to international protocols as the Vermillion Accord on human remains or the WAC code of ethics, neither to postcolonial archaeological practices nor to local critiques regarding the collection of skeletons as by Legassick and Rassool. The WAC code reads, for example:

'5.Members shall not interfere with and/or remove human remains of indigenous peoples without the express consent of those concerned.

³⁰¹ See for example David Bunn, 'White sepulchres: on the reluctance of monuments'.

³⁰² Hart, Heritage impact assessment, 9.

³⁰³ Hart, Heritage impact assessment, 9.

³⁰⁴ Personal Communication with Charlie Arthur, Cape Town (11 January 2006).

³⁰⁵ Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point, 7.

³⁰⁶ Hart, Heritage impact assessment, 9.

³⁰⁷ Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point, 7.

6. Members shall not interfere with and/or remove artefacts or objects of special cultural significance, as defined by associated indigenous peoples, without their express consent.³⁰⁸

Instead of consulting these sources, management decisions were based on maps and past archaeological practices in Green Point. The memories of those who claimed historical connectedness were channelled through a very limited process of public participation. I discuss this process in the next sub-section.

Staging a public debate in Cape Town

From the very start the public meetings, it was clear that there was more at stake than merely development and archaeological interests. Nevertheless, the efforts of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF seemed to be mostly focused at managing the public controversy. Their lack of creativity in the light of the NHRA was partly visible in the organization of the public consultation process, which was structured on the assumptions that people wanted to hear more about the findings and about possible options for memorialization.³⁰⁹ By analyzing the place, time, structure, but also the atmosphere of the meetings, I think one can determine an approach which can be characterized as bureaucratic, managed and not very accessible. Or, as a critique of the process points out: '[public participation] operated within a paradigm of middle-class familiarity with the public consultative process.'³¹⁰

Two out of three meetings took place in Cape Town's 'better', historically white areas (City Bowl and Green Point). The buildings chosen (two churches and a school) can be described as 'places of the sermon' with, traditionally, a clear division between those talking and those listening. Two meetings were held on a week day and one on a Saturday morning. Comments as 'speaking on behalf of those who don't have cars: the next meeting should be on a Saturday in Mitchells Plain' made clear that location and time had to be chosen different if one intended to involve the 'working class' living on Cape Town's fringes.³¹¹

The first and the third meeting were relatively well attended (about a hundred or so people).³¹² Black or African people however, were to a large extent absent in the audience. The most articulate Capetonians attending the meeting were a variety of individuals historically classified as Coloured. Most members of CSRF, the archaeologists and the facilitator were white, whereas the CEO of SAHRA was black. Shepherd refers in this respect to a complex situation of convergence between new (black) and historically (white) elites and the continuing marginalization of the black and Coloured working classes.³¹³

The structure and agenda of the meetings (especially the first and third) were focused on informing and *not* on discussing. The room was not arranged for an exchange of thoughts or debate. The public was sitting in rows facing all the same direction, namely towards those on the stage behind the microphone. At the first meeting there was an elevation from which the panel (SAHRA, developer and

³⁰⁸ URL: <http://www.wac.uct.ac.za/archive/content/ethics.html>: 'World Archaeological Congress. First code of ethics' (accessed 12-12-2005).

³⁰⁹ Interview with Antonia Malan.

³¹⁰ Prestwich Place Project Committee, Submission to DAC Tribunal (20 May 2004), MAD of UCT, PS, 1-10, here 2.

³¹¹ Comment by Yvette Abrahams, Video footage of the first public meeting and Comment by Mogemat Kamedien, Video footage of the second public meeting.

³¹² Judy Damon, 'Slave descendants to be consulted on fate of city grave site', *Cape Times*, (30 July 2003).

³¹³ Shepherd, 'What does it mean "to give the past back to the people"?'

academics) briefed the audience. The agenda of the meeting gave people the opportunity to ask questions of clarity after the presentations. However, from the beginning people questioned the exhumation and made comments related to the significance of the site. In the first meeting, especially, the atmosphere was electric. The contestations were extreme and many people showed their anger in words and gestures.

The panel was clearly not prepared for a situation of this nature. In a sense, the discrepancy between the comments of the audience and the agenda of the first meeting seemed irresolvable. The 'independent' facilitator Marlene Laross affirmed that due legal process was followed by SAHRA and the developer, and reminded the public that this meeting is about discussing 'the way forward'. The way forward though was controversial. According to many voices in the public it was certainly not the proposal for a memorial as presented. Joe Marx thought that the developer and SAHRA packaged and marketed the meeting, and he said he didn't want to buy their lies. During the second meeting Mrs. Kolbe said: 'people are being pressed in to responding *your* issue, not theirs. This can never be fair. I don't think ordinary people have a hope and hell to get a fair deal on this call.'³¹⁴

Much criticism and many suggestions of the first meeting were repeated during the second. Due to the focus at these meetings on the implications (feasibility) of stopping or continuation of the exhumations, the discussion elided questions concerning the meaning of the heritage. Although, Legassick and Rassool wrote in 2000 that a focus on descendants is a limited approach, as in the past no regard was given to the biography or individual identity of bones, the predominant reading of the NHRA was in terms of direct descent and social economic development.³¹⁵ As such a momentum for healing and restitution went lost. Shepherd argues that the practices and language of cultural resource management focused on 'real issues' and 'responsible decisions'.³¹⁶ The Prestwich knowledge project can be described as essentially archaeological within a context of the development urgency. As result the public consultation process lacked social engagement and a creative approach. In the minutes of an internal SAHRA meeting was stated:

'We as SAHRA staff we are employed for our experience and we are here to make the final decisions for the public.'^[sic]³¹⁷

Rassool, member of the SAHRA council stated that especially SAHRA CEO Madiba was determined to 'engineer' the outcome of the public process.³¹⁸ As such, meetings were organized from a management perspective and as such new epistemological ways of appreciating the heritage of Prestwich Street were not explored. Nor were the reappearance of the city's ancestors an incentive to change the gaze on the city, to come to an understanding of the place as a site of memory, fantasy and imagination. Deacon, chair person of the permit committee, stated once again in her presentation, in response to the appeal by the Hands Off Committee that the Prestwich Street

³¹⁴ Video footage of the first public meeting and comment by Mrs. Kolbe, video footage second public meeting.

³¹⁵ Legassick and Rassool, *Skeletons in the cupboard*, 49.

³¹⁶ Shepherd, 'What does it mean "to give the past back to the people"?'

³¹⁷ SAHRA minutes of the meeting of the Prestwich Place exhumation project, Cape Town (8 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS, 4.

³¹⁸ Interview with Ciraj Rassool, held in Cape Town on 31 August 2005, recording is part of the collection of the author.

heritage fitted in the broader area in terms of archaeological history and legislation.³¹⁹ Rassool claims that the public consultation process was never intended to engage political with an argument that it is incorrect to disturb the remains.³²⁰

As such, the counter-discourse as vocalized by PPC and individual members of the public did not lead to an alternative way of reading this cityscape. Instead, as I attempt to point out in the next sub-section, the heritage management of Prestwich Street can be characterized by continuous acts of improvisation.

Collecting, curating and improvising

In analyzing the character of the Prestwich Street heritage management, it is interesting to return to the period of the disturbance of the burial ground at Cobern Street. Townsend, the incumbent City planner then, wrote in response to criticism on the City's conservation efforts in the *Cape Times* of 14 October 1994:

'...we believe that the omission (or mistake) was not "appalling" or "grossly unacceptable". Unfortunate certainly, but the kind of failure that will inevitably occurs from time to time but occurs infrequently in Cape Town.

The problem is not so much that "we need a change of attitude.. a change in local administrative procedures and a change to national legislation..." but rather that the disparate sets of legislation and corresponding administrative mechanisms that control cultural, the built and natural environments be coordinated in a deliberate and coherent way[...].³²¹

Since Cobern Street, discoveries of human remains in Green Point took place at Victoria Junction (1996), the Marina (2000), a site owned by a company named I&J Engineering, and on property of the British Petroleum (BP) company (2003).³²² And even though the NHRA was introduced in 1999, meetings concerning the management of Prestwich Street make evident that similar problems regarding the coherence and correspondence between different administrative mechanisms is at stake. James, for example, remarked that Green Point should be dealt with as a provincial heritage area under the NHRA. Local competence in terms of archaeology and heritage was, according to the city manager, not within the City's scope at the present.³²³

In addition, Malan articulates in her report that '[the] City's role is to enable development. [...] This burial ground has been in private hands and impacted by development projects since c1820. What are the property rights in this part of the city and how do they fit with heritage management?'.³²⁴ James articulated in similar terms to Townsend regarding the management of the Prestwich Street heritage:

'There are certain functions in the Act which are national and provincial. The City is at place where you see development implications; and as soon as those bones came up it was to alert the correct heritage agency which is the City. I'm not sure whether Heritage Western Cape was in existence yet, they only got formed around that time. And I think SAHRA went out and issued the cease.'³²⁵

³¹⁹ Minutes of the Prestwich Place burial ground appeal meeting, 6.

³²⁰ Interview with Ciraj Rassool.

³²¹ Letter by S. S. Townsend to the editor of the *Cape Times* (17 October 1994).

³²² Hart, Heritage impact assessment 7-8.

³²³ Minutes of the Prestwich Place development meeting (7 July 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

³²⁴ Malan, Prestwich Place. Exhumation of accidentally discovered burial ground in Green Point 9.

³²⁵ Partial transcript of interview with Clive James.

In response to my question regarding the meaning of the Prestwich Street site in terms of conservation, the head of the HRS said the block was outside two conservation areas. Referring to a map of burial grounds he indicated:

'The Green Point conservation area ends here and the Bo Kaap area and Centre area conservation here. It is outside the zoning scheme potential. Those boundaries were drawn in the 80s and 90s by the urban conservation studies and those studies were done on architecture. And the area was not obviously considered then to have a significant level of particular architectural level of significance that was being looked at. I don't know whether the value of those industrial buildings, as historic buildings was useful in the 80s and 90s.'³²⁶

[The Prestwich Street site] got the zoning scheme attached to it, those would be the rights we have; there are general commercial zones; merely residential zones; those are the parameters that come in with the development for that.

The only thing stopping a development [...] would be if there [are] 60 year old buildings on the site. Those have been surveyed and the decision on that was that they were not significant.

If [...] they had have been, I don't know if we would have had the information that we got know, because we would have never found those bones. There was no protocol in place to go and test through the floors. And the same issue might have just come up three years later.'³²⁷

More specifically, regarding the management options of HRS regarding the Prestwich Street burial place, James said:

'That's not a permit which is withdrawable; it's a building plan. And when a building plan is approved then it is approved. It's a real right [...].

All the City can do as far as archaeology and burials are concerned, is as a developer comes into an area is where you know there's a potential for burials [...] you can tell we found burials and there a potential for burial [...].

'It is easy to say in hindsight. To say if you have a map of what you don't know; it might have come out differently. How do you know what you don't know until you know until you need to go out map out burial sites?'³²⁸

Interestingly, although HRS is the City's body to look after its heritage, the only instruments it has are development related. Regarding local planning authorities Dewar observes another problem, namely that 'the issues of capacity extends into the arena of political decision-making'. Moreover, according to him, 'professional planners are providing little leadership for change'. Instead, he pleads therefore for a moratorium on the existing planning and control regulations in relation to pilot project sites, 'so that these processes themselves may be re-examined'.³²⁹

Thus, in the process of collecting and curating its heritage, the City of Cape Town is, amongst others, troubled by a strong development focus and a lack of capacity. Importantly, many actors active at the Cobern Street case were again involved in the Prestwich Street case. In the case of the heritage management of Prestwich Street this brings about a sense of improvisation. As, for example, becomes clear in the numerous occasions where the City and SAHRA dispute over the issue of management responsibility.³³⁰ Also, the fact that no archaeological survey was

³²⁶ Ibidem.

³²⁷ Ibidem.

³²⁸ Ibidem.

³²⁹ Dewar, 'Settlements, change and planning in South Africa since 1994' 370 and 374.

³³⁰ Minutes of the Prestwich Place development meeting (7 July 2003), MAD of UCT, PS, Letter by Clive James to Pumla Madiba, CEO of SAHRA (3 August 2004, SAHRA), MAD of UCT, PS, Minutes

required for the Prestwich Street development points, in my opinion, at certain ignorance at the City. During the appeal meeting in October 2003 Murray questioned the technical proceedings, which led to the City council approval of the development in Green Point. Moreover, she expressed surprise at the fact that SAHRA had not used the case as a precedent and the architect stated that she felt that SAHRA needed to take forward the 'spirit of redress as in encapsulated in the NHRA',³³¹

The heritage manager, though, decided to follow a different route. A number of statements make clear that the three organizations dealt with the public consultation process not as part of a knowledge project on Prestwich Street social history, but focused on manageable outcomes. Malan writes for example:

'The public consultation process need not necessarily affect exhumation at this stage, if it is agreed to be the best option by SAHRA – but a longer-term debate needs to continue until acceptable and practical options are found for dealing with real public concerns.'³³²

In the report to the SAHRA council - regarding the future of the heritage of Prestwich Street – the following benefits were described concerning the final decision of proceeding the exhumation and the development of a 'memorial crypt and garden of remembrance in the immediate vicinity', as well as 'a declaration of a heritage area across the entire area of the burial grounds'³³³.

- 'Garden of remembrance and crypt;
- The crypt could provide a home for all remains relating to the burial grounds found in the area in the future;
- Costs are realistic and involve;
- Funding the crypt and garden of remembrance;
- No cost of buying out the owner or compensation for loss of rights;
- Further development allowed, and the rights of property owners in area are not compromised;
- Process put in place for dealing with development and human remains in the area in a sustainable way;
- Existing park adjoining St. Andrews Church may be available as a site for a garden of remembrance, and has been discussed with City officials. The park enjoys a prominent position at the entrance at the burial area.'³³⁴

This option made no mention of how the memorial is supposed to deal with the memories, concerns and angers of members of the public. Instead, SAHRA decided, next to a memorial park, to organize a 'cleansing ceremony' and a 'continuous and broadened public participation process as dis-interment continues'.³³⁵ The argumentation above for exhumation and a memorial crypt shows clearly the impact of a development discourse. The continuation of the public participation process in the working group was dominated by heritage 'professionals' and archaeologists to whom SAHRA outsourced the deliberation on the future of Prestwich Street. I will deliberate more on this important point in the next chapter.

Interestingly, the minutes of the first meeting between SAHRA and religious leaders, on 5 September 2003, gave an account of a sense of resistance towards the

of the meeting of the Prestwich Place exhumation project, Cape Town (8 August 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

³³¹ Minutes of the Prestwich Place burial ground appeal meeting, 13.

³³² Interim draft report Prestwich Place exhumation project public participation process 9 July to 1 August 2003 prepared by Antonia Malan.

³³³ Ibidem.

³³⁴ Ibidem.

³³⁵ Written ruling by the SAHRA Appeals Committee.

procedure planned by SAHRA. Rabbi Micheal Glass expressed that he felt as if SAHRA wanted the religious groups to endorse their decision by performing religious rituals. Father John Oliver and father Cloete commented that they could not comment on what an appropriate process for a cleansing ceremony would be until the outstanding issues with community members were resolved.³³⁶ Also, the functioning of the working group was hindered, according to SAHRA, due to the refusal of PPPC to be involved.³³⁷ I think the working group is another account of the improvisatory character of the heritage management. The group, namely, had to advise SAHRA on crucial matters such as 'providing and assisting SAHRA with strategies for information dissemination to the public', 'identifying and assisting SAHRA in establishing strategies for multi-disciplinary research' and 'advising on criteria for the public participation'.³³⁸

Yet, after the political rule against the appeal by the Minister, the PPPC became an active member in the decision-making process regarding the future of the bones and the memories of Prestwich Street. The citizens group participated in the cleansing ceremony, which was, according to a SAHRA document, 'a move towards bringing harmony, peace, respect and dignity to the dead'.³³⁹ In addition, the Mayor said at the City Hall during the procession:

'This city is what it is because of its history, no matter what this history is. We should create the memory of not only our ancestors as we find them today, [but] where ever we find remains.'³⁴⁰

As such, a discourse of reconciliation was made material. Moreover, the collecting of the bones of Prestwich Street became a supposedly meaningful element in the production of the public history of Green Point and the memories of forced removals were appeased. To make the improvised treatment of bones, as it came about at Prestwich Street, official, HRS, SAHRA and Heritage Western Cape developed an 'interim archaeological protocol for developers to follow in Green Point until there is a "heritage area"'.³⁴¹

Instead of dealing first and foremost in depth with how to manage the public memories, the main focus of the document covered an archaeological procedure enabling further development. Again this document is evidence of the closeness of the relation between heritage managers, urban developers and archaeologists, which will determine the outlook of the built environment and the dominant history of this area. More precisely, I think, the outcomes of the heritage management of Prestwich Street are the result of the disciplinary praxis of archaeology and architecture.³⁴²

³³⁶ Minutes of a meeting between SAHRA and religious leaders, Cape Town (5 September 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

³³⁷ SAHRA, Prestwich Place burial ground. Response of SAHRA council appeal committee for the appeal scheduled for 20 May 2004, MAD of UCT, PS, 7.

³³⁸ Submission to SAHRA council for meeting of 3-4 July 2004. Prestwich Place working group: summary report (12 April 2004), MAD of UCT, PS, 2.

³³⁹ Draft for comments, SAHRA invitation to cleansing ceremony. Why cleansing ceremony? (14 November 2003), MAD of UCT, PS.

³⁴⁰ SAHRA video footage of the procession to the Woodstock hospital (22 April 2004), part of the archive of SAHRA.

³⁴¹ Draft agreement entitled Bo-Kaap, de Waterkant, Green Point and V&A Waterfront. Area in which there is a probability of burial being uncovered. Interim archaeological protocol for developers to follow in Green Point until there is a "heritage area" (26 October 2004), MAD of UCT, PS.

³⁴² Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination culture*, 78.

4.4 Conclusion

In the introduction to this chapter I raised the question: *In what way can the praxis of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF related to the heritage of Prestwich Street be characterized?* In response, I have shown how SAHRA, HRS and CSRF played their particular roles in producing a new public history for Green Point. The records in the archives concerning this heritage reflect these different involvements, but as well, the ways in which these actors read this cityscape.

In addition, the South African politics of culture as set out in the NHRA gives shape to a context in which a discourse of reconciliation and a discourse of development coexist and co-opt notions of healing, restitution and empathy. Focused on manageable solutions, the act neglects to spell out a mechanism in which notions of self-worth and wholeness can be made reality. In response to the irregular landscape of perspectival constructs as a result of the condition of South African history the dominant narrative of the rainbow society. The practices, which have constituted this narrative, do not have a firm epistemological basis as the current knowledge and power relation is fundamentally formed by this condition.

As a result, SAHRA, HRS and CSRF 'have to constantly mediate the pasts it collects, presents and represents in order to ensure that it becomes a "Destination Culture"'.³⁴³ Management becomes a process of continuous improvisation. As such, in analyzing the ways in which Cape Town is transforming, it is perhaps best to look at its 'messy intersections and overlapping realities.'³⁴⁴ If we take up Boym's suggestion to examine the city as an exhibition then the practices of these actors at Prestwich Street can be seen as engagement in a process of managing counter discourses and controlling interpretations. Hitherto, these management efforts are not focused on creating spaces and objects of contestation – on realizing the dream passages in the act; but rather, they come from an urge for historical closure and distinct uniqueness. Or as in the words of Boym 'restoration of intentional monuments makes a claim to immortality and eternal youth, not to the past; intentional commemoration is about victory over time itself.'³⁴⁵ In the same vein, Mbembe writes that 'archiving is a kind of internment, laying something in a coffin, if not to rest, then at least to consign elements of that life which could not be destroyed purely and simply. These elements, removed from time and from life, are assigned to a place and a sepulchre that is perfectly recognisable because it is consecrated: the archives.'³⁴⁶

Thus, the mystifying statements of SAHRA regarding the research on Prestwich Street, the constant need for heritage experts to declare knowledge authentic and the lack of coherence and correspondence between the different administrative mechanisms can be seen as the result of controlling time. Importantly, the praxis of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF has to be seen in the context of the 'unresolvedness of the South' African condition, but also, influenced by a discourse of development.

As I have pointed out, the surfacing of the Prestwich Street dead did not lead to a new epistemology regarding the meaning of South African cityscapes. Nor were

³⁴³ Witz, Minkley and Rassool, 'Who speaks for South African Pasts', 7 and Witz, 'Museums on Cape Town's townships tours'.

³⁴⁴ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 360.

³⁴⁵ Boym, *The future of nostalgia*, 78.

³⁴⁶ Mbembe, 'The power of the archive and its limits', 22.

references made to international protocols or local critiques. Therefore, a different conceptualization of the site, in terms of memories of colonial repression and forced removal remained a marginalized element in the public history of the area. Instead the management and historical production was firmly based on old practices of the local disciplines of archaeology and architecture/planning. As such, the nature of these disciplines became apparent. In addition to improvisatory, I argue that, the praxis of the heritage managers can be characterized as, to a degree, 'banal' or labelled as business as usual. In between the stoppage and the continuation of the construction work on The Rockwell, the heritage managers never gave a public account of self-reflexivity. What deserved to be remembered and treasured at Prestwich Street was a collection bolstering a legitimizing national South African folklore.

In the fifth chapter, then, I discuss how the heritage praxis of Prestwich Street can be explained by the city's institutional memory of the past, and as such the nature of the disciplines in South Africa.

University of Cape Town

5. INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION

'Urban nostalgia inevitably turns back to the question of what is modern and kind of modernity and modernization is to be developed for the future. The "international style" of the new generation visible in the cities throughout the world is a culture of youthful forgetting [...].'

Svetlana Boym³⁴⁷

Once again, I wish to return to those moments in Cape Town's present: The Rockwell, St. Andrews memorial garden and SAHRA's multi-disciplinary research project. I have suggested that a powerful way of revisiting the meaning of Prestwich Street is by unravelling the reasons that lie behind the creation of these historical moments. As such, I have shown how the dream passages in the NHRA did not provide a context in which the heritage managers of Prestwich Street reflected on the past in terms of open-endedness and contestations. Instead they contributed to a narrative and a set of images, which represents 'a national impatience to move away from the dark times into a more hopeful future.'³⁴⁸ Certainly The Rockwell, which conveniently neighbours the V&A Waterfront complex, marked itself as distinct from Cape Town's past and present. Worden and Van Heyningen write, concerning the Waterfront, that 'the very design of the area sets it apart as a "special" place and a distinct place'.³⁴⁹ Concerning the public representation of history at this site these historians comment:

'Heritage is interpreted as aesthetic physical environment rather than human consciousness.'³⁵⁰

Yet, also the proposed memorial park and the Prestwich Street research project are subject to what they describe as acts of romantization and sanitization.³⁵¹ As a result, the three moments do not include, what Delpont articulates as, a 'notion of accessibility, the creation of a generative arena for historical retrieval and interpretation and the interrelationship of historical method and aesthetic'.³⁵²

The current representations at Prestwich Street are not the product of a visual imagination based on a celebration of the memories of the site's past. Instead of recovering its social history and reinstalling its aesthetical character as part of everyday life, The Rockwell, St. Andrews memorial garden and SAHRA's multi-disciplinary research attempt to create new and 'unique' connections between the area's past and present. These new constructions of Cape Town's Green Point, I assert, constitute the materialization of a colonial discourse. In conserving and creating structures with so-called unique connections to the past, a dominant discourse comes to the fore in which a certain hegemony over the imaging of this city in Africa is reaffirmed.³⁵³ Witz, Rassool and Minkley articulate that in the dominant discourse of the new South Africa, the tropes of passivity and lack of development remain omnipresent as part of public histories.³⁵⁴ How is it possible that in the postcolonial

³⁴⁷ Boym, *The future of nostalgia*, 81.

³⁴⁸ Delpont, 'Signpost for retrieval: a visual framework for enabling memory of place and time', 36.

³⁴⁹ Worden and Van Heyningen, 'Signs of time', 224.

³⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, 233.

³⁵¹ *Ibidem*, 224.

³⁵² Delpont, 'Signpost for retrieval: a visual framework for enabling memory of place and time', 36.

³⁵³ Said, *Orientalism*, 7.

³⁵⁴ Witz, Minkley and Rassool, 'Who speaks for South African Pasts', 20.

revisions of Cape Town's past and present Africa remains represented as otherness, or as Mbembe and Nuttall suggest, as 'an object apart from the world'?³⁵⁵

As an explanation, Rassool argues that the tourist industry in post-apartheid South Africa has been given the responsibility of constructing images of the new society and its past for an audience of international visitors. South Africa's tourist spectacle – partially constructed in the colonial gaze and now being re-imagined – is not only directed at the international traveller, but also at the development of the rainbow people as a nation.³⁵⁶ Reiterating J.B Pine and J.H. Gilmore, Hall and Bombardella understand the appropriation of heritage by entertainment complexes in South Africa in the context of the experiential economy – a combination of entertainment, simulation, security and the appearance of a unique experience. They write: 'rather than being measured by verification against the archival record, heritage productions gain respectability if they convey the essence of a place or of an era'.³⁵⁷ Going beyond these explanations, in this final chapter I attempt to grasp how the ways in which Cape Town is composed and re-invented at Prestwich Street are not only based on an institutional memory of the past as influenced by both local scholarly systems, but also on global flows of knowledge.

That is, I aim to address my last sub-question: *How can the heritage management of Prestwich Street be interpreted in relation to the institutional memory of the city's past?* In response to this question, I discuss the heritage management of Prestwich Street in relation to traditions of urban conservation in Cape Town and local practices of the disciplines of architecture and archaeology. In addition, I place this discussion in a context of global cities and local heritages.

5.1 Traditions of conservation and a discourse of the Cape

As a point of departure, in this sub-section, I interrogate the manner in which heritage management references were made at Prestwich Street, as well as the kinds of new practices they invoked. Reflecting on the institutional gaze directed towards this heritage, one can determine two disciplinary influences. On the one hand, the City's praxis is derived from an architectural view on urban conservation; on the other hand, SAHRA's management efforts are inspired by the discourses of CRM and archaeology. In the specific case of Prestwich Street, the CSRF's role is based, partly, on facilitating a cultural dialogue on development interests and community interests related to this city space.

Following the course of the developments at Prestwich Street, the City is the first institute involved in this heritage. Regarding the heritage value, the City's HRS decided that erven 550-555 were not worthy of conservation. Its decision was based on an urban conservation study from 1991. This study, by Derek Japha *et al*, focused on buildings of architectural significant in terms of the National Monuments Act.³⁵⁸ The intellectual setting of this study, I assert, should be seen in relation to the urban conservation symposium organized in the previous year. This symposium, held in the year of the release of Nelson Mandela and the un-banning of the ANC³⁵⁹, firmly

³⁵⁵ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 348.

³⁵⁶ Rassool, 'The rise of heritage and reconstitution of history in South Africa', 8-9.

³⁵⁷ Hall and Bombardella, 'Las Vegas in Africa', 6 and 18.

³⁵⁸ Derek Japha *et al*, 'Green and Sea Point conservation study', prepared for the town planning branch of the City's planner's department of the Cape Town city council (1988-1989) 2.

³⁵⁹ Worden, *The making of modern South Africa. Conquest Outline Chronology*.

placed the process of achieving a more balanced urban cultural heritage in the context of planning and development.³⁶⁰ In addition, Derek and Vivienne Japha articulated in a paper delivered at this symposium:

‘...unless it is possible for all South Africans to see the value of historic urban environments and to derive benefit from them, the future for urban conservation cannot be good. Sectarian approaches to conservation and the effects of the Group Areas Act in dispossessing people of their urban heritages are therefore serious threats for conservation *per se*.’³⁶¹

The two architects do not however expand on what ways a more balanced heritage assessment can be achieved, nor do any of the other contributors to the symposium address issues of restitution in the light of South Africa’s urban pasts. Instead, the study approach of Japha *et al* on a Green Point conservation zone focussed on ‘erf-by-erf data base for the city, by supplying rudimentary land-use information, [and] building type information [...]’.³⁶²

Interestingly, the study shows that the criteria for determining significance were not laid down in the brief by the City, but ‘were left to the discretion of the consultants, to be decided in the context of the specific characteristics of the study area’.³⁶³ In the previous chapter I pointed to the role of so-called experts in the decision-making processes regarding the significance of the heritage of Prestwich Street. Here, then, an earlier case of knowledge outsourcing comes to the fore. I assert that the conceptualization, construction and the management of the post-apartheid city is taking place within the uncertain framework of a private-public partnership. In the case of Prestwich Street this partnership transpires, on the one hand, a lack of knowledge at SAHRA and the City regarding the nature of historical production in relation to urbanisation in South Africa; on the other hand, this cooperation shows the struggle of the post-apartheid institutions to deal with the notion of the public. The City and SAHRA administrators use the knowledges of the private experts namely for the common good of all Capetonians, even though these reports, recommendations and studies are produced in a context of commercial competition and private interests.

In the case of the Green Point conservation study, the consultants’ main focus was the built environment and as a result no references were made to burial grounds or any other aspects of the area’s social history. I claim that the City-managers in post-apartheid Cape Town should have been aware of the narrow focus of this study. Japha *et al* discuss that Green and Sea Point were farming and recreational areas. ‘Farms, private villas and communal recreational buildings, such as the Heerenhuis, were stretched out along the low slopes of Lion’s Head, served by a road from Cape Town.’³⁶⁴ Regarding the apartheid period the study reads, somewhat inadequately, that ‘after 1940, development occurred either as isolated infill within existing fabric, or else there were more substantial redevelopments, which replaced older housing with modern high rising flats’.³⁶⁵ I argue that the study in this form is a direct offspring of the discourse of the Cape, in which the former colony is imagined as a garden where black people are occluded from the scene.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁰ Japha and Japha (eds.), *Proceedings of the national urban conservation symposium*, vi.

³⁶¹ Japha and Japha, ‘Conservation in small Cape Towns’, 50.

³⁶² Japha *et al.*, ‘Green and Sea Point conservation study’, 3.

³⁶³ *Ibidem*, 4.

³⁶⁴ Japha *et al.*, ‘Green and Sea Point conservation study’, 7 and Appendices.

³⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, 7.

³⁶⁶ Coetzee, ‘Introduction’, 4-7.

Aligned to this, the attempts by SAHRA and the City to narrate the history of Green Point, and more generally in the NHRA and the City's heritage strategy paper, can be understood in the context of what Coetzee describes as 'the question of finding a language to fit Africa, a language that will be authentically African'.³⁶⁷ The lack of a genuine understanding and articulation of the black person's social history in this history, can and must be seen as a failure of the heritage managers' imagination or, as in the words of Pratt, by 'textual apartheid'.³⁶⁸ Examining North European travel books on Southern Africa written across the eighteenth century, she observes:

'The European improving eye produces subsistence habitats as "empty" landscapes, meaningful only in terms of a capitalist future and of their potential for producing marketable surplus. From the point of view of their inhabitants, of course, these same spaces are lived as intensely humanized, saturated with local history and meaning, where plants, creatures, and geographical formations have names, uses, symbolic functions, histories, places in indigenous knowledge formations.'³⁶⁹

Interestingly, the characterisation by Japha *et al* of the Green Point area by its farming and leisure aspects shows striking similarities with the description of the environment of The Rockwell. The building's brochure reads:

'Voted as one of the top three tourist destinations in the world, Cape Town has it all. The iconic Table Mountain. Two oceans. White beaches. Fynbos. Ocean drives, wine farms, first world service, Mediterranean climate, vibrant nightlife and a relaxed outlook life.'³⁷⁰ [sic]

The dream topography coming to the fore, both in the conservation study and the brochure, invokes elements of what Coetzee calls 'the isolationist romance of the return to the family farm', which lies outside of society, outside history. This scholar looks at South African settler literature, especially the pastoral novel, from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. He states that as these novels excluded the histories and works of the black people, the Cape Colony *had* to be described as if it lay outside of history. Otherwise, as Coetzee opines, 'the farm mimics the idleness, ignorance, and greed of the colonial society'.³⁷¹ Importantly, there is a discursive resemblance between these novels and the texts accompanying The Rockwell and the Memorial Park. That is, the narratives of both moments create the illusion of a timeless zone outside of history.

A second dimension in the discursive formations regarding conservation in Cape Town, which I want to point to here, concerns the meaning of the landscape. Coetzee explains that in the pastoral novel landscape is imagined as humanized when inscribed by white hands and the plough.³⁷² Aligned to this, Pratt articulates that through the European lens the Southern African landscape was conceptualized in terms of its capitalist futures and marketable surplus. I want to argue that later accounts of reading the landscape of the Cape, and as such of the Prestwich Street site, are perpetuated by this discourse of the 'West and the rest'.³⁷³ Concerning

³⁶⁷ Ibidem, 7.

³⁶⁸ Pratt, 'Narrating the anti-conquest', 61.

³⁶⁹ Ibidem.

³⁷⁰ Brochure of The Rockwell. Luxurious De Waterkant Living.

³⁷¹ Coetzee, 'Introduction', 4.

³⁷² Ibidem, 7.

³⁷³ Importantly, I think, Hall elucidates that the notions 'West' in opposition to the 'rest' are complex and have a diversity of meanings influenced by not only ideas of place and geography, but also myth and fantasy. The concept of the 'West' overlaps with the condition of being 'modern'. It is a historical construct, which originated in the context of the development of modernity in Western Europe

traditions of planning in South Africa, in particular, Mabin sets out that throughout the 20th century official ways of imagining the environment and practices of planning were based on European and North American categories. Interestingly he writes that 'as planners embark on their first attempt to reconstruct the cities in the image of a brave new democracy, warning bells are ringing'.³⁷⁴ The modern notion of reconstruction - as it was described in the political discourse of the ANC's Reconstruction and Development Programme - appeared to be problematic in the ways in which it was confronted by the complexities of the urban conditions after 1994.³⁷⁵

In response to the lack of results of this programme a new jargon with terms as 'private-public partnerships', 'developmental local government', and 'integrated development planning' was introduced at the end of the 1990s. The recognition of heritage resources as integrated in planning and development objectives, as articulated in the City's 'Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy', can be seen as the latest official product of the spatial categories of the discourse of the Cape. As such, I want to assert that Cape Town's urban transformation takes place in a discursive context, which is articulated in the mirror of the development of the 'West'. The complexity of the notions the 'West' and the 'rest', though, are also represented not only in the opposition between the narrative of The Rockwell and the narrative of the bones, but also, in the difference between the official management discourse and the counter-discourse of the PPPC. As such, these discursive formations are hybrid accounts of 'rest in the West' and 'West in the rest' respectively. Nevertheless, the recurrent tropes of a lack and of otherness remain present in reading Prestwich Street and as such a specific knowledge-power relation, which prevents the imaginary community of Prestwich Street from re-capturing their selves and re-establishing a sense of self-worth.

In the above I have attempted to show how traditions of urban conservations and a discourse of the Cape became apparent after the unearthing of the burial place. In the next section, I discuss the practice of the disciplines of archaeology and architecture at Prestwich Street in the light of the dominant discourse of CRM.

5.2 Disciplinary practices at Prestwich Street and a discourse of CRM

Architects and archaeologist played a central role in the management of the heritage of Prestwich Street. Inside *and* outside CSRF, HRS and SAHRA professionals with such disciplinary backgrounds were key figures in the process leading from the unearthing of the bones to the memorialization of the burial place. Interesting for examining this urban spectacle is Kirschenblatt-Gimblett's remark that 'exhibitions, whether of objects or people, are displays of the artifacts of our disciplines. They are for this reason also exhibits of those who make them, no matters what ostensible matter'.³⁷⁶ Aligned to this, I argue that the nature of the disciplines of archaeology and architecture in South Africa is crucial in understanding the ways the institutional memory of the city influenced the outcome of the heritage management

beginning at the end of the 16th century. Hall points out though, that the 'West' also is an idea with a complementary language and a number of functions. See Hall, 'The West and the rest: discourse and power', 276-278.

³⁷⁴ Mabin, 'Reconstruction and the making of urban planning in 20th century South Africa', 276.

³⁷⁵ Ibidem, 277. Mabin refers here to 'postmodern' urban conditions.

³⁷⁶ Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination culture*, 78.

of Prestwich Street. Therefore, I discuss the practices of architects and archaeologists of this case study in the light of critiques of the disciplines. I assert that the discourse of CRM offered the discursive environment in which the two disciplines found common goals.

Archaeology

The integration of heritage management with development projects facilitated the re-rooting of the discipline of archaeology in post-apartheid South Africa. Inspired by examples from the United States and Australia, Deacon argues that archaeology is essential in constructing a new country. He writes that 'archaeological sanction will be necessary prior to building a road, scraping out a dam or constructing a highrise complex'³⁷⁷. As such, the rise of contract archaeology in South Africa coincided with the political transformation of the country. Shepherd argues that the discourse of CRM provided the archaeologists with a language to negotiate this transition. A new set of discursive means, as 'resources', 'stakeholders' or 'public consultations', facilitates continuity of disciplinary practices.³⁷⁸ Legassick and Rassool criticise this continuity and lack of critical self-reflection. They assert: 'the starting point seems to be that science in South Africa has already transformed itself, and indeed that science and the state had already come to the rescue of the indigenous through scientific methods of careful recording and archaeological removal together with legislative protection.'³⁷⁹ The practice of ACO at Prestwich Street, and the heritage management of the site more in general, have to be seen as the products of CRM discourse and, as such, have to be placed in a context of limited disciplinary transformation.

Shepherd argues that South Africa needs a post-colonial archaeology. He points out that archaeology in this country used to be 'not so much as a neutral means to the "discovery" of pre-existing histories buried in colonial landscapes, as a discipline actively constructing archaeological past over and against local and indigenous conceptions of past times.'³⁸⁰ Elsewhere, he indicates that 'it was entirely normal [...] to practice African archaeology without knowing, or wanting to know anything about African people *per se*'.³⁸¹ The archaeologist claims that the challenge for archaeologists in a postcolonial Africa lies in changing the ways in which Africa figures in the global politics of representation. Posing different questions, developing forms of practice and understandings of time and place with local relevance should lead to new ways of defining and representing the continent's cultural heritage.³⁸² In the management of Prestwich Street's heritage, though, no new epistemological or ontological approaches came to the fore.

I assert that the improvisatory character of the management of this site is partly due to the reluctance of the discipline of archaeology to engage with new ways of producing knowledge about the Prestwich Street dead. Especially in the context of the damages of the country's apartheid recent past, but more generally as part of a debate on postcolonial academic refiguration, it is shocking that the archaeologists showed little empathy or spoke little to the needs of Prestwich Street's 'indigenous

³⁷⁷ Deacon, 'What future has archaeology in South Africa?' 3.

³⁷⁸ Personal communication with Nick Shepherd, Cape Town (20 January 2006).

³⁷⁹ Legassick and Rassool, *Skeletons in the cupboard*, 100-101.

³⁸⁰ Shepherd, 'The politics of archaeology in Africa', 192.

³⁸¹ Shepherd, 'Disciplining archaeology', 140 and 144.

³⁸² Shepherd, 'The politics of archaeology in Africa', 203-205.

community'.³⁸³ The archaeologists of the CSRF, HRS and SAHRA could have used Prestwich Street as an opportunity to depart from past practices by taking into account indigenous values regarding the meaning and the treatment of the bones and indigenous appreciations of historical time and place. Instead they dug, collected and presented information in unimaginative ways. Without critical self-reflection, the archaeologists ignored a counter discourse constituted by the memories of a ghost town, the voices of those trying to speak with their hearts and the dreams of a South Africa with more equality.

Writing about working with indigenous communities, Zimmerman states that archaeological discourse can make a community's past intractable. The archaeologist writes about himself and his colleagues:

'We speak of the past as a cultural resource that is a public heritage and ourselves as being accountable to the public, but, in structural contradiction, we tell others and ourselves that we are the stewards of the past.'³⁸⁴

Aligned to this, the archaeologists at Prestwich Street cleared the way for a particular kind of 'politics of memory', in which a different development plan for the area was never discussed.³⁸⁵ Nor was the fact that the Prestwich Street became disputed seen as a reason to change its future. Their will to knowledge and their search for 'historical truth' made the archaeologists incapable of an engagement with the memories of the imaginary community, the community arts projects, the plays and the vigils, the poems and the protests of the PPPC.³⁸⁶ Recognizing that, as in Zimmerman's words, an event is connected to 'myriad other events, each of these subject to the perceptions of the people involved, however peripherally, in the happening', could have led to different ways of qualifying the heritage.³⁸⁷ The dominant interpretation of the bones in terms of artifacts instead of as ancestors appears to be the core of the controversy.

Moreover, an understanding of the multiplicities of worlds at Prestwich Street – to use Mbembe's term – points, I think, to a complexity of historical experiences and as such to a diversity of publics. Clearly, the management efforts of CSRF, HRS and SAHRA were not focused on determining *why* and *how* these different descendant communities of Prestwich Street know their pasts. Weeder said in an interview:

'They couldn't understand that we claimed the heritage as Africans and *not* as a minority group. We were saying: this is how African people approach the dead, approach memory, approach the graves.'³⁸⁸

Moreover, he explained:

³⁸³ Although I knowing that the term 'indigenous' is contested, I purposely use it here to make my discussion of archaeological practices in relation to the imaginary community of Prestwich Street part of a broader intellectual debate about postcolonial archaeology and indigenous communities.

³⁸⁴ Larry J. Zimmerman, 'First, be humble: working with Indigenous communities and other descendant communities', in: Claire Smith and H. Martin Wobst (eds.), *Indigenous archaeologies. Decolonizing theory and practice* (London and New York 2005) 301-314, here 307.

³⁸⁵ Rassool uses this term in the interview I had with him to describe the results of the practice of archaeology at Prestwich Street.

³⁸⁶ Michael Weeder informed me about the existence of the community arts project and the plays during an interview I had with him on 2 September 2005, Cape Town.

³⁸⁷ Zimmerman, 'First, be humble', 309.

³⁸⁸ Partial transcript of the interview with Michael Weeder, held on 2 September 2005 in Cape Town, recording part of collection of the author.

'This is a holocaust in terms of memory. We said we need time to come to terms with it means. *We don't even know what it means!*'

'A large sector of the descendants community of those skeletal remains, their ancestors, are so alienated from their own history, because slavery stripped away your identity, [and] took away your name. And apartheid just compounded that alienation. So, when we say: stop exhumation, then we say let us embark on a proper public consultation.'

'This is in continuity with the ways in which we conducted [the anti-apartheid] struggle, the ways in which we conducted popular education.'³⁸⁹

'There's never really a consciousness of *we were slaves*. The whole approach was to distance ourselves from that site of poverty that site of ignorance. So, there's no folk tradition and then apartheid comes... and consolidates it and compounds that enforced amnesia.'

'I do believe that the post-1994 conditions allow for a community to own its identity. We need to re-tell our stories.'

According to Weeder, the PPPC articulated their interests with reference to the preamble of the NHRA. Developed from the TRC, these dream passages invoked imaginations of healing the damages of a 'deep' past of slavery and forced removals.³⁹⁰ The formulation of the appeal of PPPC can be understood, I argue, as an attempt to deal with the three questions, which are, according to Mbembe, the direct result of the African condition. Reframed in my own words, these are: 1) *How can African suffering and life be written in a more positive manner?* 2) *How can the memory of slavery, colonization and apartheid be described in such a way that it enables forgetting?* 3) *How can the experiences of the 'exiled' Africans in the world be interpreted as part of an African experience?*³⁹¹

Interestingly, Weeder reconstructs his experience of Prestwich Street's community with references to local and global influences. Not only has the activist associated himself with a community of ex-slaves and the anti-apartheid struggle, he also refers to a specific memory of the mechanical destruction of human lives in Europe. Moreover, in recapturing his destiny and identity in the new South Africa Weeder resembles the position of the imaginary community of Prestwich Street with the culture of emancipation of the Afro-Americans. He says:

'Harlem's counterpart in South Africa is not Soweto, it's Eldorado-park. It's not Gugulethu, it's Manenberg, because it is [in the] same way uprooted, it's dealing with a different diaspora, but similar issues. And that's what we have to life up to reinvent.' [sic]

'The path to a South African culture is going come through via these ghetto cultures, these narrow cultures.'³⁹²

As such, Weeder's comments underlines Mbembe's proposition of the displaced character of the experiences of Africans.³⁹³ It might be obvious that the heritage managers did not (want to) recognize the complexity of both his response and

³⁸⁹ Partial transcript of the interview with Michael Weeder.

³⁹⁰ The NHRA was written in the same period as the TRC trials were held.

³⁹¹ Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing', 258-266.

³⁹² Partial transcript of the interview with Michael Weeder. Gugulethu and Soweto are 'black' or 'African' townships, whereas Eldorado-park and Manenberg are 'Coloured' townships in South Africa.

³⁹³ Mbembe uses the term 'Africans' loosely. He refers probably to all inhabitants of Africa and those who live elsewhere but associate themselves with the continent.

the reactions of others during the public consultation process. According Shepherd this is the traditional gesture of the local South African archaeologist 'keeping society at arms length'. To have something to say about the complexity and complicity of contemporary circumstances, he claims, archaeologists should 'mediate between folk and academic archaeologies', 'engage with issues of culture and identity, and the signs of a poetic sensibility thinking deeply through the past'.³⁹⁴ The language of CRM offered the discipline the necessary means to conceptualize the Prestwich Street heritage without being caught up in discussions around public history, memories of forced removals or social accountability.³⁹⁵ A similar point – analogous to that which Shepherd makes regarding the relationship between the discipline and society – is of relevance and poignancy when reviewing the state of the architectural practices at Prestwich Street.

Architecture

In the previous section I outlined the discursive context in which the architects Japha *et al* conducted their study on conservation-worthy structures in Green Point. Relevant for this study is Herwitz' remark that colonialism 'is not satisfied merely with hiding a people in its grip', it also 'turns to the past of the oppressed people and distorts, disfigures and destroys it'.³⁹⁶ Not only the styles of the building in this district, but also the 'official' study of the area's historical and cultural assets expresses the desire of the settler society to claim 'cultural difference from the native and hegemony over him'. According to Herwitz one can see, in South African architecture in particular, how it attaches itself to European models, while refusing to assimilate with the locality.³⁹⁷ Mbembe writes that 'built forms are themselves a projective extension of the society's archaic or primal fantasies, the ghost dances and the slave spectacles at its foundation'.³⁹⁸ From the assessment of the Green Point area one can conclude that the architects involved thought that erven 550-555 had no features of significance in terms of 'age combined with reasonable preservation or sympathetic alteration; and architectural or aesthetic quality'.³⁹⁹ As such the study confirmed the pastoral urban imaginary of the area in general and ignored its haunted dimension.

The technical conservation language used by the architects produces interesting discursive slippages. They write, for example:

'Criteria affecting the degree of intrinsic significance were:

- particular good preservation;
- good examples of different building types;
- particularly interesting features;
- scarcity value in the area;
- special aesthetic qualities.'

Thus, in the words of Japha and his colleagues, *intrinsic* significance can be measured by, amongst others, a degree of *good* preservation, a number of *interesting* features and *special* aesthetic qualities. Though perhaps obscured by the usage of the supposedly neutral discourse of CRM, these qualifications refer to a dominant

³⁹⁴ Shepherd, 'State of discipline', 844.

³⁹⁵ Shepherd, 'What does it mean "to give the past back to the people"?"

³⁹⁶ Herwitz, 'Modernism at the margins', 408.

³⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, 407.

³⁹⁸ Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of superfluity', 375.

³⁹⁹ Japha *et al*, 'Green and Sea Point conservation study', 3.

architectural regime of truth based on European categories.⁴⁰⁰ As such, the production of specific visual imaginations in Green Point's past is not questioned. Le Roux explains that during apartheid two opposing positions characterized the practices of architects: 'those who would not build because of politics, set against those who would not admit to the political for the sake of building'.⁴⁰¹ As a result, according to her, 'architecture as the production of spatialized political demands, utopian vision, and representations without permanence took its place'.⁴⁰²

Critics within the discipline encouraged the pursuit of organizational and multi-disciplinary approaches to project management and provoked practitioners to share their experiences in discursive forums. Nevertheless, very much alike the ways archaeologists viewed their practice under apartheid, many architects claimed that the spatial experience and form were realities that transcended their temporal and political context.⁴⁰³ Murray writes about Roelof Uytendogaardt, a seminal figure in South African architecture, that he referred to himself as a humanist and held onto 'a strong conviction, or "belief" in the capacity of design as a form making process to improve the quality of life'.⁴⁰⁴ Murray draws the attention to the politicised nature of South African space, including the use of modernist design as a form of apartheid control of culture and identity. She points at the lack of transformation with regard to the spatial disciplines. According to her:

'... there is a simplistic practicality, supposedly a new discourse aimed at nation building and addressing "urban problems" within the discourses of "development" in which practitioners involved in the reconstruction of South Africa still envision their role in ways that are primarily spatial in continuation of modernist epistemologies of design.'⁴⁰⁵

Instead of a disciplinary quest for, what Delpont describes as an 'aesthetic form as a vehicle for advancing the perceptive and interpretative capacities of all people, as also their sense of potency within the world'⁴⁰⁶, architectural practice in the post-apartheid period took place in a conservative epistemological context. The knowledges, which disciplinary practices produced, were mostly influenced by both nationalist sentiments and spatial commodification.⁴⁰⁷ In addition, Herwitz writes that 'the tasks of recovering "traditional dwelling" for a modernizing society or significantly remaking international models in the light of local geographies and cityscapes have been beset by a host of stylistic and economic concerns'.⁴⁰⁸ During the Prestwich Street public consultation process heritage managers repeatedly articulated the value of the site, and more generally of the broader Green Point area, as a commodity. Among architects or planners no critical debate took place regarding the political meaning of this particular space in the past. Nor did they reflect on what a postcolonial architectural perspective could mean for the stylizing of the structures on the site in relation to projects of memory, identity and restitution.

Instead the nationalist drive to refurbish the symbolic character of Cape Town's urban environment became explicit in the plans of the heritage managers for

⁴⁰⁰ Herwitz, 'Modernism at the margins', 409.

⁴⁰¹ Le Roux, Le Roux, 'Undisciplined practices', 352.

⁴⁰² Ibidem, 353.

⁴⁰³ Ibidem, 354.

⁴⁰⁴ Murray, 'Spaces of discipline/Disciplines of space', 5.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibidem, 11.

⁴⁰⁶ Delpont, 'Signpost for retrieval: a visual framework for enabling memory of place and time', 44.

⁴⁰⁷ Mbembe in 'Aesthetics of superfluity', 393.

⁴⁰⁸ Herwitz, 'Modernism at the margins', 408-409.

the St. Andrews Memorial Garden and its associated narrative. In addition, the cleansing ceremony and the procession of the bones to the Woodstock hospital demonstrated how heritage became articulated in the discursive context of the spectacle of the rainbow society.⁴⁰⁹ The wish of SAHRA and the City to reconcile the bones with the cityscape ignored the fact that public history and memory is also influenced by 'the politics of experiencing the place today as 'contested territory'.⁴¹⁰ Importantly, Mbembe argues nationalism underestimates the wide variety of African experiences of colonial conquest. Instead, it creates an African discourse of victims (Africans) and perpetrators (the outside world). Moreover, at the heart of the 'cult of victimization' he discovers a hatred of the rest of the world, which is supposedly conspiring against Africa.⁴¹¹ Mbembe says:

'On the basis of [the] uniqueness, Africa is supposed to reinvent its relationship to itself and the world, to own itself, and to escape from the obscure regions and the opaque world (the "Dark Continent") to which history has consigned it.'⁴¹²

Interestingly, Mbembe is of the opinion that contemporary African cultural formations – and as such architectural practices – emerge from peoples' 'ability to treat the past both as open-ended' and as 'a negotiation of those aspects or fragments of the past necessary for life to go on in the present'.⁴¹³

The postcolony consists, according to Mbembe, of several public spaces. Therefore, the identity of the postcolonial subject has to be flexible enough to negotiate between these different spheres. As a result, according to this scholar, the African presence is written in a mode of hallucination. It loses its sense of proportion.⁴¹⁴ Interesting in this regard is how Philippides, the architect of The Rockwell, articulates his inspiration for the design of the building. He remarked during an interview:

'If you look at Green Point as an area, it is almost a strange area. It has a very industrial feel to it. But is really probably only one of the parts of Cape Town that is almost strategically located. Because it is located in an area where the real estate values are really high. So you are getting a certain kind of clients who are putting money into that area. But it is also semi-industrial, so there is almost a contradiction. It is a particular industrial space and a particular expensive real estate space. A lot of the starting points of the design came from the existing fabric. If you go to Napier Street there is a little Anatolian restaurant. That is probably one of my favourite buildings in the whole of Cape Town.'⁴¹⁵

The architect's ideas in for the building were based on two elements. Firstly, he reads the area in terms of its usage and function. In Cape Town's Green Point, as in many Western cities where labour intensive industry disappears, industrial-type buildings become popular among urban professionals and as a result real estate prizes rise. Secondly, Phillipides is inspired by the materiality of the surrounding buildings.

⁴⁰⁹ More in general the same phenomenon is visible at the Cape Town Memory Project.

⁴¹⁰ Lucien le Grange, 'District six: urban place and public memory', in: Ciraj Rassool and Sandra Prosalendis (eds.), *Recalling community in Cape Town. Creating and curating the District Six museum* (Cape Town 2001) 106-112, here 112.

⁴¹¹ Mbembe, 'African modes of self-writing', 252.

⁴¹² *Ibidem*, 254.

⁴¹³ Mbembe, 'On the power of the false', 363-637.

⁴¹⁴ Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 144 and 165.

⁴¹⁵ Partial transcript of interview with Michael Phillipides, held on 1 September 2005 in Cape Town, recording part of the collection the author.

Here the Greek-Capetonian architect makes reference to the fabric of a restaurant named Anatolia. He explained further:

'What I find really appealing about the whole Green Point area is the attention to detail, the fact that buildings were built properly in those days. If you look at detailing on the Anatolia building: there are bricks, which have been turned, there are bricks which have been cobbled, laid, straight up. The intricacies in the laying on particular types bricks are just fantastic. This is the feel which the new building will have.'⁴¹⁶

I would like to suggest here that the symbolic meaning of the restaurant – Anatolia, though geographically a current part of Turkey, was in ancient history part of the Greek civilization – forms the central stylistic image for the Greek fantasy of the architect and developer inspiring the design of The Rockwell.

In the aftermath of decolonization, writes Mbembe, a 'matrix of plural styles, a striated, striped city that concatenates the most formal and modern with the most informal' becomes visible. Post-apartheid architecture, according to him, 'aims to return to the "archaic" as a way of freezing rapid changes in the temporal and political structures of the surrounding world.'⁴¹⁷ As such, the overarching New York Jazz Age narrative, manifest in the design and conceptualisation of The Rockwell, and very much like the resorts described by Bombardella and Hall, integrates 'a range of design, development and management services'; the combination of the primary attractors of shopping, restaurants and exclusive living; 'advanced surveillance and policing that exclude those without money to spend and ensures a high degree of internal security'.⁴¹⁸ The architect and developer have little interest in matters of public history. Their primary purpose is 'to surprise and delight as they draw visitors in the heart of their world' and the individual experience of The Rockwell.⁴¹⁹

According to Mbembe, the architecture of buildings such as The Rockwell asks not only of the spectator to forget the past, but to forget that it is itself a sign of forgetting. As such, the new construction on the Prestwich Street site 'reiterates the pathological structure and hysteria inherited from the racial city'. Therefore Mbembe speaks of 'an architecture of hysteria'.⁴²⁰ Instead of engaging with postcolonial theory, inventing new epistemologies and new spatial practices, the architects have created at Prestwich Street a thematic simulacrum fetishizing civilizations from other parts of the globe. Nothing of the visual imagination of The Rockwell is inspired by the remnants of the local society, namely the bones and their memories. As such, old knowledge projects remain undisputed, reaffirming colonial patterns of exchange and undermining attempts to claim identity and history.

In opposition to practices of freezing and controlling time as represented by The Rockwell, the Memorial park and the intention of the multi-disciplinary research project on Green Point's history, I wish to explore, in the last part of this section, ethical position regarding disciplinary practices at Prestwich Street.

Archi-violence and the ethics of reconstructing identity

In pursuit of an ethical approach to archaeological practice, Keisuke Sato problematizes the *right* to appropriate a site and its memory as a means to construct the identity. Sato's aim is to manufacture a paradigm shift that focuses on the site as

⁴¹⁶ Partial transcript of interview with Michael Phillippides.

⁴¹⁷ Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of superfluity', 400 and 403.

⁴¹⁸ Hall and Bombardella, 'Las Vegas in Africa', 21.

⁴¹⁹ Ibidem, 22.

⁴²⁰ Mbembe in 'Aesthetics of superfluity', 402

an accumulation of traces testifying the dead that lived there before. By questioning whether the dead approves to transfer his/her memory to the living, he disrupts the discipline's agency to produce knowledge about the past. He writes:

'...the appropriation of sites by the living for constructing their identities is violence over others, the dead and the things. Inevitably, using the archaeological sites involves the *archi-violence* [my emphasis] over others, that is, not a material violence over the ruins, but an ontological violence over the dead and things.'⁴²¹

According to Sato, the appropriation of a site in order to establish identity means the annihilation of the existence of the bones and depriving them of their own rights. I suggest that annihilation in terms of social history happened at Prestwich Street, because of the practices of both archaeology *and* architecture. In the preceding discussions, I showed how the nature of the disciplines at this site are reflected in the objects and narratives they produce establishing a particular urban identity.

Yet, even if the heritage managers had chosen a different approach to the management of the heritage Prestwich Street, violence – through archaeological and architectural method – would have been unavoidable.⁴²² Therefore, Sato's suggestion – not to oppress and disguise, but to reveal archi-violence – is of some importance. Bauman explains that 'the civilizing process is, among others, a process of divesting the use and deployment of violence from moral calculus, and of emancipating the desiderata or rationality from interference of ethical norms or moral inhibitions'.⁴²³ Therefore, and not least in the light of the institutional involvement in Cape Town's past of forced removals, I assert that a departure from a banal approach, a practice without human consciousness, is a necessity. Sato's plea for a new imagination, which accepts to be exposed and haunted by the remnants of a site, is profoundly different from the management approach of SAHRA, the HRS and the CSRF.

Giving agency to the dead is likely to evoke new approaches to deep time, new experiments in the practice of these disciplines and, as such, it could give different shape to projects of restitution, reparation and memory in Cape Town's urban environment. In general a more dynamic conception of the past and its multiple manifestations, as Meskell points out, could evoke a different visual imagination in the postcolony.

An extra dimension has to be added to this problematic though. As the result of the globalization of capitalism and the growing impact of information technologies, namely, human perception is transformed and, as such, are local identities transformed in the process. I discuss this matter in the last section of this chapter.

5.3 Global city, local heritage

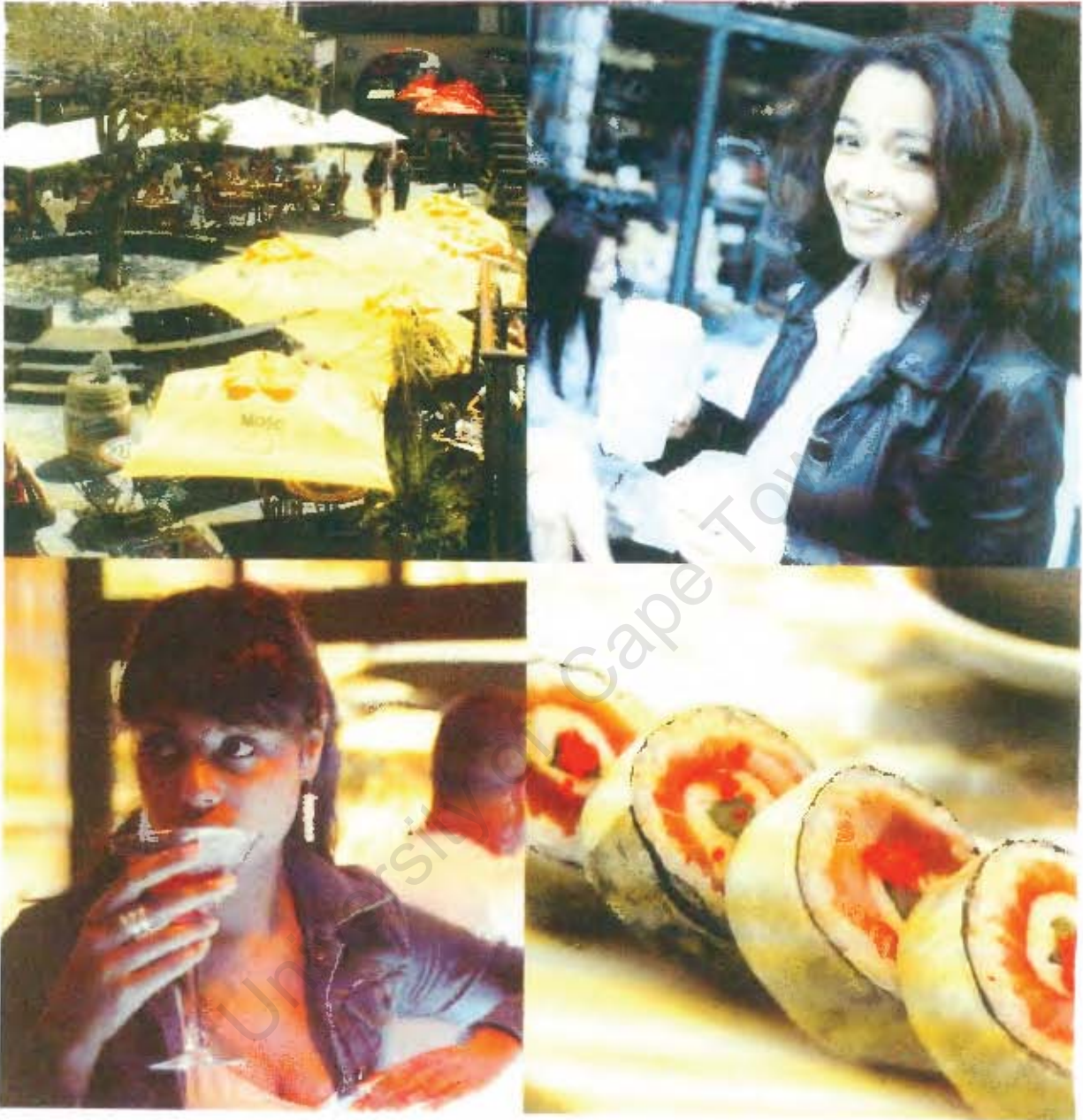
Situated in close range to the V&A Waterfront, the Prestwich Street site is part of the most internationalized area in Cape Town and probably in the whole of South Africa. As a space, this part of the city is profoundly globalized. Not only because of the great numbers of international tourists it attracts and the wide-range of global consumer choices it offers, but also because of the successes of the Waterfront

⁴²¹ Keisuke Sato, 'The site of memories, the site of things. Against the identity politics', paper delivered at the WAC congress () 3

⁴²² In Sato's terms, namely, every form of archaeological (and architectural) practice on a site is a form of violence of the remnants or their cultural objects.

⁴²³ Bauman, *Modernity and the holocaust*, 28.

'The feeling is upmarket. The lifestyle is cosmopolitan. The crowd is young and trendy.'



14. Collage of The Rockwell brochure (Manuscripts and Archives Department, UCT).

Company in copying its formula worldwide. The company is a consultant to similar waterfront developments in Port Louis (Mauritius), Portsmouth (United Kingdom), Libreville (Gabon), Lagos (Nigeria), Gelendzhik (Russia) and Barcelona (Spain).⁴²⁴ Through the Waterfront development area Cape Town partakes of 'an increasingly complex organizational architecture that cuts across borders and is deterritorialized'.⁴²⁵ As such, the Prestwich Street dead were actors on a global stage where national authorities had to participate 'in creating the enabling institutional and legal environment that contribute to the formation of this cross-border geography for crucial functions largely embedded in the network of global cities'.⁴²⁶ Sassen describes how these 'cities that are strategic sites in the global economy tend, in part, to disconnect from their region'.⁴²⁷ As a result, elites become denationalized and have their own culture.⁴²⁸ The brochure of The Rockwell speaks to this global culture (figure 14):

'Local and foreign investors are looking towards Cape Town, because it is the next big thing. And as the next big thing, property in this highly lucrative market is becoming more exclusive. The demand for world-class apartments is on the increase.'

'The feeling is upmarket. The lifestyle is cosmopolitan. The crowd is young and trendy. And THE ROCKWELL is at the heart of it all.'⁴²⁹

According to Castells the global cultural expressions are increasingly enclosed and shaped by what he calls an electronic hypertext, created by an integrated system of global electronic media. The virtuality of this text he argues is a fundamental dimension of our reality, providing 'the symbols and icons from which we think and thus exist'.⁴³⁰ An example in this regard is Phillippides' comments on the brochure of The Rockwell. The architect legitimized this presentation in the following terms:

'I think it is like everything: if you go to a restaurant then there are pictures of food that make you hungry. That's the point of the brochure: make you hungry for the building.'

'At the end of the day it is the same as anything you are selling, it is about creating an image. If you think about cigarettes, a few years ago there were all these commercials with good-looking people living this magnificence life, playing on jet skis, beautiful women, well-built men and at the end they all light a cigarette.

If you buy a cigarette, you might not necessarily get the lifestyle. But that is the image they try to portray on you.'⁴³¹

Furthermore, Castells explains that this hypertext has a fundamental effect on politics. As the result of flows of information in the global networks new power hierarchies are created. Importantly, the sociologist asserts that in these hierarchies the new sites of power are peoples' minds.⁴³² I argue here that the outcomes of the heritage

⁴²⁴ URL: www.waterfront.co.za/profile/external_projects/projects.php: 'International projects' (accessed 8-2-2006).

⁴²⁵ Mbembe and Nuttall, 'Writing the world from an African metropolis', 360.

⁴²⁶ Sassen, *Global networks, linked cities*, 2.

⁴²⁷ Ibidem, 15.

⁴²⁸ Ibidem, 24-25.

⁴²⁹ Brochure of The Rockwell. Luxurious De Waterkant Living.

⁴³⁰ Castells, 'Material for an exploratory theory of the network city', 12-13.

⁴³¹ Partial transcript of interview with Michael Phillippides.

⁴³² Castells, 'Material for an exploratory theory of the network city', 20 and Castells, *The information age: economy, society and culture. Volume II: The power of identity*, 425.

management of Prestwich Street are, amongst others, determined by the fact that the discourse of the Cape forms the base for the hypertext of Cape Town as a global tourist destination. As a result, the counter discourse – in which the Prestwich Street dead figured as ancestors of the repressed and forcibly removed urban blacks and Coloureds – could not enter the shared imagination of this place.

Just as the Waterfront area is not only a high securitized space of global consumer culture, but also 'a place of tensions, of compromises, of contrasts, and of ongoing identity negotiations in a post-apartheid, globalizing society'⁴³³, the cultural context in which the developments at Prestwich Street took place is an irregular one. This is apparent, amongst others, in the way in which the PPPC, on the one hand, resists the dominant image of black culture characterized by jazz and dance as represented by the brochure of the Rockwell. Moreover, they stated:

'The proposed present development will contribute to the further gentrification of this part of the city: another New York, or a little London. It says nothing about the Africa which is ours.'⁴³⁴

And, on the other hand, Weeder referred to black ghetto cultures in North America as examples for black emancipation in South Africa. Prestwich Street as a local heritage, articulated in the discursive context of global black urban deprivation, was also part of Weeder's imagination of Africaness. As such, it was probably more acceptable for the heritage managers of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF.

Appadurai's thoughts on global scapes makes the irregular cultural context at Prestwich Street understandable. He claims that individuals move through cultural landscape formed by the disjunctures and difference of a global economy. The mediascapes provide viewers, such as Weeder, with a large and complex repertoire of images from around the world. Moreover, Appadurai argues that with the spread of ideological and cultural images across the globe, the internal coherence – previously constituted by a Euro-American master narrative – has loosened, which causes a degree of semantic confusion.⁴³⁵ The codification of discourse of the building makes it possible, for example, for a white developer the use the image of the New York Jazz Age – part of black American culture – for an apartment complex stylistically inspired by a fantasy about an Anatolian restaurant, which will be built on a colonial burial ground. Appadurai writes that global advertising is a key technology in the global cultural economy. He claims:

'These images of agency are increasingly distortions of a world of merchandising so subtle that the consumer is consistently helped to believe that her or she is an actor, where in fact he or she is at best a chooser.'⁴³⁶

The outcomes of the heritage management of Prestwich Street can be summarized by what this social theorist describes as the triumph of the universal and resilience of the particular. The impact of global flows on local culture in Cape Town and vice versa is not a new phenomenon. Since the early days of the settlement of process of creolization is taking place, the outcomes are the result of a complex

⁴³³ URL: www.africanstudies.uct.ac.za/postamble/vol2/waterfront.pdf: Lindsay Ryan, 'Identity, conflict, and memory in Cape Town's public spaces: unearthing the waterfront', in: *Postamble 2* (2005) 35-43, here 41 (accessed 12-1-2006).

⁴³⁴ Prestwich Place Project Committee, Submission to DAC Tribunal, 9.

⁴³⁵ Appadurai, *Modernity at large*, 35-36.

⁴³⁶ *Ibidem*, 42.

process between the global and the local of resistance, collision and use of force. Today at Prestwich Street, this 'mutual canibalization' shows its ugly face in the anger during the public participation process, the lack of political support to test the act, and the institutional ignorance of the city's past; and, finally, in the empty stylistic message conveyed by The Rockwell in the future.⁴³⁷ Its brighter side is the articulation of a counter-discourse regarding identity and heritage management in Cape Town, making heritage managers (hopefully) more conscious and self-critical of the symbolic dimension of future development projects in the Green Point area.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed the last sub-question, namely: *How can the heritage management of Prestwich Street be interpreted in relation to the institutional memory of the city's past?* In response to this question I posed that the institutional memory is given shape by the discourses of the Cape and of Cultural Resources Management, as well as by the character of the local disciplines of architecture and archaeology. Moreover, I made clear that the institutional recollection of Cape Town's past is under pressure of a new global geography of power.

More precisely, I studied the impact of the discourse of the Cape and the pastoral imagination on the conservation study of the Green Point area. As such, I attempted to illustrate that this fantasy caused the representation of The Rockwell and St Andrew's memorial park as a timeless zone, as such constituting only a limited departure from this dominant discursive model. In addition to this, the tropes of a lack and otherness stayed prevalent in the assessment of the Prestwich Street site by the heritage managers. I assert here that the continuation of discursive formations originating in the postcolonial society reflects a limited urban transformation. The reading of cultural heritage in the context of planning and development is partly evoked by the lack of disciplinary transformation of both archaeology and architecture and an institutional practice of the outsourcing of knowledge production.

I also showed how both disciplines – by a tradition of keeping society at arms length – were not capable of developing new epistemological strategies. Simplistic practices were given shape in the discursive context of nation-building and development. As a result of these practices the Capetonians who resisted the course of events were not offered the opportunity to reclaim their identity. Especially in the light of the history of forced removals I judge this insensitive. The discourse of CRM offered archaeologists and architects the language to legitimize their practices. In response this banal archaeology and the architecture of hysteria I propose to take in account the notion of archi-violence. By deconstructing archaeological and architectural practices at the site, revealing the violence over the past and giving the remnants – in Prestwich Street's case the bones – the agency to evoke new practices new ethical projects can come to the fore.

In Prestwich Street's case this would mean in the first place the acknowledgement of the contradictions, the use of force and the tragedies, which form the foundation of the modern character of The Rockwell, St. Andrew's memorial garden and SAHRA's research project. Moreover, time would be created for the dead.

The fact, though, that the heritage management of Prestwich Street site is also directly influenced by globalization makes the matter more complex. One of the

⁴³⁷ Ibidem, 43

products of the global cultural economy is the continuous fluidity of local images. Spaces become commodities and narratives a mystifying hotch-potch adjusted to the global hypertext, in which youthful forgetting through the nostalgic romantization of the essence of a place dominates practices of critical reflection. The juxtaposition of the images of the age of New York jazz, the unearthing of the bones, the memorial garden, but as well the Greek fantasy and the procession to the Woodstock hospital is an account the disparate and intersecting ways of stylizing Cape Town. The institutional memory of this City accommodates these practices out of fear, nostalgia, but as well, out of the dream for a new South Africa. Although 'a play of intervals enables everyone to construct his or her own story'⁴³⁸, the dominant modern master narrative remains of influence on the stylizing of Prestwich Street.

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⁴³⁸ Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of superfluity', 404.

6. CONCLUSION: STYLIZING CAPE TOWN

'Whenever colonization sets in with its dominant culture it devours the native culture and leaves behind a bastardized culture that can only thrive at the rate and pace allowed it by the dominant culture. This is what happened to the African culture. It is called a subculture purely because the African people in the urban complexes are mimicking the white man rather unashamedly.'
Steve Biko⁴³⁹

Throughout the length of this dissertation, I have dealt with matters related to these thoughts of Steve Biko – the founder and leader of South Africa's black consciousness movement –, which he articulated in the early 1970s. In response to my central question – *What is heritage at Cape Town's Prestwich Street according HRS, SAHRA and CSRF?* – I, on the one hand, have emphasized Biko's central thesis: that a dominant culture, or more precisely a colonial discourse, remains to determine, to a large extent, cultural practices in South Africa. On the other hand, I have shown that the everyday life, in for example Cape Town, is more complex than the famous activist sets out in the above cited quotation. That is, South Africa's cultural landscape is also created through the differences and disjunctures of the flows of the global cultural economy, importantly, in conjunction with struggles for control, voices and texts at a local level. As such, Cape Town's cityscapes, under the influences of the ending of apartheid and globalization, have become spaces of difference. The practice and discourse of three institutions in Cape Town – namely HRS, SAHRA and CSRF – regarding the heritage management of Prestwich Street, reflected this complexity.

In particular, I interrogated the notion of heritage as it became apparent through the praxis of these organizations in relation to the human remains uncovered at a construction site in 2003. As such, I explained in response to a first sub-question – *What has happened at Prestwich Street since the discovery of the burial ground in 2003?* – the archaeological nature of the script concerning the management of the former burial place. The archaeological gaze determined that the unearthing of the bones could be framed as a 'discovery'. Moreover, the script for Prestwich Street, in which archaeological and development interests went hand in hand, resulted in a formulation of the significance of the site in general archaeological terms. According to HRS, SAHRA and CSRF the burial place consisted of people whose contribution was essential to building of the city. Therefore the Prestwich Street dead were the ancestors of all the inhabitants of contemporary Cape Town.

In the course of the public consultation process the archaeologizing of the heritage became disputed. During the meetings a great number of people addressed that the burial ground was known; in addition, they spoke out against exhumation. These contestations and the claims of historical connectedness with the dead were managed and controlled by HRS, SAHRA and CSRF. As such, they showed a reluctance to consider this burial as a potential urban space where identities could be reconstructed and reclaimed.

Instead of demonstrating a degree of empathy with those claiming the human remains as their ancestors, these organizations designed a plan for a memorial garden

⁴³⁹ Steve Biko, 'Some African cultural concepts', in: Aelred Stubbs C.R. (ed.), *Steve Biko. I write what I like. A selection of his writings* (first edition 1978; Johannesburg 2004) 44-51, here 51.

for the re-interment of the bones. In reference to Schönfeldt, I would like to suggest here that the heritage managers constructed, as such, new visuals at Prestwich Street when found in the absence of a coherent narrative. At the same time, their attempts to eternalize the history of Green Point were aimed at a redirection of the past towards the present official discourse of reconciliation and the rainbow nation. More generally speaking, I assert that, The Rockwell, the proposed St. Andrews Memorial Garden and SAHRA's multi-disciplinary research project are the result of the re-appropriation, as well as, the annihilation of specific elements of the history of this site; a process which failed to be reconciled with the painful memories of those forcibly removed from the area.

In addressing a second sub-question – *In what way can the praxis of SAHRA, HRS and CSRF related to the heritage of Prestwich Street be characterized?* – I explained that these organizations functioned through and within the contexts of the NHRA. The dream passages in this act reflect a desire for an overarching narrative of a national past of South Africa. As such, the NHRA does not incorporate a sense of incompleteness in the country's cultural identities. The heritage managers, instead, constantly mediated the pasts they collected, represented and displayed. I suggest here that the managers of SAHRA, especially, were engaged in a continuous struggle to ensure that they controlled the interpretation and production of the past of this part of Cape Town. Thinking through the city as an exhibition and the heritage managers, therefore, as curators, I propose to consider their practices of collecting as constituting acts of improvisation. At Prestwich Street the heritage managers were, as such, not focused on creating spaces or objects of contestation. In relation to the burial place, I argue, that the proposition to stop the exhumation was never a real political consideration.

Instead, I addressed, SAHRA contracted consultants – namely, CSRF and ACO – to collect knowledge of the burial place. In addition they engaged with religious leaders to legitimize the treatment of the bones. These forms of outsourcing of knowledge production and public responsibility indicate the ignorance of institutions such as SAHRA and the HRS regarding the complexity of the notion of the public in Cape Town. The impulses of the officials to manage historical closure and to point out the distinct uniqueness of the area can also be understood in the context of the official discourse of reconciliation and the rainbow society. As such, the management of the heritage of Prestwich Street by HRS, SAHRA and the CSRF did not include a conceptualization of the knowledge-power relation that established the exclusion of groups of Coloured and black people in the past and the marginalization of their memories in the present. Thus - even though the reports of the consultants presented the knowledge, which, indirectly, linked the forced removals with the current unearthing of the graves - the archaeologists continued digging as authorized by the heritage managers.

This course of events is especially surprising since there is a body of critical texts on indigenous archaeologies and the treatment of human remains. I want to suggest here, that as result of a development urgency and a focus on 'reasonable' solutions these texts and codes were not considered. Therefore, the management of the events following the unearthing of the human remains can be qualified as, to a certain degree, unimaginative and banal. Importantly, no attempts were made to depart from old practices in the light of the city's history of urban planning and development. The managers did not recognize the multiple places of the production of historical knowledge at Prestwich Street. Instead, the notion of heritage at Prestwich

Street - as brought to the fore in the praxis of the heritage managers - seemed to be conditioned by heritage management practices in the past.

In response to a third sub-question – *How can the heritage management of Prestwich Street be interpreted in relation to the institutional memory of the city's past?* – I examined the extent to which the urban transformation of Cape Town was limited by the traditions of conservation it inherited from the past. In the fifth chapter of this dissertation I showed that the institutional gaze on the city was determined by the discourse of the Cape. A central image in the reading of the site by HRS, SAHRA and CSRF is, I assert, what Coetzee names, the isolationist romance of the return to the family farm. An interpretation in these terms is not only visible in the Green Point conservation study, but was also reflected in the narrative accompanying the design of The Rockwell. In this dream topography of the Cape the landscape is presented as a timeless zone; I propose to understand the ambition to eternalize history and freeze time – which is evident in the narrative of both the plans for The Rockwell and St. Andrew's Memorial Garden - as a perpetuation of this discourse.

Another discursive formation, which is prevalent in the analysis of the conservation worthy structures in Green Point, is a reading of this district in terms of its marketable surplus. As such, I argue, the area is evaluated in the mirror of the development of 'the West'. Consequently, the tropes of a lack and otherness remain firmly in place. The local disciplinary practices of archaeology and architecture re-enforce, to a degree, these discursive formations. In addition, the supposedly neutral discourse of CRM, of which the NHRA and the City's strategy document are the products, meant that the archaeologists, were not challenged to consider the politics of their practice. At Prestwich Street it becomes apparent, namely, that no new epistemological approaches were developed. As such, the counter discourse articulated during the public consultation process and the appeal period could not be conceptualized by these professionals and incorporated in their practices at the site. Moreover, the relations of knowledge production regarding Cape Town cityscape remained unchanged. An explanation for the lack of political awareness and engagement is the disciplinary tradition to keep society at arm's length.

The visual history at Prestwich Street, which is and will be produced, amongst others, by HRS, SAHRA, and CSRF, gives, in my understanding, account of this lack of disciplinary engagement, but represents as well the fractured imagination of the future of Cape Town. As such it shows the state of the institutions responsible for the transformation of heritage management in this city. Moreover, the heritage management of Prestwich Street displays the complexity of global influences on local debates on urban development and heritage. Nevertheless, I think – even when I take the complexity of Cape Town's transformation in consideration - that these heritage organizations could, and should, have practiced in more ethical ways. In the light of a history of urban displacement and politically, culturally and spatial marginalization, the victims of forced removals, I assert, should not be victimized again by redirecting their past to the dominant political and cultural spirit of the present. The notion of 'time for the dead' offers an opportunity to re-engage with this public and the memory of the violence and destruction of its past.

Thus, I conclude that the notion of heritage at Prestwich Street, according to HRS, SAHRA and CSRF, represents, amongst others, the difficulty of going beyond colonial consciousness, and, as such the complexity of creating spaces and memorials that reflect everyday life in contemporary Cape Town. The disparate practice of these

organizations contributed to a stylized heritage. I assert here that the outcomes of their management practices are, partly, conditioned by the institutional memory of the city's past, as well as, the secrets, the ambivalences, the ironies, the tragedies and the contradictions which constitute the city's present. The interrogation of the heritage management of Prestwich Street unravels, on the one hand, the intricacies of the transformation of the post-apartheid city; on the other hand, it reveals the rise of a counter discourse and, as such, potential new windows on Cape Town's urban environment. Indeed, the unearthing of the Prestwich Street dead opens ways for articulating new narratives concerning space, memory and identity. Already, the haunting presence of the bones disturbs the coherence of the display of The Rockwell, St. Andrews Memorial Garden and SAHRA's multi-disciplinary research project. In addition, the burials at Prestwich Street, which re-entered Green Point in 2003, currently haunt its character as a place of art galleries, boutiques, nightclubs, and restaurants.

In January 2006 I drank a coffee in the neighbouring Cape Quarter area. I tried to imagine the ways, in which the ghosts of Prestwich Street frequented me while writing my dissertation. Later - I walked along the construction site again - I saw that construction workers were working on the floor of the underground parking – at least eight meters under the street level. Solid new structures penetrated deep into the foundational layers of the city. I mused on a suitable epistemology and form of representation for the Prestwich Street spectacle. Perhaps dance, poetry, theatre or art performances are more powerful ways of jamming old images and these new foundations. More importantly, these forms of expression might be more successful in conveying the anger, the fear, the desire and the dreams that were unleashed at this place.

As a student in the field of African studies, I argue, that the exposure to the ghosts of Prestwich Street can have a challenging epistemological impact. I propose, namely, that the counter discourse can be used as a source to evoke new critical questions regarding the heritage management of the site, as well as, regarding the nature of the disciplines. As such, the notion of time for the dead might inspire a postcolonial academic refiguration. Moreover, with respect to Mudimbe's remark that the development of discourse has both negative and positive aspects, I attempted in this dissertation to write critical about the stylising of Prestwich Street, as well as in tones of empathy and hopeful expectation. Thus, the heritage of Prestwich Street might inspire a different imagination of the future of Cape Town.

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