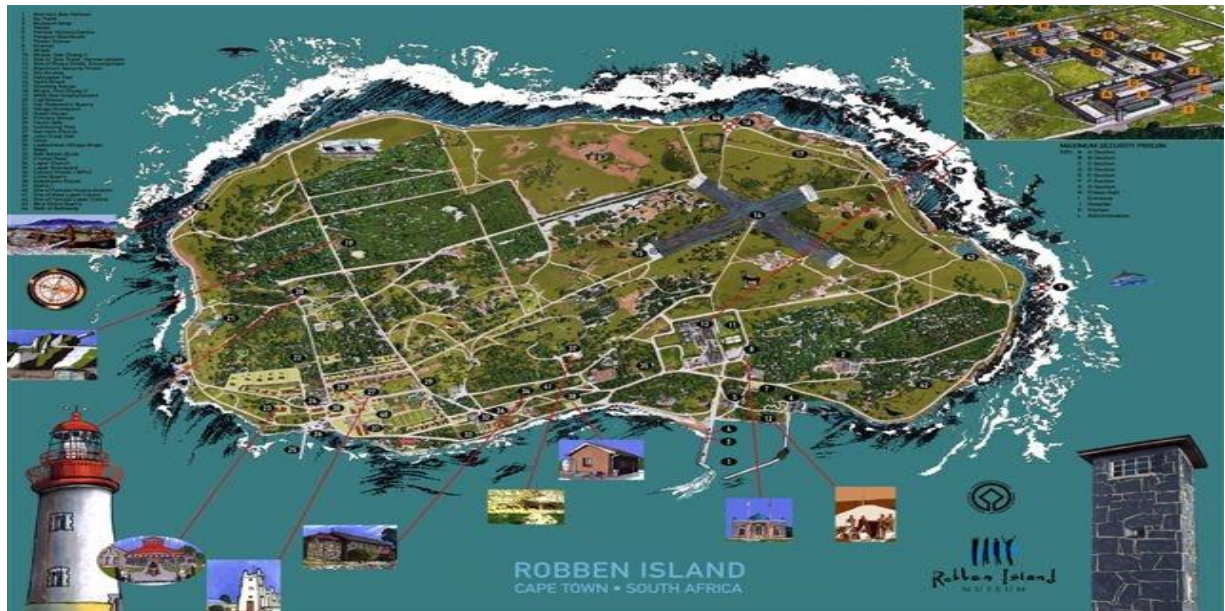


What is the impact of World Heritage status and related positioning for a tourist audience on Robben Island's meanings and public narratives?



Mandla Ngewu

Mini-Dissertation: Submitted in partial fulfilment of MPhil (Conservation of the Built Environment)

School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics

University of Cape Town

Supervisor: Dr Naomi Roux

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DECLARATION

I, Mandla Ngewu, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it at any other university for a degree.

Further, I declare that all sources of information have been acknowledged appropriately.

Signed by candidate

Mandla Ngewu

Date: 13 February 2021

ABSTRACT

The advent of democracy brought about changes in the cultural heritage landscape. Cultural heritage used to be a preserve of the rich and experts. Heritage of places is not found lying around for it to be discovered, but it is continually reproduced to suit the needs of that particular society. Reproduction of heritage is due to it being amenable to be used and reused to suit the needs of that grouping.

Cultural heritage in South Africa offers is used as an economic tool as it offers easy access for participants to the cultural tourism industry. The capital outlay is usually minimal. Politicians also use cultural heritage to create new identities. In South Africa, during the early stages of democracy, heritage was used to promote national reconciliation and nation-building.

Robben Island was used as a flagship institution to open up the cultural heritage space and give voice to those previously denied access or whose heritage was distorted or misrepresented. Robben Island, a place of atrocity stemming from the colonial period, was seen as a beacon of hope and promoted as a symbol of the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. The site's positioning as an economic tool and fostering notions of national unity invariably leads to selecting a layer that will resonate with the nationalist ideals.

The exploratory study uses interviews with tour guides and heritage experts to examine the message told to visitors. The results obtained are contrasted with the national legislation, the site's conservation management plans, and UNESCO's requirements for listed sites. At an international level, UNESCO is concerned with preserving the outstanding universal value of sites. The preservation of the heritage at a local level is done through national legislation.

Key words: Outstanding universal value, heritage value, preservation

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ACCRONYMS

AHD	Authorised Heritage Discourse
AZAPO	Azanain People's Organisation
EPP(s)	Ex- Political Prisoner(s)
RIM	Robben Island Museum
RI	Robben Island
ANC	African National Congress
NMG	Nelson Mandela Gateway
NRM	Nelson Rholihlahla Mandela
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
NUM	New Unity Movement
BCM	Black Consiousness Movement
VOC	Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act
ICMP	Integrated Conservation Management Plan
WHS	World Heritage Site
WHL	World Heritage List

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2 Chapter 1

2.1 Introduction

Robben Island was one of the first South African sites to be added to the World Heritage List in 1996. Exile, isolation, hard labour, segregation, and discrimination are intricately linked to the island's history. From the 1400s, the island fed stranded sailors heading East. It also served as a post office for ships passing by the Cape. To feed the growing Cape Town settlement, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) attempted to establish gardens and raise sheep on the island in the 1650s. Following that, uncooperative Khoikhoi leaders like Autshumato and Dawid Stuurman were exiled to Robben Island (Mellet 2020). VOC rebels and enslaved people would be sent to Robben Island. Similarly, the British used the island to exile opponents of their South African conquest.

During the early 1900s, the island was used as a leprosarium and mental health facility (Deacon 2004). During WWII, it was a major military installation and training ground. During apartheid, various leaders of political movements were imprisoned, most on Robben Island. Because of its role in transforming South Africa from a repressive apartheid state to a democratic state, Robben Island is known as "the university". The older leadership encouraged learning and mentored the younger prisoners. The younger prisoners were the revolutionaries of 1976, many of whom were Black Consciousness Movement activists. The leadership in prison realised the importance of maintaining the struggle's moral high ground (Marback 2004). The struggle's values of good leadership, conflict resolution and good morals were preserved through education and mentoring. The imprisonment of political leaders for South African and Namibian liberation became a rallying point for a free and democratic state. While this is the most well-known history of Robben Island, political imprisonment dates to the 17th-century colonial era.

Autshumato, Makana, Langalibalele and Sayed Abdurahman Moturu are famous anticolonial prisoners imprisoned on Robben Island. Govan Mbeki, Robert Sobukwe, Saths Cooper, Malungisa Siyothula, Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, Ahmed Kathrada and Walter Sisulu are notable political prisoners during the political imprisonment period (Pheko 2002).

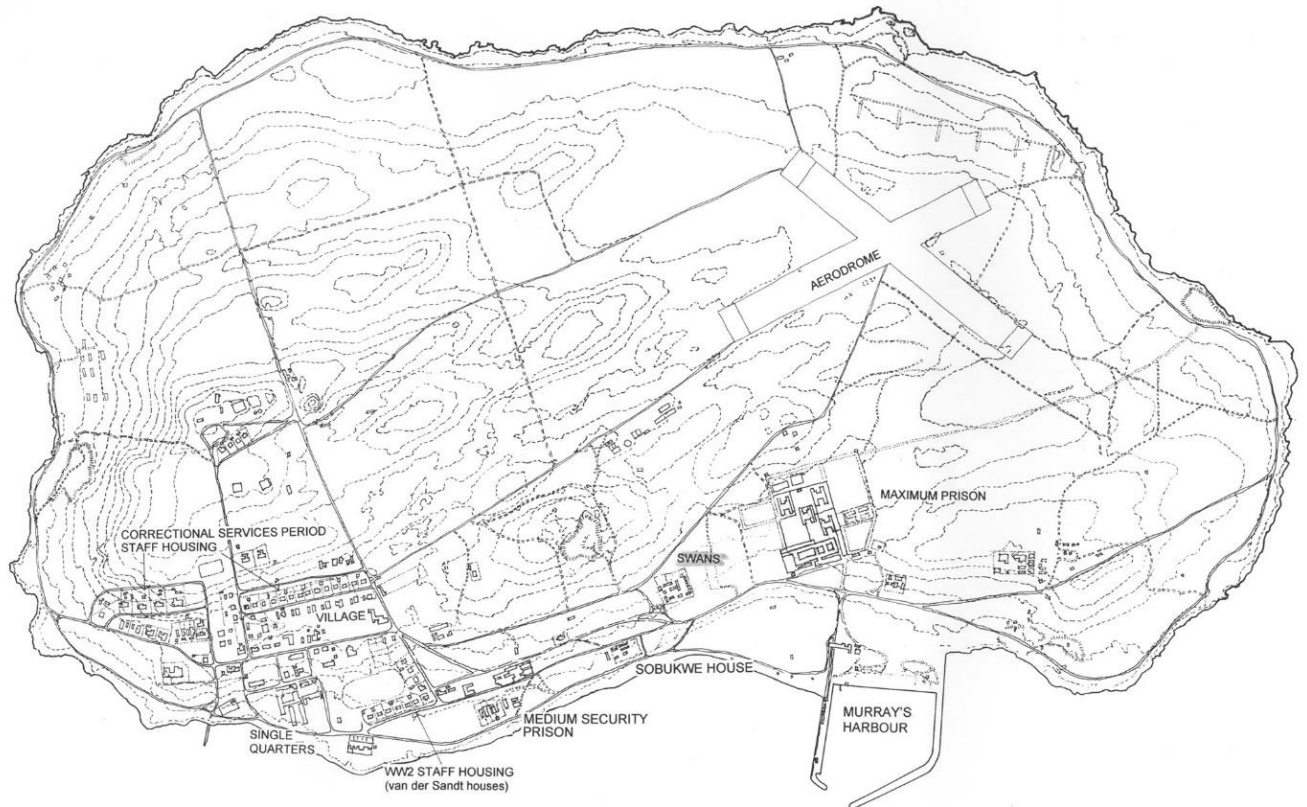


Figure 2: Based on 1986 Trig. Surveyed aerial photograph (1979 – 1996). The photograph shows the main settlements on the Island which have been repurposed over time to meet needs of the prevailing political power.

The island is a historical palimpsest, with many stories written, erased, and rewritten over the landscape. The Dutch have left their mark. When the British took over the Cape and replaced the Dutch as colonial governors, they adapted the Dutch buildings to their needs. The apartheid government repurposed buildings in the twentieth century. For example, the Sobukwe complex (Fig.2) was initially built as a hygiene station. However, during WWII it was used as a mess and barracks. PAC leader Robert Sobukwe was imprisoned in it during apartheid. After Sobukwe's release from prison, it was converted into a dog unit that patrolled the prison.

Recognising the rich history of Robben Island from the early recorded period of the 1400s to the 1990s, the democratic government identified a need to conserve the history of human interactions with the landscape and preserve the landscape and associated stories for future generations. The site was declared a South African Monument in 1996, a World Heritage Site in 1999 and a National Heritage Site in 2006 (Pastor 2021). Robben Island is an Institution under the Institutions Act of 1999.

2.2 Research context and objectives

Including Robben Island Museum on the World Heritage List reflects a series of events on the global stage. Firstly, the global community was beginning to accept the inscription of sites based on intangible heritage values associated with landscapes (Labadi 2007). Western heritage aesthetics, such as architecture and historical significance of sites, have always been at the forefront rather than people's interactions with historical sites (Gao et al. 2020). The Robben Island Museum's inclusion coincided

with states' recognition that heritage influences non-heritage international relations. Economic blocks and heritage political alignment replaced the experts' views, dictating state parties' voting patterns (Meskell 2018).

Secondly, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee endorsed a new global strategy on World Heritage List to increase the number of African and Oceanic heritage sites listed and curb the over-representation of Western heritage sites. This change in strategy in 1994 coincided with South Africa's transition to democratic rule. Heritage sites like Robben Island are instant beneficiaries of this change (Pastor 2021).

Thirdly, as Pastor (2021) opines, the inscription of Robben Island shows the world's admiration for South Africa's peaceful transition to democracy and the "triumph of the liberation struggle against apartheid." Robben Island celebrates human triumph over adversity. Deacon (2004) posits that this commemoration closely links to the political imprisonment period. The triumph of the human spirit over social injustice serves as a lesson to South Africa, Africa, and the world, demonstrating that human suffering can be overcome through reconciliation. Commemoration raises human awareness of atrocities.

The UNESCO World Heritage designation has added economic value to Robben Island by promoting cultural tourism. The site's popularity with local and international tourists influences how the audience interprets the complex narrative. The narrative draws from the official interpretation plan. Management drives the development of the interpretation plan with inputs from various stakeholders such as politicians, ex-political prisoners, and religious and business groups. Tourists construct their version of the past, present, and future as they walk through, photograph, and interact with the site (Savova 2009). Locals and international tourists have different versions of the site's narrative. Even among the locals, there are numerous interpretations. Different meanings emanate from the multiple layers of history of the place and how members of the society view these.

Thus, as an international heritage site, Robben Island's narrative is influenced by global economic and political dynamics. This study thus straddles global economic influences, politics, and international claims of ownership of the site (Jethro 2016). These relationships affect this multi-layered site's narrative positioning, layers that get amplified and occluded.

2.3 Questions considered in the study

The exploratory study unpacks whether the need to attract many tourists to Robben Island leads to tailoring the site narrative to the needs or expectations of tourism, thus leading to misrepresentation of the history of Robben Island. The commodification of heritage through cultural tourism to create a memorable experience for tourists leads to distortion, occlusion, and amplification of certain aspects to appease a tourist audience and benefit financially (Urry 2002). Thus, the sites are presented with tourists in mind (Labadi 2013). Labadi (2013) asserts that if this happens, the outstanding universal value is created through the eyes of tourists as they visit the site.

The research question examines the impact of UNESCO World Heritage listing on the framing and representation of the public narrative of Robben Island. What narratives are accentuated and occluded to appease a tourist audience?

The hypothesis, informed by prior studies on the listing of Robben Island (Pastor 2021), explores a relationship between the listing of a heritage site on the World Heritage List and the interpretation of a heritage site with multiple meanings in a multicultural society. The hypothesis also suggests that the country's politics and economic development needs influence heritage site interpretation (Labadi 2013; Minkley and Mnyaka 2015).

The research aims to contextualise the process of nomination and listing of Robben Island Museum as a World Heritage site and its declaration as a National Heritage site to test against the hypothesis.

Robben Island, a National and World Heritage site, requires an integrated conservation management plan to preserve and conserve its associated history for generations. However, this study will only focus on the interpretation aspect of the conservation management plan and how this is perceived. The interpretation becomes essential in a site like Robben Island, with multiple meanings and layers of history and human interaction that span three centuries.

2.4 Significance of the study

There is extensive literature on cultural tourism and sites of significance in South Africa. For example, Jethro (2016) focuses on the government's drive to erect many monuments to include those previously excluded in the heritage fore. Grobler (2008) and Rassool (2000) concur that the government's drive to make and promote heritage aligns with its policy on nation-building and reconciliation. Marschall (2010) explains the dissonance of government-sponsored heritage with the communities the heritage purports to represent. Minkley and Mnyaka (2015), drawing on the Duncan Village Massacre Memorial, delve into causes of dissonant heritage.

Robben Island has been written about extensively due to its association with political imprisonment and its role in the new South Africa in positioning complex heritage as a tool for fostering national reconciliation (Deacon 2004, 2021; Jethro 2016; Odendaal 2021; Rassool 2000). There seems to be little written about the influences of dominant politics and global dynamics on the interpretation of narratives on multi-layered sites in a multicultural society. Bertacchini et al. (2016), Labadi (2013) and Meskell (2012) explore the influences of politics on the listing of heritage sites in a global context. The research on Robben Island Museum will add to an existing body of knowledge, particularly in positioning a site for a tourist audience and what narrative gets amplified and occluded in the process.

2.5 Research methodology

The research explores the relationship between the inscription of heritage sites onto the World Heritage List, opening the sites to tourists, and how the sites get interpreted to promote economic value. The research uses an iconic heritage site, Robben Island Museum, as a case study and relies on:

- Literature review.
- Interviews
- An in-depth analysis of the case focussing on:
 - Reinterpretation of often complex colonial heritage in South Africa and the National Heritage Resources Act.
 - Nomination of sites onto the World Heritage List and politics involved.
 - RI nomination dossier
 - RIM Integrated Conservation Management Plan

2.5.1 Case Study Methodology

I selected a case study methodology given the complexity of the site, the historical significance of the site as a place of banishment and human suffering, and the site's positioning in defining and interpreting colonial heritage in the post-apartheid South Africa. The importance of the site is not limited to human interaction. Rowe et al. (2010) detail the geological significance of Robben Island, showing that the bedrocks of the site are fine-grained, low-grade metamorphic rocks of the Malmesbury group. The declaration of Robben Island as a National Heritage site in 1996 included a buffer zone of one nautical mile to protect the marine life in this area (MacHutchon and Van Den Bossche 2018). These interventions showcase the importance of the site in both human and natural history (Rowe et al. 2010).

Case study methodology allows understanding of meanings attached to the site as interactions occur and, over time, how these meanings are interpreted to and by those who visit the site. The research examines the complexity of selecting these meanings to form part of the official narrative and how some meanings are occluded.

Using a case study also tests "views related to the phenomenon as they occur in practice" (Flyvbjerg 2010). Thus, the case study method helps examine current events where I cannot influence the activities (Yin 2009). The tour guides follow RIM's operational processes. As a researcher on these tours, I cannot control or influence how the tour guides present the narrative to tourists.

Using a single case in this exploratory study is based on the rationale that political and economic decisions influence the positioning of a world heritage site with multiple meanings. These influences have a bearing on the interpretation of the site's meanings. The proposition made is clear, and thus using a single case will determine whether the proposition made is correct or allows for other alternatives to the initial proposal. The expectation is that using a single case will be sufficient to test the theory, contributing to 'knowledge and theory building' (Yin 2009).

Notably, single case study research poses fears concerning methodological rigour, the researcher's subjectivity, the ability to analyse the results critically, and the validity of conclusions (A.K. Harrison

2018). However, triangulation of research methods and strategies mitigates these fears (Baskarada (Baskarada 2014; Hyett, Kenny, and Dickson-Swift 2014; Taylor, Dossick, and Garvin 2011; Tellis 1997; Yilmaz 2013).

I have used historical interpretative strategy and ethnographic methodology as complementary research strategies to the case study. I am using multiple complementary research strategies to aid in constructing an interpretation of the history of Robben Island Museum, from its declaration as a national monument to its declaration as a World Heritage Site. Ethnography allows me to participate in tours of Robben Island and obtain information on the narrative told to tourists, tour guides' behaviour, and observe tourists' interaction with the heritage. As Harrison (2018) and Gracy (2004) described, direct involvement in the tours allows me to study and describe social events in their natural setting.

In addition to the triangulation of research strategies, case study methodology allows for the triangulation of data collection methods (Johansson 2007) . Using multiple data sources enhances rigour and counters the researcher's bias in collating and analysing data Creswell and Miller (in Yilmaz 2; Jack and Raturi 2006). Central to ethnography is the researcher's position concerning the phenomena.

In this study, I have used participant observation during the tours. I have also used semi-structured interviews with tourists and tour guides. In addition, I have used structured interviews with Robben Island Museum Heritage and specialist heritage practitioners, movements through the space and interactions during these movements, taking field notes to record the setting from the start of the tour at the NMG to Robben Island and back to the mainland (Gracy 2004; Savova 2009). I interrogated documents such as the RIM's Integrated Conservation Management Plan and RIM's nomination dossier. These documents were read together with the National Heritage Resources Act to reach credible conclusions.

2.5.2 Participation observation

Participant observation enabled me to spend time with the tour groups and observe the behaviour of tour guides as they conducted the tours and narrated the historical significance of Robben Island. Harrison (2018) opines that participant observation's advantage is providing an outsider-insider binary, even though not in the strict sense.

The outsider view relates to purely observer status, whereas the insider relates to participation during the tours. Participant observation during tours is essential in observing behaviour tours as the behaviour in its natural setting. This observation technique is central to an ethnographic study due to differences in what people do and say. Therefore, in a tour setting where the intention is to observe behaviour, interviews alone will not suffice. In an interview setting, one tends to position one's cultural beliefs and practices at the centre of their worldview (Harrison 2018). Secondly, there are usually challenges in expressing oneself on a particular occurrence in interviews. Furthermore, the interviewee tends to ignore or gloss over certain vital aspects not explicitly asked by the interviewer .

Interviews have limitations in that two people might interview the same people and not get similar results. In other instances, interviewees try to sense what the interviewer wants and answer accordingly.

In other instances, the subject will dispute what they have told the interviewer, thus bringing credibility issues to the study. Johnson (2001) notes that the researcher's standing in the community becomes essential to counter these occurrences and their "self-understanding, reflections, sincerity, authenticity, honesty and integrity."

The participant observation also allows me to enter spaces during the fieldwork, interact with the spaces and spend time in these spaces (Gracy 2004). Observing people for a short period alters their behaviour, thus negatively affecting the desired natural setting. In the tour setting of Robben Island, this shortcoming is countered by not announcing my presence in public tours. The time constraints also allow for the shortest interaction time, and thus, the behaviour will not significantly change.

Observation is time intensive and requires several trips to Robben Island, a very challenging feat during the COVID-19 pandemic period. I managed to do three tours for this study, one with the tour group, a personal walking tour conducted by the Robben Island Museum's Educational Office staff member and an unguided tour where I explored the island on foot, unaccompanied. I understand that conclusions might be challenging to reach based on three tours. However, the repetitive nature of the tours makes it easy to conclude on the tour narrative. As alluded to before, the most critical element is what narrative is told to the tourists. The study thus fulfils one of the critical elements of case study research in that the study focuses on a site over a fixed period. Gerring in Willis (2014) aptly puts it that a case study should be an intensive study of:

a single unit, a spatially bounded phenomenon – e.g., a nation-state, revolution, political party, election, or person – observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period"(1).

2.5.3 Interviews

Interviews triangulate information obtained by touring the site and analysing documents to establish policy changes.

For this study, I interviewed three different groups of respondents. These included:

- Mr Pascall Taruvunga – Robben Island Museum Chief Heritage Officer. He is the most senior staff member in the heritage department within the museum and an active participant in various UNESCO initiatives. He gives perspective on the development of the interpretation plan of RIM as reflected in the 2007-2012 ICMP and how the interpretation plan evolved in the 2013-2018 ICMP. Pascall juxtaposes the RIM interpretation plan with UNESCO requirements for listing Heritage Sites.

- Ms Deidre Prins-Solani – Heritage Expert. She was involved in developing the interpretation plan of Robben Island Museum in the early establishment of the Robben Island Museum. She has vast experience in the heritage sphere, both locally and internationally, as she has worked for UNESCO.

- Robben Island Museum tour guides – both the Ex Political Prisoners and the other tour guides. The tour guides are the people who communicate the narrative to tourists. Their views are essential to understanding the narrative told during the tour, whether they cover all the layers.
- Tourists – set questionnaires were sent to tourists who have been on the tour of Robben Island.

Interviews with the experts were semi-structured, one-on-one. I guarded against a question-answer session where only the questions were asked but did not explore the underlying reasons. Opting for a conversation method allows for the “broadening of the narrative” (Portelli 2009).

2.5.3.1 Tourists' questionnaires

The aim is not to obtain a statistical representation of a particular sample as a quantitative analysis. The research is a qualitative study that looks at the meanings and behaviours of people as they interact with the site (Pereiro 2010). This method justifies using a relatively small sample of subjects or observations. Interviews with tourists complement the observation of tourists as they interact with the site (Savova 2009) and the narrative imparted by the tour guides.

The questions posed to tourists do not mine for information. I am interested in why people leave their places and come to Robben Island. Are they consuming a product sold to them through popular media or searching for a particular experience? I asked questions that would reveal whether new learning occurred during the tour. Jameson (2019) opines that interpretation should be about communicating the message and enhancing the learning of new information. New elements revealed through the tours fulfil a vital aspect of interpretation (Jameson 2019).

The critical element with tourists is their experience after interacting with the heritage site (Savova 2009). I consider that tourists' experiences will be broad, and their meanings of the site will vary. These broad experiences and meanings will be sufficient for me to understand the narration of various layers during the tour. I will establish whether there is a concentration on a particular era. The tourists' gazes will assist in extrapolating the experiences to general society (Urry 2005).

2.5.3.2 Interviews with tour guides

I interviewed three tour guides, one from the bus tour and two former political prisoners. Initially, I wanted to send all the selected tour guides a questionnaire. However, after undertaking the tours, I realised it would be better to have open-ended interviews. The EPPs speak from historical memory, having experienced prison life, and thus there might be issues that they would like to put across which might not be covered by the questionnaire (J.A. Smith 2011).

It was essential to interview tour guides as they are the prominent people that interact with tourists. They can introduce narratives that management might not sanction, even though these might not be harmful to the organisation or tourists (Savova 2009). Some tour guides stick to the formal script and do not venture beyond this. The interaction with tour guides was initially through observation and then recorded conversations. Thus, the interviews with tour guides draw on their tour-guiding experiences. It establishes the processes of the development of a tour narrative. In the case of EPPs, there might be

instances where tour guides believe that critical narratives have been left out to skew the narrative towards a tourist audience.

2.6 Sampling

The selected sample was random regarding ethnicity, gender, and residency. The selected sample size of participants is not based on a quantitative statistical calculation to ensure sufficient coverage for the claims (Creswell et al 2007; Sargent 2012). In the qualitative study, the sample size is not predetermined but situational, depending on whether the participants selected are sufficient to establish themes. The random selection of tourists to complete the questionnaires was not based on a predetermined plan but on availability and willingness to participate in the study. In essence, the selection method eliminates an element of bias and ensures the rigour of the case.

The selection of the heritage expert, the senior heritage manager of RIM and the tour guides was purposeful (Gracy 2004). The experts speak authoritatively on local legislation and UNESCO requirements for World Heritage Sites. They give a professional perspective to the phenomena (Ibid). Tour guides' selection was purposeful as they are responsible for interpreting the tour narrative to tourists.

I opted to use eight questionnaires from tourists. I handed out twenty questionnaires, with many people promising to send them electronically. I received very few back, even after numerous follow-ups.

2.7 Data analysis

The responses from interviews, questionnaires and recordings are analysed and interpreted to determine lessons about the case (Creswell et al. 2007). The information is broken into parts and arranged into prevailing common themes (Sargent 2012). I analyse the information to understand the meaning of Robben Island to the participants and how the participants make sense of these experiences (Smith 2011). I factor that these are individual accounts and may not infer the general populace. The information collected is then framed within an existing theory, evidence collected during the research and general practice within UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

2.8 Researcher bias

The selection of a wide range of participants ensures that I do not select only those amenable to my topic, thus eliminating bias. Another essential element that I considered in eliminating bias is framing interview questions in an open-ended manner and conducting interviews to initially reflect the interviewee's personal experiences rather than the institutional view (Gracy 2004). In interpreting and analysing the events, I ensured a balanced view of interactions and occurrences to allow a credible test against my formulated hypothesis. I used various data sources to test against the hypothesis, thus ensuring I do not project my views only (Ibid).

2.9 Documentation and archival records

I reviewed and analysed books, policy documents, tour guides' official scripts, Robben Island's World Heritage nomination dossier, RIM Integrated Conservation Management Plan, archives relating to Robben Island, and the Museum's establishment. I emphasise records that deal with Robben Island's historical evolution to decipher the site narrative's evolution. The ICMP gives an official account of the interpretation narrative of the site. The ICMP and the tour guide script are used with data gathered from the tours, field notes, and results from interviews to understand whether the guides veer from the script or stick to it to give a uniform official narrative of the site.

I looked at whether the NHRA has influenced the framing of the current narrative of Robben Island and whether Robben Island is a microcosm of South Africa, with some memories remembered while some are not. The focus is on the NHRA on how it influences heritage sites and fosters notions of reconciliation and nation-building in post-apartheid South Africa. The act is read with the RIM Nomination Dossier and ICMP to understand the framing of the current interpretation narrative of the heritage site.

I reviewed the UNESCO criteria upon which Robben Island was listed to determine the extent of influence on the narrative of local sites to conform with international norms and appeal to tourists. The review allows for determining whether the World Heritage listing is a badge that places international visitors' interests over local meanings of the heritage site. I briefly examined the nomination process and the rise of economic blocs, which are not necessarily aligned on heritage conservation but use the UNESCO processes to lobby one another on economic issues. These political dynamics influence the nomination of sites onto the World Heritage List.

The information gathered from primary resources is used in conjunction with the reviewed literature to enhance the quality of the research.

A review of documentation and archival records is an opportunity to present additional information not covered in the literature review. The aim is to review both supportive and critical information to enable me to draw logical conclusions.

2.10 Ethics and positionality of the researcher

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) distinguish “procedural ethics and ethics in practice.” They opine that procedural ethics are based on institutional policies for conducting research. I have followed procedural ethics and obtained approval from the relevant institutional ethics committee before conducting research. Ethics in practice refers to the researcher’s ethical considerations when researching others. These are situational and unplanned. Shaw et al. (2020) highlight fundamental observation principles when researching with others in their paper on ethical considerations in research with vulnerable groups. They identify central principles such as “respect and care for others.” This principle incorporates:

informed consent free of coercion, limitation of deception, special care of vulnerable participants, respect for property rights, minimisation of harm to the researcher, minimisation of harm to the institution, and minimisation of harm to participants, groups or communities (Shaw et al. 2019, 2).

There was no coercion for participants to take part in the research study. I gave people an option to participate in the study. Upon reading, I encountered several tourists who initially took the questionnaire and decided, without giving reasons, that they would not be taking part. Two identified Ex Political Prisoners working as tour guides decided not to participate. During the tours, I blended in as part of the group. The blending is the nature of ethnographic studies (Henriksen and Schliehe 2020). The ethical considerations are that the study will not infringe on the rights of participants in any way.

In defining vulnerable groups, Levine et al. (2004) (in Shaw et al. 2018,3) define vulnerable groups as “categories of people [who] are presumed to be more likely than others to be misled, mistreated, or otherwise taken advantage of as research participants.” Levine explains that the vulnerable groups are likely to be “emotionally damaged or offended” (Levine 2004).

From the divergent groups I have interacted with, I posit that the EPPs closely fit Levine’s definition of vulnerable groups from the divergent groups I have interacted with. Questions that do not show respect or understanding of their suffering during incarceration are likely offensive. I ensured that the questions asked during the conversations with the Ex Political Prisoners were to seek clarity and understanding to enrich the Robben Island narrative. I communicated with the Ex Political Prisoners to remove any notion of potential offence. Research with vulnerable groups is sensitive. However, this does not mean that interactions with non-vulnerable groups should be conducted in a hurtful manner or not courteous (Shaw et al. 2019).

My interactions with the tourists revolved around interaction with the heritage space, listening to the tour guides’ narrative, documenting the spaces we interacted with and observing any emotions expressed where possible. In the tour group, I did not introduce myself as a researcher. The limited time spent on the field and my positionality did not affect the behaviour of tourists as we interacted with the spaces. The tour guides did not behave differently (Shaw et al 2019). However, after introducing myself, detailing the study area I am involved in, the qualification I am pursuing, that I am a senior manager in one of the tourism sites and the intention of my visit, I noticed reluctance from tour guides for further interactions. There was reluctance for further engagement despite reassurances from me that the identities will be concealed and that the study aims to contribute to Robben Island’s rich narrative.

The interviews conducted with the Heritage Practitioner and the RIM senior manager were not significantly affected by notions of power balances (Henriksen and Schliehe 2020). I had initially discussed the questions and obtained approval from my supervisor prior to the interviews and embarking on guided tours. During the interviews, the environment allowed for academic engagement and social interaction while conscious of the limited time.

All interviews, including engagements with the Ex Political Prisoners, can raise positionality issues. For example, with the Ex Political Prisoners, I found that they were more comfortable talking about their experiences in prison rather than interpreting the narrative. I tried to be sensitive by allowing them to express their emotions while steering the conversation towards their involvement in developing the interpretation plan and their thoughts on the inclusivity or otherwise of the interpretation plan. Still, I was

met with short answers that deferred the responsibility for interpreting the heritage site to RIM's management.

I constantly needed to assess my position because I have the power to decide on the interpretation of what is said, and thus I could be biased and include only my accounts (Henriksen and Schliehe 2020; Hyett, Kenny, and Dickson-Swift 2014; Israel 2016; Nunkoo 2018). Issues of age, gender and class also contribute to positionality and must be constantly managed to ensure no bias. I grew up towards the end of apartheid. I might have a particular bias, thus shadowing my understanding of the narrative. Similarly, as a senior manager in the heritage space, I might have a biased view of the RIM interpretation narrative. These are the issues I constantly check to ensure the study somewhat contributes to enhancing the interpretation narrative.

In this study, I become part of a tourist group natural setting. My role is close enough to be an integral part of the group while conscious that I am not. My role is to observe interactions in the heritage space, how the site is interpreted during the tours and make detailed notes. Fielding (2001) (in Henriksen and Schliehe 2020, 845) suggests that this ethnographic way of working raises issues of marginality – “the idea that the ethnographer is in this social world, but not of it” (Fielding 2001, 151). I strive to bridge this challenging concept by understanding that my position in the field is not my responsibility alone but requires fluidity and constant negotiation with the participants (Henriksen and Schliehe 2020).

In conducting research, ethical principles require me to be aware of how I relate to others, reciprocate good relations, and take responsibility as I co-develop the research narrative with the research participants. Interactions with various participants require I consider all divergent views encountered and craft the findings unbiased. My interactions with the heritage space are not offensive and show respect to the many individuals and groups that contributed to the historical significance of the heritage space (Denzin and Giardina 2020).

2.11 Confidentiality

The names and gender of people interviewed are kept anonymous to not infringe on their private lives. All interviewees were asked to sign consent forms, kept confidential and used only for this study.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter unpacks the question of the study. The methods used to obtain information to answer the research questions are clarified. The case study methodology is triangulated with ethnographic methodology and historical interrogation to answer the research question about Robben Island's narrative positioning.

Data collection methods in the exploratory qualitative study include participant observation during tours and structured interviews conducted with the Heritage Expert and Robben Island's Heritage Manager. The experts were identified owing to their comprehensive experience and involvement in developing the interpretation narrative of the Robben Island Museum. The experts have experience in UNESCO

workings and thus offer insights on requirements for management of World Heritage sites like Robben Island.

Tour guides are key role players in transmitting the narrative to tourists. I thus conducted semi-structured interviews with them to obtain their viewpoints on the multiple layers of Robben Island and whether tours cover all layers. I sent questionnaires to tourists to support the information gathered from the tours and juxtaposed this with the tour guides' responses.

The exploratory study considers how my positionality affects the research and mitigating factors that ensure the quality of information gathered. The study considers the ethics and confidentiality of data collected from participants to ensure rigour and support the findings. The next chapter examines the literature reviewed in support of the study.

2.13 THESIS STRUCUTRE

This thesis consists of five chapters and a conclusion.

Chapter 1

This chapter sets the scene for the research. It gives a brief historical view of the selected site, Robben Island. The rationale for the research is detailed, and the questions the study seeks to answer. The chapter delves into reasons for selecting this site for the study, the research strategies applied and the data collection methods. The chapter addresses the positionality of the researcher and ethical requirements.

Chapter 2 – Literature review

This chapter explores the literature on the impact of positioning a heritage site for a tourist audience. Deacon (2004) and (2021) opine that tourism and politics have an effect of occluding other site layers while accentuating the layer that is amenable to tourists. The chapter examines the writers like Ashworth and Turnbull (1996), Lowenthal (1998) and their contemporaries like Harvey, Ndoro, Peterson, Keitumetse on how heritage is used as a consumer good and as a political tool.

The literature examines the influence of tourism on heritage, examining writes like Urry on the Tourist gazes and how these influence the use of heritage sites as a packaged product to be sold to consumers.

The chapter looks at the use of heritage in post-colonial Africa and South Africa. It examines the use of heritage as an economic development tool and as a tool to foster national reconciliation.

The chapter concludes by delving into Robben Island as a World Heritage site and the influences of politics and economic value on the site's narrative.

Chapter 3 – Historical overview of the selected site

This chapter looks at the evolution of the site from the 14h00s. The chapter highlights the making and remaking of heritage over this period. The chapter traces the listing of Robben Island as a World Heritage site and the influences on the framing of the narrative.

Chapter 4- Analysis of collected data from tour guides, site visits and tourists

Chapter 4 analyses the results from the collected data, supported by the reviewed literature. The analysis aims to answer the question asked in this study. Chapter four focuses on data collected from participating in tours, interviews with tour guides and tourists' questionnaires.

Chapter 5 -Analysis of collected data from heritage experts

Data collected from heritage experts are juxtaposed with UNESCO's listing requirements, review of the RIM's ICMP, the RIM's nomination dossier and the NHRA. The analysis ascertains whether UNESCO influences the framing of the site's narrative and whether the World Heritage badge promotes the site as a tourist attraction leading to the positioning of the narrative for these purposes. The chapter briefly looks at the influences of State parties in the nomination of sites onto the World Heritage List and whether these politics influence Robben Island.

Conclusion

The chapter summarises the findings of the case. The findings are threaded through literature to establish whether the listing of Robben Island as a World Heritage Site impacts the narrative's framing for a tourist audience, leading to the accentuation of a particular layer of heritage whilst others are occluded.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter delves into the literature used to elucidate the answer to the research question. I discuss heritage politics in section 2.1. The discussion on whose account of heritage gets used as official heritage builds into the discussion on the development of heritage in colonial Africa, apartheid South Africa and post-colonial Africa in general and liberated South Africa in particular. The literature gives a historical account of Robben Island as a heritage site. The section introduces complexities in pinning heritage to a specific definition. The complexities arise owing to multiple meanings of what we describe as heritage. I rely on the writings of Ashworth and Turnbull (1996), Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998), Lowenthal (1998) and their contemporaries like Howard (2001), Shackely (2001), and others to develop a narrative of heritage production to satisfy the present needs, which might be economic or political.

Peterson, Gavua, and Rassool (2015), Herwitz et. Al (2015), Deacon (2004 and 2021), Marschall (2010), (Pastor 2021) and others bring the argument of uses of heritage into the African and South African context and drawing parallels with the selected site.

Section 2.2 focuses on tourism growth globally and the creation of cultural heritage to promote tourism. The World Heritage branding of cultural heritage sites makes these sites attractive to cultural tourism. Consequently, governments promote the commercial interests of these sites through tourism to create much-needed jobs and generate revenue.

South Africa's rapid erection of statues and monuments links commercial interests. However, new identities and meanings are created, premised on national reconciliation and nation-building notions. The section delves into the influences of tourists on the narratives and how tourists influence the creation of heritage. The section draws on the work of Grobler (2008), Marschall (2005); Meskell (2018); Turnperry (2004); Witz, Rasool and Minkley (2001) and others.

Section 2.3 relies on the works of Smith (2008); Herwitz et.al (2015); Coombes (2011) present the global influences on the presentation of heritage in local heritage sites. Robben Island's narrative is influenced by global politics of gender, where heroic male figures' stories shadow the contributions of women. The gendered nature of heritage is traced to meanings and the creation of identities.

Section 2.4 links to section 1.3 (research context and objectives). This section explains Robben Island's World Heritage listing and nomination criteria used and influences on the use of these criteria. This chapter relies on the works of Pastor (2021); Deacon (2004); Deacon (2021). The section is a precursor to Robben Island's historical evolution, as detailed in Chapter 3.

The literature review concludes in section 2.4 by delving into UNESCO politics of heritage. It gives an overview of a move by international heritage community to balance the World Heritage Lists by focussing on heritage sites in Africa and Oceania, which are generally underrepresented in the WHL.

3.1 The Politics of heritage – whose heritage?

In conducting this research and answering the questions asked, it is crucial to consider the input of many scholars on heritage. Lowenthal (1998) gives an account of global exponential growth in recognising what we define as heritage. Lowenthal does not offer a neat definition of heritage but explains its uses in contemporary society. Lowenthal (1998) asserts that heritage is as old as humanity and that legacies have always been bequeathed to generations. However, it is only recently that heritage has become critical, multiplying in number and taking up a central stage in the public discourse (ibid). Similarly, Harvey (2001) recognises the complexity of narrowing heritage to a set definition. Harvey (2001, 2) propagates the importance of understanding the creative process in contemporary societies, aptly stating that heritage "has always been with us and is produced by people according to their contemporary concerns and experiences."

To illustrate the zeal of heritage discourse in current societies, Lowenthal (1998) compares legacy discourse to religious devotion, in that it appeals to moral fervour rather than seeking claims to fact. The heritage discourse has developed from what used to be a feel-good, not for a critical knowledge-seeking hobby, to an economic and political appendage whose defence and practice are likened to the "Crusades –bitter, protracted and ruthless" (Lowenthal 1998, 2).

The ideology of inheritance, good or bad, gives no option to those who inherit it. Belonging to "a family, a community, a race, or a nation" binds one to that group (Lowenthal 1998). Those who share the common legacy are linked to that community, while those who challenge it are ungrateful and outsiders. Thus, Lowenthal's assertions of how heritage creates identities ties with Anderson (2006)'s views on the formation of national identities through shared cultural practices and discourse. Howard (2003) revisits questions that seek to define heritage, understand its use, the need to save it and for whose benefit. The critical question linking to this study is: "how is this heritage best presented and interpreted?" (Howard 2003).

Howard (2003) argues that heritage has both good and bad and encompasses nationalistic, exclusive, sexist, elitist and backwards-looking nuances. Thus, heritage will lose relevance if all these aspects are not appropriately managed. Proper management of these aspects shows that heritage invariably benefits someone while disadvantaging others. The danger with heritage is that it is both amenable and amendable and may be used for various purposes, such as an economic tool to foster nationalist ideas or subjugate or exclude others (Howard 2003; Lowenthal 1998; Ndoro, Chirikure and Deacon 2017).

In answering what makes up heritage and who owns it, Ndoro, Chirikure and Deacon (2017) suggest that one must observe who ultimately pays for heritage. They posit that presentation and interpretation depend on the target audience. Harvey (2001) agrees that there are links between heritage and commerce, but this does not mean heritage development solely looks at economic exploitation. Harvey (2001) contends that viewing heritage in this manner opens it to the idea that the practice of heritage is just one of the leisurely practices of people, done during their spare time or as a statement of fashion. Harvey (2001) asserts that linking heritage to the post-modern era of economic development strips

heritage of its rich historical context. Thus, the present-day heritage concerns of presentation and interpretation are developments linked to advances in politics, culture, and society (Ibid).

In examining the presentation and interpretation of heritage, one must understand the current societal needs. Ashworth and Turnbull (1996) note that the heritage presentation process is done by selecting 'patrimony from an imagined past for current use and deciding what to pass to future generations. Hardy (in Harvey 2001) thus refers to heritage as a "value-loaded concept" whose presentation focuses on the present circumstances. The use of heritage in this form is what Lowenthal refers to heritage as a practice that "clarifies pasts to infuse them with the present." (Harvey 2001, 9) concludes that "since heritage is produced in the present then our relationship with the past is understood in relation to the present temporal and spatial experience." These assertions corroborate R. Harrison et al. (2020)'s view that heritage is about the present.

The presentation and interpretation of the sites of historical significance have links to political, economic, societal, and cultural transitions. The presentation of these sites depends on the political hegemony and prevailing popular narrative (Harvey 2001). As political agendas change, so will the interpretation and presentation. Hall (1999) links heritage to cultural representation, arguing that culture is concerned with producing meanings and their actual or practical effects. Thus, the selection process of heritage, its presentation and interpretation are linked to its meanings. It is meanings that give heritage value, which can be cultural or financial, and this explains the selection of specific meanings over others (Ashworth 2007; B. J. Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge 2016; Keitumetse 2016). Waterton and Smith (2010) observed that heritage is used to "construct, reconstruct and renegotiate a range of identities and social and cultural values and meanings in the present." B. J. Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge (2016) accentuate the multiplicity nature of heritage and identities and note that heritage is constantly revised and changed to conform to the present needs.

3.2 Heritage in colonial and post-colonial contexts

Peterson, Gavua, and Rassool (2015) examine the formalisation of African heritage to illustrate the use of heritage in serving the present societal needs. They acknowledge Europeans' unintended contribution to developing heritage conservation by creating African museums. The confiscation of African artefacts, taking them away from the public eye and preserving them in museums, was done to elevate European philosophy of culture and government. However, the unintended consequence was the preservation of African artefacts and, thus, heritage.

Herwitz et al. (2015) examine the production and remodelling of heritage in post-colonial Africa to suit the dominant political force. These reconfigured pasts assume commonality in origin and destiny (Herwitz et al. 2015). Challenges arise on whose version of the past is used in multicultural societies to interpret heritage property, thus resulting in contestations and dissonant heritage (R. Harrison 2010; Rao 2010; McMann 2017).

Ashworth (2007), Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998), McMann (2017), Timothy and Boyd (2006) and Shackley (2001) deal with difficulties in attaching meanings to heritage in multicultural societies and the selection of these meanings as official heritage. They posit that the selection of meanings usually

reflects the prevailing power relations. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998, 149) clarifies that the heritage of a place is not just lying around in a state of continuous existence to be discovered but is actively produced and made to suit the present needs. In sites like Robben Island, the making and remaking of heritage were initially intended to foster notions of national reconciliation (Deacon 2021; Solani 2021).

The heritage of a place continuously exists even before the remodelling of a place or determining whether the stories are valuable to be included in the official narrative (Harrison 2010; Harvey 2001; Howard 2003; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Ndoro et al 2017; Turnbridge and Ashworth 1996). Keitumetse (2016) observes that some meanings that may have been relevant in the past might not resonate in contemporary society. Thus, interpretation becomes a sieve of the cultural significance of a place, site, and artefact (Keitumetse 2016).

Robben Island, as a place of shame and atrocities spanning over three centuries, and existing in a multicultural South Africa, represents the challenges of which meanings get amplified over others. What gets presented and interpreted has links to prevailing political and economic conditions. The selective presentation and interpretation lead to dissonance (Mnyaka and Minkley 2015).

3.3 Heritage politics in the South African context

Apartheid South Africa depended on a highly ethnically and culturally stratified understanding of culture and heritage, reflected in how culture and heritage were understood and presented. Then also the way heritage was entangled with Afrikaner Nationalism, visible in the kinds of monuments constructed (e.g., the Taal monument, various Voortrekker monuments) and the kind of heritage sites and buildings (e.g. the Castle of Good Hope) that were viewed as significant. Representation of African culture and heritage by the apartheid government was linked to the Bantustan system, creating artificial borders where none had existed before and deliberately ignoring that Africans had always been moving freely, infusing different cultures across the continent (Herwitz et. al 2015). Fanon (in Herwitz et. al 2015) asserts that the misrepresentation of the oppressed people's past serves to "disfigure, distort and destroy" that past to give credence to the new system of oppression and political dominance.

As opined by Ashwoth and Turnbrige (1996) and Lowenthal (1998) on the making and remaking of heritage, particularly to suit prevailing political and societal needs, the new democratic government reimagined colonial heritage and built several monuments to address the imbalances of the past, introduce cultural diversity void of ethnic exclusivity. The democratic government also infuses the celebration of the liberation heroes and heroines by creating statues and monuments (Minkley and Mnyaka 2015). Marschall (2010), reflecting on the Trojan Horse Memorial, characterises the rapid production of monuments in post-apartheid South Africa as a heroic visual display. This description ties in with Minkley, Rasool and Witz's (2015) (in Minkley and Mnyaka 2015) notion of a visual spectacle. The new heritage reflected the government's vision of celebrating the indigenous past and infusing it with a liberation narrative that seeks to celebrate the triumph of the struggle over the brutal system of apartheid. National policies like the National Heritage Resources Act fulfil the new government's social and political imperatives. I will be able to assess Marschall (2010)'s assertions on whether the narrative

accentuates the liberation era, and hence proving the production of heritage to satisfy the present needs.

Like the old dispensations have done, the imagined pasts are given a sense of authenticity as the true history of the previously misrepresented groups. Waterton and Smith (2010) opine that the authorised heritage discourse depicts the perceived struggle heroes. Public and alternative memories are often neglected and are not included in the authorised heritage discourse. However, as Minkley and Mnyaka (2015) elaborate on the erection of the Duncan Village Massacre statue, the official heritage is usually met with disagreements and discontent among the community.

3.4 Museums and politics of heritage

Museums intertwine with politics. They showcase contestation on representation and what to include or exclude in exhibitions. Contestations extend to how the material is displayed and narrated and how visitors create meanings. These contestations create multiple stories (McMann 2017). The complexity of representation decisions is compounded by the economic development principle that becomes an imperative of the new dispensation. Thus, using the past not only fulfils conservation and preservation principles but also drives economic development through tourism. Dumbraveanu, Craciun, and Tudoricu (2016) concur with Timothy and Boyd (2006) on using some aspects of heritage pasts in the present. McMann (2017) opines that in the context of Robben Island, the use of the past elements fulfils the tourism narrative and achieves national reconciliation.

3.5 The influence of tourism on heritage

3.5.1 Tourism influence in the world

Tourism on its own has a significant global presence driven primarily by middle-class tourists (Aas et al 2005; Ashworth 2006; Christie et al. 2014; Mason 2015). The improvement in technology and the effects of globalisation have enabled the movement of people worldwide (Telfer and Sharpley 2015; Timothy and Boyd 2006; Timothy and Nyaupane 2009). Mowforth and Munt (2015) opine that the rise in tourism to the developing world is fuelled by well-heeled middle-class tourists, who have differentiated themselves from the average tourists. These tourists search for authenticity.

The World Travel and Tourism Council (2016) show that the tourism industry contributed R377 billion to the economy of South Africa in 2015. Tourism revenue translates to about 9.4% of South Africa's GDP. The tourism economy created about 800 000 direct jobs and about 1,5 million indirect jobs in 2015. The tourism sector expects to have created 10 million jobs by 2030. Capital investment in the tourism industry reached about R145 billion in 2015. The government expects to use the tourism industry to boost the economic base of the SMMEs, employ more young people and revive the rural economy. The government has realised that the easy access points in the tourism industry can assist with its transformation agenda across the tourism value chain.

Cultural tourism is one of the fastest-growing global industries and contributes to the GDP of many countries (Christie et al 2014; Timothy and Nyaupane 2009; van der Merwe 2014). Over the years,

there has been a shift in heritage tourism from a middle-class centred product to one that encompasses “everyday landscapes that depict the lives of ordinary people” (Timothy and Nyaupane 2009; Van der Merwe 2014).

As alluded to earlier, heritage is influenced by political and economic factors. Several heritage sites are tourist attractions, particularly sites with an adverse history like Robben Island (Frey and Steiner 2011). Promoting heritage tourism in South Africa is an easy way to solve socio-economic issues like unemployment, revenue generation and economic development (Marschall 2005; Meskell 2018). Adie, Hall, and Prayag (2018) posit that the World Heritage brand is a placebo that serves mostly political interests than economic interests, which might cause more problems.

3.5.2 Heritage Tourism in the post-apartheid era

Heritage tourism has increased in popularity globally and in Southern Africa, thus presenting opportunities for economic development (Van der Merwe and Rogerson 2018)

The post-apartheid government recognised the opportunities in tourism and ensured that national tourism policies played a central role in planning processes. Opening of tourism spaces, accommodation and transport to all citizens contributes to exponential growth in the tourism industry (Phaswana-Mafuya and Haydam 2005; Shackley 2001; Witz, Rassool, and Minkley 2001).

Witz, Rasool and Minkley (2001) note that the freedom of movement brought about by the democratic era meant racial diversification in the domestic tourist mix. The government campaigned actively on the international front to attract tourists. Campaign slogans such as “Explore South Africa -Culture” were superimposed on images of ‘sun, sea, the environment and animal spoor’ (Rassool 2000). Tourism promotion was meant to showcase tourism that reflects the diversity of its people and environment (Rassool 2000).

New museums and public memorials were built to give a voice to the voiceless and honour the leaders of the liberation struggle for freedom (Deacon 2007; Marschall 2004; Rassool 2000). The rapid development of cultural sites depicted the old lives of various ethnic groups to preserve their traditions. This development would allow people to know who they are and take pride in themselves and their culture (Turnpenney 2004). In addition, several monuments emerged to immortalise the leaders of the liberation struggle. Grobler (2008) compares the erection of monuments and statues by the democratic government to the apartheid government, which sought to do the same after taking over from the British, where several War Memorials popped up to immortalise the heroes of the Anglo-Boer War. These statues celebrated only a section of the South African population, and the majority were not honoured in any meaningful way.

Thus, heritage tourism in the post-apartheid era was not only an economic development tool but a form of redress through opening spaces to all citizens. The new memorials and reinterpretation of some were designed to give a balanced view of history. Heritage would thus fulfil one of the new government's underpinning tenets, reconciliation and nation-building (Grobler 2008; Rasool 2000). Peterson (2015) succinctly describes the use of an imagined past to assume a shared future. Minkley and Mnyaka (2015) also elaborate on using heritage to foster notions of national reconciliation.

Jethro (2019) agrees that the government's drive to erect statues, building museums and memorials that sought to 'recover and commemorate the previously marginalised histories of black people was driven by the aims of reconciliation and nation-building. Jethro (2019) observes that this was done in a 'teleological' manner, starting from colonialism through apartheid and culminating in the democratic era. History's linear description and representation assume a common origin, common present and a shared future without contestation.

Labadi (2013) contends that the linear description of history gives a sense of continuity of a homogenous identity of the nation. This chronological recreation of history is problematic as it excludes other historical contexts related to sites (Labadi 2013). The tours will reveal if the narrative is told in a linear fashion that does not consider other interventions that might enrich the narrative. The narration of the history of Robben Island will not be rich if it is not related to events occurring in the rest of the country, considering the communities the prisoners came from. I will assess if there is a way of knowing if tourism has created value for the ex-political prisoners and other communities. The notions of reconciliation and nation-building cannot be reduced to the Robben Island narrative as they impact the entire country.

The National Department of Tourism's National Heritage and Cultural Tourism Strategy (2012) is unambiguous about the government's positioning of heritage and cultural tourism in fostering social cohesion and as an economic development tool. The strategy recognises "safari" type tourism drives South African tourism. It thus envisages the country's development of heritage and cultural tourism to increase its popularity and enhance social cohesion. The government recognises that tourism does not require a considerable capital outlay. People not previously involved in economic development can access many tourism businesses such as tour guiding, accommodation facilities, and transport. Ensuring easy access to this economy bridges the economic gap and social cohesion. The strategy looks at sustainable heritage and cultural tourism as a revenue generation stream that will assist in maintaining the heritage and cultural places to ensure they are conserved for future generations. The strategic document complements the early thinking of the ANC government in reconfiguring heritage as a nation-building instrument. Going on Robben Island tours, I might be able to ascertain if the emphasis is on generating revenue through tourism, i.e., the narrative is geared towards attracting more tourists.

3.5.3 Tourists' search for authenticity and influences on meanings

An essential premise for this study is that present political machinations influence museums. Thus, museums are thus not solely concerned with preserving and conserving people's culture and natural heritage. Heritage consumers, primarily tourists, influence the interpretation and presentation of heritage spaces. Tourists attach various meanings to heritage. They also seek different experiences.

Strange and Kempa (2001) link the popularity of places of suffering as tourism objects to tourists' quest to experience these places. Strange and Kempa (2001) opine that tourists seek to experience these places in their natural settings to relive the authenticity of the toured object.

Zhu (2012) writes that tourists search for original and "credible cultural construction and representation in a diverse cultural and heritage context". Zhu (2012) alludes to authenticity in tourism as a subject of

much academic discussion and writing, resulting in three significant approaches to understanding the term.

These approaches are objective authenticity, constructive authenticity, and existential authenticity. Zhu (2012) believes that authenticity is neither objective nor subjective but is performative. Performative authenticity implies an interaction between 'memory, habitus and embodied practice'. Performative authenticity implies that our view of toured objects is influenced by social, religious, and political factors around us. We thus attach meanings to these objects based on the outside real-life influences. Based on our life experiences, we create the toured objects as authentic. Wang and Jin Kim (2015) clarify that objective authenticity relates to the toured object and constructive objectivity relates to human constructs. Existential authenticity aligns with what the tourist draws from the toured object (Wang and Jin Kim 2015). In trying to resolve this complexity, Wang and Jin Kim (2015) propose that there has to be a realisation and appreciation that heritage sites have evolved with interaction by various social groups and hence would invariably have different meanings.

Reisinger and Steiner (2006) allude to the complexity of the term in heritage tourism and posit that the term should be abandoned, and issues of authenticity are left to the tourist to decide. In 'The Tourist Gaze' Urry (2002) also advances the complexity of authenticity in cultural tourism and further extends that the tourists should not be viewed as a homogenous group, but as diverse individuals with different needs and invariably attach different meanings to different sites.

Urry (2002) believes that linking tourism and the tourists to a search for authenticity is too simplistic. He views tourists as searching for experiences that are different from their daily lives. Wang (1999) clarifies that the search for authenticity in cultural tourism is critical in revealing representation of the Other or past. Material that is given prominence and accentuated is viewed as authentic or original. Authenticity is thus influenced by the views of mass media and sometimes heritage practitioners who promote a particular layer to societies and present it as authentic. Wang (1999) contends that museum professionals widely use authenticity to give authority or validate a particular interpretation.

Integrity and authenticity become more complex in landscapes like Robben Island, where the heritage value is not manifest in the architecture but where intangible heritage has more value than the tangible. Chirikure et al (2016), in acknowledging the complexity of these terms, also note that they are denoted through the tangible heritage. Chirikure et al (2016), in acknowledging the complexity of these terms, also note that they are usually denoted through the tangible heritage. My interactions with tourists on Robben Island will, in part, elucidate the reasons they visit it, whether for leisure or searching for authentic objects.

3.6 Heritage sites of international influence in a local setting

3.6.1 Enlightenment period and universalism in heritage

The development, promotion and repurposing of sites such as Robben Island in Cape Town, the Inanda Heritage Route in Durban, Constitutional Hill in Johannesburg, and the Hector Peterson Memorial in Soweto showcase the complicated history South Africa has been through and the nation-building that followed. The listing of local sites on the World Heritage List, as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, gives

them an international appeal. World Heritage listing mainly serves to preserve the world's patrimony for many generations. The World Heritage Site badge has proven to be essential in drawing international tourists to a site. Thus, many nation-states use this badge as a tourism promotional tool. These heritage sites are thus sites of global significance in terms of the UNESCO listing requirements. The implication is that the sites have unique characteristics embraced by peoples of the world (Labadi 2013; Bertacchini et al. 2016).

Labadi (2013) traces this universalism to the Enlightenment philosophy, which significantly influenced European politics and the World Heritage Convention. Tucker and Carnegie (2014) agree with Labadi (2013) that this is the reason for the domination of European sites on the World Heritage List, pointing out the use of “materialist emphasis” to determine the outstanding universal value. The early development of heritage management in Europe paid attention to ruins, artefacts and architecture as heritage objects, and Europe is replete with these. The Eurocentric universalist view affects which sites get inscribed on the WHL and how the site's narrative is framed and presented to tourists (Gao et al 2020). The Eurocentric approach harms the developing world, where the heritage of landscape is often linked to intangible heritage.

Labadi (2013) argues that universalism excludes certain voices, particularly women and vulnerable groups. The dominant group's version of heritage becomes the heritage of the multicultural society (Hall 2000; Labadi 2013). The representation of the nation reflects an upper-class masculine figure (Waterton and Smith 2010; Labadi 2013). The nation's heroes are well educated male figures. The male heroes are projected in isolation from their communities. The conversations with tour guides will reveal whether the presentation of Robben Island heritage is centred around heroic male figures.

3.6.2 Complexities in heritage presentation – gender, identity, and heroic figures

The dominant narrative excludes the minorities, women and people living with disabilities. L. Smith (2006) supports these assertions and opines that heritage discourse is generally gendered and mainly masculine. Men are active agents in interpreting and representing heritage sites and artefacts. The histories of women and their interaction with historical sites are not given adequate prominence in the heritage discourse. This exclusion reflects the gendered nature of heritage.

Gender is not reduced to women's issues, implying that men are without gender. As espoused by Smith (2006), the gendered nature of heritage seeks to highlight the skewness of heritage representation and discourse in favour of males. She looks at gender as the tone of the essential elements in constructing identity and the association of heritage with creating identity. The management, protection, interpretation, and promotion of heritage sites are made because the sites represent our identities (Smith 2006). Robben Island and its narrative promote the concept of a men's prison. The role of women reduces to “holding the fort” at home, serving as a support structure to male activists, neglecting that women were active participants in the struggle for liberation (Coombes 2011).

Identity is not universal and is influenced by several socio-political issues such as ethnicity, religion, sexuality. Thus, a particular grouping may have its own identity due to its commonalities. Graham and Howard (2008) corroborate that heritage creates an identity for a particular class or nation, opining that

heritage objects have little intrinsic value on their own, but values are apportioned on heritage sites or objects by people based on a myriad of views. The veracity of these views depends on the situation, and these views may change over a period. The interpretations of heritage objects or places are also subject situation, place, and time. Graham and Howard (2008) assert that the meanings we attach to heritage places or objects give these their values, which explains why certain heritage places, objects, or memories get selected from the past.

Understanding that heritage involves the selective use of the past to influence the present helps to clarify that memory and commemoration are also closely linked to the process of heritage creation (Herwitz et al. 2015; Marschall 2010). McDowell (2016) clarifies that various memories may range from personal, societal, private, public, or national memory in society. Each of these draws on experiences that may be personal or shared among the members of society.

The state party tends to take what it envisages as national memory and organise it into official heritage. In the South African context, the official heritage discourse is centred around a narrative that depicts a cohesive nation, reflecting the nation's diversity in what has been framed as a "Rainbow nation." The selected heritage centres around male heroes who have been leaders in the struggle for freedom against oppression. Thus, as it was during the colonial period, the selection of national heritage is entangled by politics and the context of the current times (Hall 1999; Peterson, Gavua, and Rassool 2015).

Contestations then begin to arise on the framing of the national heritage. Constructing new narratives and creating new identities leads to forgetting, foreshadowing and occlusion of other narratives that, if included, could lead to a different narrative (Hall 1999). As I analyse the ICMP in chapter 5, I will be able to determine whether the framing of the narrative of the Robben Island led to contestations. I will be able to establish if there were any contestations from my engagement with heritage experts. Rioful (2000) looks at the presentation of the narrative of Robben Island as excluding the memorial aspect of those who suffered during apartheid. The notion that is promoted is celebration of victory against apartheid. Rioful (2000) asserts that these actions promote forgetting the past. Thus, the tensions and challenges brought about by apartheid and colonialism persist to the present day.

3.7 Robben Island as a World Heritage Site

The exploratory study examines whether the inscription of Robben Island based on criteria iii and vi influenced the interpretation, the communication of information, and accentuated areas. The study does not delve into the nomination process and the preparation of nomination dossiers by State parties. The study highlights the criteria used in nominating sites like Robben Island to the World Heritage List and explores whether UNESCO has a role in determining the narrative.

Robben Island's outstanding universal value is based on criteria iii and vi of the UNESCO operational guidelines. Criterion (iii) requires that the cultural heritage property "bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilisation or cultural tradition which has disappeared." Criteria (vi) requires that the cultural heritage property "be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance" (Deacon 2004;

Pastor 2021). Labadi (2013) opines that the inclusion of "cultural tradition" in (iii) and "living traditions" in (vi) emphasises a shift to include social aspects of cultural property and the recognition of the continuity of cultural traditions. Robben Island fits in well with criteria (vi) as an associative landscape. The social aspects of the outstanding universal value are a critical element for UNESCO as European-based natural and cultural heritage sites dominate the WHL. The list had very few associative sites representing living cultures and non-European and non-monumental cultures (Labadi 2013; Pastor 2021). Munjeri (2004) and Pastor (2021) trace the inclusion of cultural heritage's social aspects to the NARA Declaration on Authenticity.

Deacon (2004) notes the oddity of the inscription of Robben Island in comparison to similar sites as it portrays positive sentiments rather than negative sentiments that prevailed on the island. Deacon (2004) compares Robben Island to Auschwitz, which accentuates suffering. However, as Veronique (2000) asserts, the narrative of Robben Island promotes positive aspects of reconciliation and nation-building, "the painful and divisive past is tamed" while celebrating the triumph of political liberation. The intangible heritage closely associated with Robben Island is not a pre-colonial heritage but that of political imprisonment. It is presented as a continuation of the history of triumph over adversity. Labadi (2013) contends that the linear presentation of history in nomination dossiers intends to show the continuity of living heritage. This form of presentation is problematic as it prevents parallel histories and stories related to the site, which might be told differently from the official narrative. Moreover, the dominant narrative usually centres around a male hero, which marginalises women and those members of society who do not form part of the dominant class (Deacon 2004; Labadi 2007, 2013; Ndoro, Chirikure, and Deacon 2017).

Rassool (2010) opines that official heritage discourse in places like Robben Island and heritage evolving out of community involvement, such as District Six, finds that the community-developed heritage presents inputs from multiple voices, avoiding a linear narrative. Minkley and Mnyaka (201) extrapolate that the politicians' and experts' view of heritage does not resonate with the meanings attached to it by the community members. Marschall (2017) opines that even though vandalism acts of monuments are not common in South Africa, these are expressed in other means such as "silence, disengagement disrespectful behaviour and neglect."

Involving many stakeholders to create acceptable meanings is essential in conserving and managing heritage (Coombe and Weiss 2015; Munjeri 2004). Involvement gives those stakeholders with an attachment to the site a voice (Fleming 2015; Murray and Witz 2014). Data obtained from participating in Robben Island tours, together with the ICMP and tourists' experiences, will be used to determine the framing of the narrative of Robben Island and the evolution of the narrative from the many layers of history. I will juxtapose these with assertions made by Mpumlwana and Ramoupi (2021) that the Robben Island Museum played a pioneering role in changing the skewed cultural heritage of South Africa, making heritage accessible to ordinary people.

3.8 CONCLUSION

The reviewed literature links the dominant role of politics in the presentation and interpretation of the site. In post-colonial societies, the dominant political force reproduces heritage and traces it to a distant past to give the new heritage a sense of authenticity. By redressing the past, the dominant political group invariably determines whose version of the past is more relevant for presentation and interpretation. Challenges become evident in multicultural societies, where several people attach different meanings to heritage places. What is dominant in the literature review is the reproduction of heritage to satisfy the present political needs.

Tourism is an essential economic development tool with easy access points in the value chain. Heritage tourism requires little capital outlay and thus is more suitable for developing countries. The economic needs of a particular society might thus influence heritage presentation and interpretation issues.

The development of the interpretation narrative of Robben Island closely links to the government's policy on fostering national reconciliation and nation-building. The listing of Robben Island as a World Heritage Site drew from its strong association with the intangible heritage. The negative sentiments of suffering were not amplified. The message associated with the site is the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. The message resonates with the government's national imperatives.

The heritage produced is gendered as it centres around heroic male figures, ignoring the central role played by women in the struggle. The reviewed literature is juxtaposed with the observations made during the tours, the information obtained from interviews with tourists and tour guides, the review of RIM's nomination dossier and other policy documents. The information assists in answering the research question of whether political and economic value drive the positioning of the site's narrative and whether some layers are accentuated over others in the reproduction of heritage.

In the next chapter, I review the historical development of the selected site to accentuate its rich history and heritage development over the period. The chapter delves into various epochs of the site's existence, examining the influences on the landscape during each period.

4 Making and remaking heritage on Robben Island

This chapter chronicles the historical evolution of the site, from early interactions with the sailors passing around the Cape to the East and associations developed over time. The chapter examines the site's current use as a museum of international significance. Each interaction develops an association with the site, giving meaning to that interaction. Interactions with the landscape make the heritage of the place (Deacon 2004; Peterson, Gavua, and Rassool 2015).

4.1 Robben Island History

There has always been life at Robben Island, long before declaring the site as a museum. Those who left their footprint on the fabric of the site include religious leaders, Khoikhoi and traditional African leadership, leprosy and people with a mental health condition, World War II personnel, liberation struggle prisoners, warders, women, and children (Deacon 2004; Hoelscher and Alderman 2004; McMann 2017; Phaswana-Mafuya and Nobert 2005; Shackley 2001). The experiences were not all negative and sombre. The built fabric of the site mirrors the different epochs of occupation (Shackley 2001). Deacon (2004) suggests that the interpretation of the narrative must try to capture all these eras. McMann (2017) suggests that the most recent narrative reflects a need to forge a new nation-state.

The selection of the most recent narrative leads to creating a single history for the developing nation, a concept that does not exist (Grobler 2008; Timothy and Boyd 2006). This study looks at the relationship between tourism and heritage and the dynamics in the narrative (R. Harrison 2010; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Nuryanti 1996). The new narrative might be viewed as not encompassing as it can occlude other layers in the museum (Brian J Graham and Howard 2008; McDowell 2016; Peterson, Gavua, and Rassool 2015).

4.2 Early recorded history of Robben Island

Robben island is part of a submerged mountain linked to Blouberg by an undersea saddle. It is thus possible that the San or Khoi interacted with the island prior to the first recorded history of 1488. The hunter-gatherer San and the pastoralist Khoikhoi settled along the Cape coast for more than 2000 years before interacting with the Europeans (Deacon 1996; Richards 2017).

The early recorded history of Robben Island coincides with the trading ships en route to India during the lucrative spice trade in the late 15th century. These were led by the then conglomerate, the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC). The VOC would later significantly impact the Cape and South Africa in general, following the establishment of a permanent refreshment station in the Cape in 1652 (Deacon 1996a). The VOC commanded Jan van Riebeeck to oversee the establishment of a garden to supply the ships with fresh fruits and vegetables.

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Prior to the establishment of a refreshment station in the Cape, Robben Island had played a vital role to the sailors as a source of food and a place where information was exchanged between the sailors as they (Weideman 1998).

Portuguese explorers Bartolomeu Dias and his second in command, Joao del Infanto, are accepted as the first Europeans to set foot on Robben Island. Their expedition had an unpleasant interaction with the Khoikhoi in present-day Mossel Bay in 1488. Skirmishes between the crew and the local people resulted in two locals' deaths (Richards 2017). These skirmishes led to mistrust of the Europeans among the local communities. As a result, Vasco da Gama's crew took refuge in a cave on Robben Island in 1502, fearing cannibals on the mainland.

The rising tensions between the early explorers around the Cape coast and the Khoikhoi reached a peak in 1510 when Portuguese Viceroy Francesco d'Almeida and his entire crew were killed by the Khoikhoi on the banks of Salt River in Woodstock in what became known as the Battle of Salt River (Richards 2017). The Portuguese would avoid Table Bay after this incident. However, the Dutch, French and English explorers continued to stop at Table Bay even after these skirmishes. A permanent settlement was established by the Dutch after 1652.

4.3 Wars of dispossession

As the settlement grew in the Cape of Good Hope, so did tensions with the local Khoikhoi leaders. Given the island's geographic location off the mainland, it proved a perfect place of banishment for troublesome VOC soldiers or local Khoikhoi leaders, seen as rebels by the VOC establishment. Autshumato was the first local official political prisoner in 1658 (Garuba 2001). The British continued using the island as a place of banishment when they took over from the Dutch as the dominant colonial force in 1795. The British thus imprinted their culture on the mainland and Robben Island.

The Dutch buildings in the current village were demolished by the British. The Postholder's house was converted into a female mental asylum (Weideman 1998). The British moved further to the South of the Cape to annex more lands. The wars of dispossession fought mainly in the Eastern Cape frontier saw several indigenous leaders like Dawid Stuurman, Maqoma and Makhanda imprisoned on Robben Island. They were to be followed by Langalibalele of AmaHlubi in 1874 (Deacon 1996). The banishment period is the first official political imprisonment on Robben Island.

4.4 Leper and mental asylum banishment

Banishment was not only reserved for rebel indigenous male leaders and VOC personnel. Robben Island was home to the leper community and a mental asylum from 1846 until 1931. The initial leper patients were admitted voluntarily and were free to leave at any time. However, the disease spread, and inconclusive medical knowledge on the mode of its transmission and racial stereotyping of the disease by the European society, quarantine was the only solution to curb the spread. Robben Island was seen as a perfect place for this purpose (Deacon 1996b; Horwitz 2006).

European nations had known about leprosy as early as the seventh century. Initially, the international view was that Europeans were immune to leprosy due to this prior exposure. Furthermore, by the 19th century, leprosy had not reached pandemic proportions. However, the death of a white mission worker, Father Damien, in Hawaii in 1897 sparked fears of a resurgence of leprosy (Deacon 1994). However, in South Africa, government involvement in segregation and isolation of leprosy patients began in 1895 when a Cape Colony magistrate moved for those affected by leprosy, together with their families, to be isolated from society as a means of curbing the spread of leprosy (Horwitz 2006). The directive had come after two European farmers had contracted leprosy. With time the leprosy narrative took racial undertones.

In the early 1900s, leprosy in South Africa was associated with Blacks and their living conditions. The spread of leprosy thus became a rallying point for the leaders of the colonial community for racial segregation. Racial segregation based on epidemiology and sanitation science had been actively employed in major South African urban areas like Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, and Port Elizabeth during the bubonic plague of 1900. As the bubonic plague devastated Cape Town communities, Africans were blamed for its spread. Authorities used this social issue to remove Africans from the cities to the town outskirts (Swanson 1977). Swanson (1977) traces the segregation of communities based on sanitation and health issues to Victorian Europe in the 1850s, where poor communities were believed to be eroding the social status of the elite and thus required separation from the rich.

The leper community mirrored the racial segregation that took shape on the mainland (Deacon 1996; Horwitz 2006). Patients were separated based on race and gender, with disparities in food rations, health benefits and living conditions. Patients of higher stature received better treatment than poor patients and were buried in marked graves upon death (Deacon 1994).

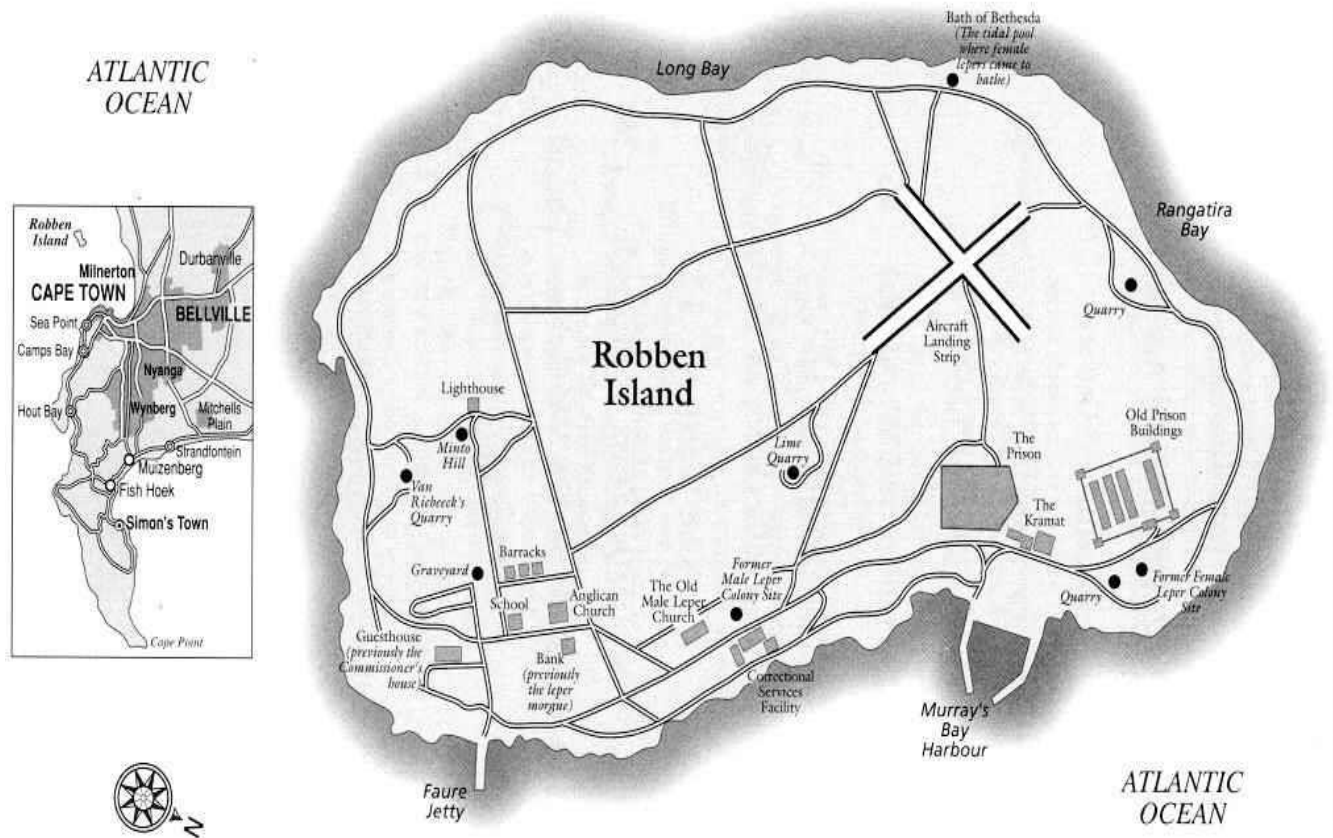


Figure 3: Map showing location of male and female leper sites, reflecting the presence of women on Robben Island.

In 1931 the lepers were relocated from Robben Island to other areas in South Africa such as Mjanyana and Mkhambathi in the Eastern Cape, Pretoria, and Amatikulu in Kwazulu-Natal. All buildings that housed the leper community (Fig.3), bar the Good Shepperd church (Fig.4), were demolished (Clark 2003; Horwitz 2006; Weideman 1998). The church was built for leper men only. It was first consecrated in 1942 after then reconsecrated in 1999. It was refurbished in 2002. The Anglican Church of Southern Africa currently owns the church and the small land surrounding it. The church and graves are the only visible history relating to lepers.



Figure 4: Side views of the Good Sheppard Church (source: Author 2021)

Robben Island was briefly abandoned upon decommissioning the asylum in 1931 until the Second World War (WWII) in 1942. Robben Island was to see significant infrastructure development to prepare it as a defensive military base. It was fitted with the state-of-the-art light calibre and heavy coastal artillery guns (Weideman 1998). During this period, the soldiers saw the suffering of the mentally ill and leprosy patients. The destruction of buildings during this period erased the imprint of mental and leprosy patients on the site. The only preservation was using the stones from the asylum hospitals to build some structures on the island, particularly the Murray Bay Harbour.

4.5 Political imprisonment 1960 – 1991

The end of WWII in 1948 coincided with the rise of white nationalist politics and the further exclusion of blacks from the franchise. The repressive Nationalist Party policies saw increased resistance by black organisations. The African National Congress changed to a more vibrant organisation following the co-option of the leadership of a radical wing of the ANC, the ANC Youth League. The ANC adopted a

Programme of Action to be proactive in confronting the apartheid rulers. More militant organisations in the late 1950s, such as Robert Sobukwe's Pan Africanist Congress and Neville Alexander's Yu-Chi-Chun Club/ National Liberation Front. In the 1960s, the ANC and PAC intensified the struggle against the apartheid government. The liberation movements actively set up military wings to perform acts of sabotage. The armed struggle was carried out with defiance campaigns to destabilise and ultimately overthrow the repressive apartheid policies and laws.

These defiance campaigns were most prominent in big cities like Johannesburg and Cape Town. The most significant was the defiance against the much-hated pass laws in 1960. There were major protests in Sharpeville and Langa. With its hegemony challenged, the apartheid government reacted sternly, resulting in the loss of lives in the Sharpeville pass law protests. To entrench their rule and segregation policies, the nationalist government banned all black political organisations in 1960, and the senior leadership were either arrested or exiled. Robben Island was again identified as a perfect place to banish these leaders (Clark 2003; Deacon 1996). Robert Sobukwe was arrested immediately after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 and sentenced to three years imprisonment. Upon the expiry of the initial term, the government passed a law that extended his incarceration. Sobukwe was transferred to Robben Island in 1963. Sobukwe was kept separate from other prisoners on Robben Island until his release in 1969.

The senior leadership of the ANC had launched uMkhonto we Sizwe as the military wing of the ANC on 16 December 1961 to carry out insurrection and advance the revolution. However, most of the ANC and MK High Command were arrested in Liliesleaf farm, Rivonia in July 1963 following a police raid (Cole 2016). Liliesleaf had been purchased by the SACP and MK High Command for their activities in the early 1960s. The high command members included Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Ahmed Kathrada, Denis Goldberg, Elias Motswaledi, Lionel Bernstein, and Andrew Mlangeni. Nelson Mandela was already serving a five-year prison term and was positively linked to the other Rivonia Trialists and charged with them (Solani 2021). The Rivonia trial is a watershed moment for the political struggle in South Africa. The world took note of what was happening. At the same time, most of the white community was united in wanting to see the black violence contained (Allo 2015). Many believe the international focus might have saved the lives of the trialists as the state had wanted a death sentence. Found guilty of acts of treason, eight of the trialists were sent to Robben Island in 1964 (Hook 2015). Denis Goldberg served his prison sentence at the Pretoria Central prison as it was the only prison with a wing for white political prisoners. Bernstein was acquitted of the charges but was placed under house arrest. He subsequently evaded the authorities and left the country for London (Bernstein 2017).

With most senior leadership incarcerated in many South African jails and others exiled there was a gap in black defiance politics from the late 1960s to the early 1970s. The political vacuum saw the emergence of militant student organisations such as South African Students Organisation and The Black People's Convention in 1972 (Gqola 2001). These culminated into Biko's Black Consciousness Movement led by Steve Biko, Barney Pityana, Muntu Myeza, and others. There were more political upheavals culminating in the 1976 Soweto students protests. More young people were exiled, and

others incarcerated in Robben Island serving sentences of between five to ten years. BCM leaders like Mosiuoa Lekota, Saths Cooper and Strini Moodley being jailed in Robben Island in 1976 joining several long-term political prisoners.

These young political leaders, incarcerated in Section A of the MSPC, were more militant than the older prisoners on life sentences. Section A was reserved for militant prisoners from all political affiliations. There were ideological differences between the young group and the “old guard” within the political ranks. The PAC had assumed that since the BCM policies aligned with theirs, there would be natural synergies and hence did not actively recruit among the new prisoners. The ANC saw a gap in recruiting firebrand leaders resulting in leaders like Mosiuoa Lekota defecting to the ANC. The relations between the liberation movements became strained due to threats of physical violence. The leadership of all liberation movements met and formed inter-political party committees that sought to resolve political differences, formulate policies, and ensure harmony among political prisoners.

Owing to political and social engagements among prisoners, Robben Island was widely known as the university of life. The resolve was not only to defeat the repressive system but also on a personal level to inculcate confidence and prevent degradation and deprivation caused by imprisonment. Marback (2004) opines that reference to Robben Island as a University was done to counter dehumanising conditions of imprisonment. Robben Island thus continued to be a place of banishment until 1991, when the last political prisoners left. Political prisoners were aware they were not fully participating in the political battles raging on in the country hence had to ensure they acted with integrity and resolve in fighting for fair treatment in Robben Island. Education was encouraged to provide ‘intellectual coherence for the political struggle and safeguard it from disintegrating’ (Marback 2004).

The political prisoners were not only South Africans. The South African government had administrative responsibility over the then South-West Africa. The Namibian people’s struggle for independence was spearheaded by the South-West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO). The South African government would see some SWAPO leadership banished to Robben Island.

4.6 Common law prisoners

There were common-law prisoners imprisoned on the island from the 1948 period. After WWII, they were employed as free labour to keep the island clean, maintain roads and infrastructure, and as domestic workers at Robben Island village. During the political imprisonment, they were mainly cooks and thus had some leverage on who gets what food and how much, an extension of punishment for political prisoners. Dlamini (1984) and Marback (2004) take a dim view of the ordinary prisoners as they allowed themselves to be an extension of the prison guards in meting out harsh punishment to the political prisoners, making life unbearable. Over time, some of them became sympathetic to the political prisoners and their cause (notes from tour).

4.7 Normal life in an abnormal environment

Intricately linked to political imprisonment and hardships was the life that resembled a sense of normality lived by prison warders. The village precinct had been repurposed to accommodate prison warders and

their families. There were schools to cater for their children's educational needs. There were recreational facilities like tennis courts, public swimming pools, shops, a church, pubs, and other communal activities to ensure life continued as normal on the island for the prison warders and their families. This normal life existed around a place of incarceration and banishment (Dlamini 1984).

4.8 Voice of women in Robben Island

Krotoa

The history of Robben Island is not restricted only to **males**. Krotoa was among the first women to be imprisoned on Robben Island. Born in the 1640s into the Goringhaicona clan and related to the powerful Cochoqua clan, Krotoa was to grow into one of the most influential figures in the history of South Africa (Scully 2005). A niece of Autshumato, she worked in the Van Riebeeck household and often acted as an interpreter between the Dutch and the Cochoqua clan into which her sister was married. Krotoa was assigned to the Van Riebeeck household as a companion to his wife and children. She was the first woman to be baptised in the Cape and seemed to have assimilated into the van Riebeeck household and, by extension, the European culture (Scully 2005).

She traversed both the Khoikhoi and European worlds, as when she was of marriageable age, she had gone to her clan for the initiation rites. In 1664 she married a Danish surgeon Pieter Van Meerhof, and they had three children. They settled on Robben Island in 1665. Upon the death of her husband on a slave expedition in Madagascar in 1668, she returned to the mainland. Jan van Riebeeck had left for the Netherlands, Wagenaar had taken over as the Cape Governor, and Krotoa lost her place in high society. Wagenaar had a negative view of the Khoikhoi (Scully 2005). With tensions rising between the Dutch and the local Khoikhoi clans and Krotoa having assimilated into the European culture, she was also mistrusted by her clan and lost her diplomatic role. Her children were taken away from her and raised as Europeans. Wagenaar banished her to Robben Island on accusations of being a drunkard. Shunned by both communities she had served, she died on the island in 1674, lonely and destitute.

4.9 Biodiversity in Robben Island

The interactions on Robben Island were not only between humans and the structures they erected.

The interactions on Robben Island were not only between humans and the structures they erected. Humans left an imprint on the landscape. Robben Island has rich biodiversity comprising animal and birdlife. It is an Important Bird Area as a breeding site for various seabirds, such as the African Penguins and other endangered birds, like the African Black Oystercatchers. The Cape Fur Seal, which no longer breeds within Table Bay, was abundant in Robben Island. There is a variety of fish species, reptiles, and other fauna. These served as food, and most have been over-exploited. Political prisoners remember when they would cook molluscs while digging quarries during their imprisonment on the Island (Webber, Shadreck, and Janette 2017; Meintjes et al. 2021).

Humans did not only introduce a variety of animals like eland, springbok, rabbits, and other species but also several alien plant species such as the Rooikrans, Manatako, and Eucalyptus, which have taken over the flora of the Island. Trees provided shade and a source of healing for mentally ill and leprosy patients (Davis 2021).

4.10 Military installations on Robben Island

Robben Island landscape has WWII military installations. These include the two batteries, namely the Robben Island battery, which consists of three 9.2-inch guns, and the Cornelia battery, which had two quick-firing naval guns (Fig 5). The Robben Island battery was to protect the island from the south, and Cornelia was to protect from the Blaauberg side. Other military installations included the submarine detection cables from the Blaauberg side. The visible military infrastructure included the forward observation posts, fire control towers, watchtowers, command posts, searchlights, an airstrip, and rifle trenches along the shoreline. As much as there was no attack on South Africa during the war, the site played a prominent role in training personnel deployed to North Africa. Central units include a black unit, the Cape Corps, trained for support services during the war.



Figure 5: Military installations on Robben Island (author 2021)

4.11 Establishment of Robben Island Museum

In the late 1980s, there were significant changes to the political outlook of South Africa. The repressive apartheid government started to engage the ANC to bring the stakeholders onto a negotiating table for the future of a democratic South Africa. The apartheid government began with a process of releasing some political prisoners imprisoned on Robben Island. The political prisoners released in 1987 included ANC stalwarts Harry Gwala and Govan Mbeki. In 1989 the apartheid government released all the Rivonia Trialists imprisoned in Pollsmoor. Mandela was released a year later, in February 1990. Political parties like the ANC, PAC, SACP and their affiliates were unbanned. There was a free political movement and a steady opening up of spaces.

The release of the political leadership caused anxiety among the prisoners who were still on Robben Island. They were anxious to be reunited with their families and communities. However, the wheels of freedom were grinding slowly, resulting in prisoners deciding to embark on a hunger strike to force the government to speed up their release from prison. Prisoners during this period reported that prison conditions had improved, and more liberties were allowed to the prisoners (Seroke 2021). The prison warders were not as harsh and were mainly concerned about what would happen to them in the new dispensation. The last prisoners left Robben Island on the 15 and 16 May 1991 and were held at Pollsmoor Prison. The apartheid government gave a directive in March 1993 to Correctional Services to vacate Robben Island in 1994 (Odendaal 2021).

Upon transition to a democratic state, the new cabinet had to decide on future uses of Robben Island. Ahmed Kathrada, working through the Office of the President, led the coordinating committee on the future uses of Robben Island. The committee, the Future of Robben Island Committee, made up of various stakeholders in academia, business, activists, and ex-political prisoners, actively sought inputs from various stakeholders on the future of Robben Island (Shearing and Kempa 2004; Odendaal 2021). Some suggestions advocated for the commercialisation of the site for leisurely activities. Some called for developing a theme park, while others called for a centre that promotes peace and reconciliation (Shackley 2001).

The Committee had to work with speed to translate its decisions into Cabinet Memoranda, fearing for safety and security on the Island. The Department of Correctional Services was preparing to vacate the island and was uncooperative. Odendaal (2021) lists the decisions taken by the Cabinet sub-committee responsible for the transition:

- Robben Island was to be developed into a World Heritage Site, National Monument and National Museum. The intention was to showcase the cultural and conservation ideas of the new democratic government, and to exploit the economic potential, and utilise the site for educational purposes.
- The then Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology would be the responsible department for Robben Island.
- The DACST to name the Island a Declared Cultural Institution in terms of the Cultural Institutions Act (Act 29 of 1969) and appoint oversight and management structures.

- Ensure Robben Island is run as a museum and follows international and national conservation approaches. The political prison complex to be converted into a Museum for the Freedom Struggle in South Africa.
- To showcase international cooperation and transformation efforts of a new democratic state and be a beacon for other planned legacy projects.
- To generate income independent of state funding, establish a trust in which President Mandela as chief patron.
- To incorporate the ex-political prisoners in planning and operations of the new established institution.

In November 1996, the new institution, Robben Island Museum, was established with a budget and management structure. In 1996 Robben Island was declared a National Institution in the Cultural Institutions Act. The uncoordinated transfer from Correctional Services led to chaotic management of the tourism and heritage site.

Warders who agreed to stay on were part of the national reconciliation project. In emphasising the ethos and values of the new democratic state, Ahmed Kathrada coined the phrase “triumph of the human spirit over adversity” (Deacon 2004, Odendaal 2021), which became the slogan for the newly established museum. The warders worked with the former political prisoners to create memorable visitor experiences through the narration of the history of the place, which delved into their personal stories. Odendaal (2021) elucidates the debates within the newly established RIM regarding whether the EPPs should rote learn a script for the tours or speak from their personal experience as prisoners.

The site's popularity grew, with tourists queuing for long hours for a chance to be on Robben Island (Shackley 2001; Odendaal 2021). Dignitaries and VVIPs paid lots of money to be pictured in Nelson Mandela's cell and sometimes with him. Critical government meetings were held on Robben Island. The economic spinoffs were positive despite some adverse reports of rape and murder on the island during the early days (Shackley 2001). However, Odendaal (2001) believes that the rape incident, in particular, shaped the manner law enforcement agencies dealt with rape victims in the country, paying attention to privacy and sensitivity in investigating rape incidents.

The increase in visitor numbers and high-profile guests visiting the Island necessitated the relocation of the departure point from Jetty 1 to the current Nelson Mandela Gateway. Jetty 1 is of historical significance as part of the original harbour. It is where prisoners, visiting families, and prison warders would embark on or disembark from Robben Island. Visitor interviews took place here, and if successful, visitors were allowed to go to the Island. They left at 13h00 and returned at 16h00, leaving little time to interact with the prisoners. Children under sixteen were not allowed to cross the Island. Jetty 1 building is currently a national monument with pre-and post-apartheid Robben Island exhibitions. It has prison cells and beds like those on the Island.

4.12 Politics of control within the Robben Island Museum

The economic windfall of ferrying tourists presented more challenges for the newly established museum owing to the diverse stakeholders in the ferry business. The private ferry operators on the V& A Waterfront wanted a piece of the economic boon. They attempted to force the management to allow them to operate ferries from Jetty 1 to the Island. Jetty 1 was where prisoners, warders and other visitors would depart and return on their travels to and from Robben Island. People serving in the military and security services, connected politicians, Ex Political Prisoners and other businesspeople had access to ministers responsible for the management of Robben Island (Odendaal, Maart, and Forbes 2021). These connected people would exert undue influence on the operational activities of the museum, taking the focus away from discussions about the museum's future. The economic factors seem to trump the focus on heritage and conservation (Deacon 2004).

With Nelson Mandela being the President of the new democratic space and his association with politics of reconciliation and humanitarian values, it became evident that he would be the draw card for the visitors to the Island, and the new museum latched on the Nelson Mandela euphoria. People wanted to see where Mandela was imprisoned (Deacon 2004; Shackley 2001; Solani 2021). The international business community and politicians would make donations on the strength of Nelson Mandela's good name. The pulling power of Nelson Mandela was evident in the relocation of the ferry terminal from Jetty 1 to the current Nelson Mandela Gateway. Businesspeople donated vast amounts of money for the construction of the building. Odendaal (2021) clarifies how the NMG building was the only building to be built based on the tenant's specifications at the V&A Waterfront.

There were murmurs from other political organisations like the PAC and AZAPO that Robben Island was established to valorise the ANC as the only liberation party and that Nelson Mandela was being promoted by RIM ahead of other luminaries like Robert Sobukwe and Jaftha Masemola (Pheko 2002). Dondolo (2021) argues that 'the museum advances a monolithic and hegemonic master narrative of past privileges of Nelson Mandela and the ANC political prisoners, all as part of Mandela mythology'. Mandela had warned against the propagation of an individual in the role played by many during the liberation struggle. However, it seemed like even among the majority of EPPs interviewed by the RIM Heritage Department during the naming of the new building, there was this notion of honouring a hero among themselves (Smallberg 2021). The heroic nation-builder and father of the nation narrative permeated the general South African populace, and institutions such as the RIM.

4.13 The first World Heritage Sites in South Africa

South Africa had been barred from participating in the UN and its agencies because of apartheid laws. The country was readmitted to the UN in 1994 and was a signatory of the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention in 1997. The time coincided with the opening of the RIM to tourists. The period during the first democratic era saw enthusiasm from world nations to assist in maintaining the "miracle of 1994" (Grobler 2008). Pastor (2021) points out the assistance the new democratic state received from Scandinavian countries, notably Norway, in ensuring the conservation and heritage preservation regulations aligned with UNESCO and international standards. The World Heritage Convention Act and the NHRA were passed in 1998 and 1999, respectively, with significant assistance from Norway. During

this time, South Africa was preparing the nomination dossier for the listing of Robben Island on the World Heritage List.

RIM was a legacy project to reflect on the successful negotiation and end to political reprisals. It also showcased the new government's new nation-state built on national reconciliation and inclusivity notions.

Globally the World Heritage List had been dominated by European sites with very little from African and Oceanic nations (Labadi 2013). The World Heritage Committee had decided at its Nara conference to address the imbalanced distribution of World Heritage Sites (Munjeri 2004). UNESCO first visited the site in 1996 to assess its viability as a 'cultural site of universal significance' (Pastor 2021). The first application to UNESCO was based on the assessment of the buildings, which did not embrace the 'definition of cultural heritage in the African context. With enabling legislation, such as NEMA, and technical assistance from the Norwegians, amendments were made, and a nomination dossier was prepared through the DEAT. In December 1999, the island was declared a cultural World Heritage Site, with the natural World Heritage Site of St Lucia/Isimangaliso Wetlands and the Cradle of Humankind in Sterkfontein.

4.14 Integrated Conservation Management Plan

The declaration of Robben Island as a World Heritage Site came with the requirement for management to develop an integrated conservation management plan. The ICMP is an encompassing document giving guidance on the conservation of both the physical fabric and associated stories, interpretation of the site's narrative, plans to improve the interpretation, and management of tourists and other activities that might degrade the value of the heritage site (Deacon 2004, 2021; Mafune 2021). In the development of the first ICMP, researchers drew from experiences of former political prisoners, archives and artefacts found on Robben Island to recreate prison life. Researchers attempted to knot together the various layers of history. Deacon (2021), however, notes the "dissonances, silences and tensions between the different histories of the place." These differences were brought about by different narratives emanating during the tours. The uncoordinated transfer of the site from Correctional Services to the Arts and Culture was reflected in the drafting of the first ICMP. Former political prisoners had to relive the harsh memories of their life in prison.

Political prisoners in positions of authority in the government and on the RIM council compounded the challenges faced by heritage practitioners during this phase. Generally, they had little understanding of heritage and conservation practices (Mafune 2021). Some of them were bowing to the pressure of hosting music concerts on Robben Island, thus threatening the World Heritage listing and possibly degrading the site's heritage value. Tourists were adding another dynamic as they wanted to touch the displayed artefacts. Some of these artefacts were susceptible to being stolen. To diffuse the situation, the UNESCO heritage monitoring bodies, the World Conservation Union, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, and the International Council of Monuments and Sites engaged the management of RIM to ensure adherence to World Heritage Sites requirements.

Deacon (2021) highlights that the ICMP covering the 2007 to 2012 period was skewed towards the political imprisonment period as the dominant layer of the interpretation narrative. The initial ICMP explicitly prioritised the political imprisonment landscape as the dominant narrative. The 2013-2018 ICMP has made attempts to cover a more holistic narrative of the multiple layers of heritage.

4.15 Tourism and conservation – what to preserve and interpretation

The focal point during the opening of RIM in 1997 was more operational than heritage conservation. The presentation of the tours by Ex Political Prisoners leaned on political affiliations and seemed to accentuate the political imprisonment period and focussed only on the prison complex. The warders presented a different unofficial tour focussing on “Sobukwe House, the Church of the Good Shepherd, the old asylum buildings, the World War guns, the warders’ houses and pub” (Deacon 2021). Tourists found it challenging to make linkages between the significant heritage on the Island. The political imprisonment period was not linked to the pre-1960 period.

4.16 Conclusion

The iconic Robben Island is many things to several people. As a World Heritage site, it has an outstanding universal value. This value is not based on the site's aesthetics as in most western cultures. The outstanding universal value draws on the site's cultural and natural values and the landscape's association with lived experiences. The landscape and associated multi-layers of stories of human suffering reflect the make-up of the development of South Africa and her people.

The historical account shows various layers of these interactions and associations over a period on Robben Island. Different meanings are attached to the site by various individuals over time. It is evident from the historical evolution that the recent history of political imprisonment is closely linked to the country's politics and is well documented. The survivors of political imprisonment lived among us; some are still alive. Most of the political leadership became senior leaders of government. They shaped the notions of reconciliation and nation-building. The site reflects mainly the latter history in presenting layers of heritage. The coining of the slogan 'triumph of the human spirit over adversity' was to ensure the focus is not on suffering but on positive aspects of reconciliation and nation-building.

Dondolo (2021) points out that the presentation of heritage on Robben Island, particularly from the tour guides' perspectives, depends on which side of the political affiliation of the guide. PAC guides promote the narrative of the PAC, highlighting that PAC political prisoners like Jafta Masemola were the first to be banished to Robben Island, and PAC political prisoners built the maximum-security prison complex. They were the most ill-treated by prison guards. ANC guides amplify the narrative of Nelson Mandela as the hero of the struggle. The political parties acknowledge that their struggle was a continuation of the great fight against colonialism, but the narrative mainly centres around their suffering. Theirs thus become the dominant layer of the heritage.

The chapter highlights the centrality of economic development in positioning as a tourism site. In its early development, the site was mainly a tourist attraction site. Heritage conservation grew after the site was opened to tourists and was a special requirement for the listing as a World Heritage Site. Initially, the site suffered from the Mandelarisisation of the narrative. Mandela was the president much loved by

the world. The first ICMP was skewed towards the political imprisonment period and accentuated this layer over all other layers visible in Robben Island. There has been criticism of the first ICMP. The current ICMP addresses some imbalances but finds criticism within the BCM and PAC circles for not accentuating their role in the liberation struggle (Dondolo 2021).

The banishment of leprosy and mental health patients showcases the abuse of human rights and the use of obscure medical and social issues to foster racial and class segregation.

Political interference in operations, leaning on Mandela as a drawcard to attract visitors, focusing the interpretation on heroes of the struggle, and the focus on the government's reconciliation efforts reflects the dovetailing of the presentation of heritage and the political hegemony of the time.

5 Interactions with the tour guides and observations from tourists' interactions with the heritage.

The preceding chapter delved into various layers of Robben Island, the development of Robben Island as a tourism site, and the transition to a World Heritage Site. These developments required Robben Island to be managed according to international norms to preserve the history and traditions of the place for posterity. The chapter highlights the challenges and political interference conservation experts faced during the early phases of transition (Odendaal, Maart and Forbes 2021). These challenges influenced the interpretation and presentation of the site to tourists. Deacon (2021) and examination of the initial ICMP reveal how the site's presentation concentrated mainly on the political imprisonment period. These challenges have been addressed in the 2013-2018 ICPM. It is vital to corroborate whether what is documented is being practised and investigate reasons for gaps. The interviews with tour guides, observation during tours and tourist reviews corroborate the information.

In this chapter, I focus on the narratives presented to visitors, particularly those communicated via public and private tours and the curatorship of the heritage sites on the island. My observations and analysis of the tours are supported in the second half of the chapter by interviews with tour guides and brief surveys conducted with visitors about their experiences. I use this information to arrive at a deeper understanding of how the tour narratives are constructed and experienced. The information gathered from the tour experiences is critical to answering the research question, illuminating the unpacking of the narrative for visitors and shaping it around a particular epoch, event or people.

I attended three tours of Robben Island. On the initial pre-arranged private tour, I was with a senior staff member, Ms Vanessa Mitchell. On the second occasion, I joined a public tour. The final tour involved a self-guided tour on foot around the site, with approval from RIM Management, and making observations of various parts of the island. I interviewed three tour guides, two ex-political prisoners and the third one, a bus tour guide. Six tourists were given questionnaires on their way back from the Robben Island tour.

The ex-political prisoners conduct tours at the maximum-security prison complex. These interviews are not meant to be mined for information but to obtain an oral account of the narrative's presentation, identify visible gaps compared to the ICMP and what actions during the tours.

Establishing themes in a multi-layered site like Robben Island is challenging as people attach various meanings to the site. A question asked might be answered in several ways. However, in many instances, the political imprisonment era becomes the dominant narrative with stories of pain and suffering, the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

5.1 Personal tour of Robben Island

The personal tour did not follow the usual tourist route. It was a walking tour and much more interactive. This part of the research included participant observation and interviews as primary research sources to obtain credible information (A.K. Harrison 2018). The combination of two data collection methods

reflects the flexibility of ethnography in using more than one method to collect credible information during the process of theory development (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

Ms Mitchell had prior knowledge of my research topic as I had discussed it with her. On the tour day, we had an opportunity to fully engage in the purpose of my visit to Robben Island. Part of these discussions was on the boat to Robben Island. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, there were about 35 tourists on a boat that generally carries 300 tourists. Many of the passengers were staff members returning to the island from the mainland. I emphasise the number of tourists as the economic value generated through tourism directly links to the positioning of the narrative of the heritage site.

During this visit, I could not observe what tourists do during this part of the tour as I had in-depth discussions with the designated tour guide for the day. On arrival at Robben Island, I asked for permission to record our conversation on a digital recorder. I figured recording and taking detailed notes during the walking process would be challenging. Taking field notes is one of the critical elements of an ethnographic study as it allows the researcher to reflect on observations and make inferences from experiences gained (Harrison 2018). Ms Mitchell agreed to the digital recording.

On arrival, I observed the tourists interacting with Murray's Bay harbour murals, the landing point for tours on Robben Island. Generally, tourists appear excited as they take photographs and interact with the physical form of the heritage site. They are then taken onto the waiting buses to start the bus tour. We proceeded on foot to the maximum-security prison complex. The intention is to walk and physically interact with the heritage spaces (Savova 2009).

The standard tour of the island takes about 45 minutes on the bus tour section around the island, with another 45 minutes spent on the maximum-security prison complex. During the individual tour, we spent approximately one hour and fifteen minutes in the maximum-security prison complex. There are visible displays and signage, which Ms Mitchell was keen to show to reflect how the museum's management has ensured that the narrative is kept exciting.

The first space we visited was the reception area where prison guards received prisoners' visitors. The space is a high-security area with thickened perforated glass. Communication with the prisoners was through an intercom/telephone. Prison guards managed the communication booths on both sides to monitor conversations. I was informed that listening devices were installed to ensure the timed conversations were not political (narrated by Ms Mitchell). Ms Mitchell explains that the visitors were primarily women. The visit would last thirty minutes. These visits had been arranged with the authorities several months in advance. Upon enquiry, I was informed that tourists are supposed to see this well-curated space, but time constraints do not allow for this.

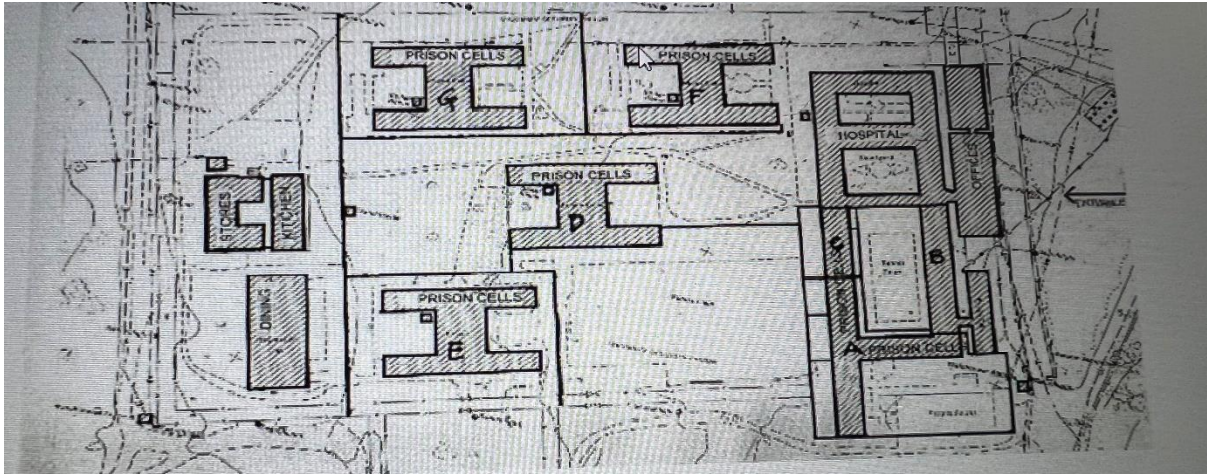


Figure 6: outlay of different sections within the maximum-security prison complex (sections E, D, G, F B)

We went meticulously in each space from Sections F, G, H, D, A, C and B (Fig. 6) and took time to interact with the space. Ms Mitchell would explain how each space is relevant to the history of imprisonment. As also reflected in the literature reviewed (Deacon 2021; Mafune 2021), she explains that the display in the prison cells is constructed mainly from the memory of the ex-political prisoners and prison warders. Ms Mitchell gives context to the different eras of occupation of Robben Island. She explains how these areas overlap and influence the history of Robben Island, the country and the world primarily through the displacement of the Khoikhoi, the Xhosa, the Muslim clerics from Batavia and the general populace of South Africa (Weideman 1988).

Ms Mitchell explains where the Outrunk used to be and that political prisoners at the Outrunk were used as labourers to build the Maximum-Security Prison. Most of these prisoner labourers were from the PAC. She explains that Nelson Mandela was initially brought to Robben Island in 1962 to serve a five-year prison sentence for inciting a strike and leaving the country illegally. He was transferred to Pretoria in 1963 to be charged with other Rivonia Trialists (Evans 2019).

The tour proceeded from the maximum-security prison past the Sobukwe complex, the leprosy gravesite, and the Good Shepherd Church to the medium B security prison. The medium B complex (Fig. 7 & 8) is a repurposed prison complex with a well-equipped library and study area. The prison cells are repurposed into bedrooms for overnight guests. There is a state-of-the-art conference facility and a security holding area. This repurposed building is mainly used for educational purposes, accommodating researchers and school groups. The medium B section building dates to the WWII era. During the construction of the maximum-security prison, prisoners were held at the Medium B complex. Later, only ordinary prisoners were housed in this section.



Figure 7: Side view of the Medium B prison that has been converted into an over-night accommodation, library and state-of-the-art conference facility. The conversion was done to preserve buildings that are not in regular use (Davis 2021). Picture by author 2021



Figure 8: Repurposed medium B prison cells (author 2021)

The individual tour was more on exhibitions (Figs. 10, 11 and 12) and how management has accentuated the voices of prisoners and their stories. Management intends to enrich the narrative and showcase that the famous political prisoners were not the only ones incarcerated. The exhibitions in the single cell units at the maximum-security prison complex narrate the history of each prisoner held there, their period of incarceration, their activities before imprisonment and any roles they played during incarceration. The tour touches on what the RIM management is doing to ensure that the heritage is relevant to all South Africans from a young age.

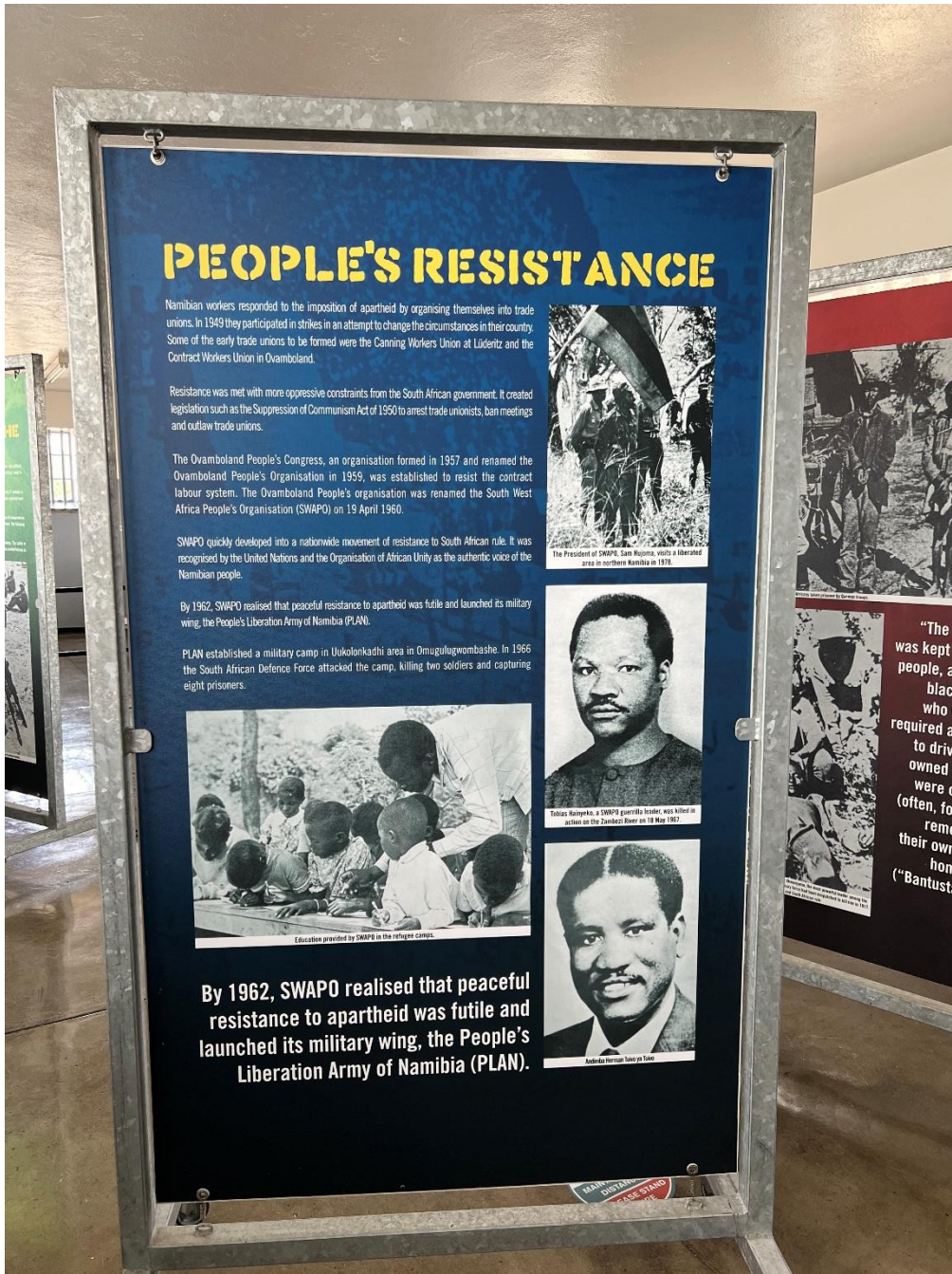


Figure 9: SWAPO exhibition in section D – communal cells

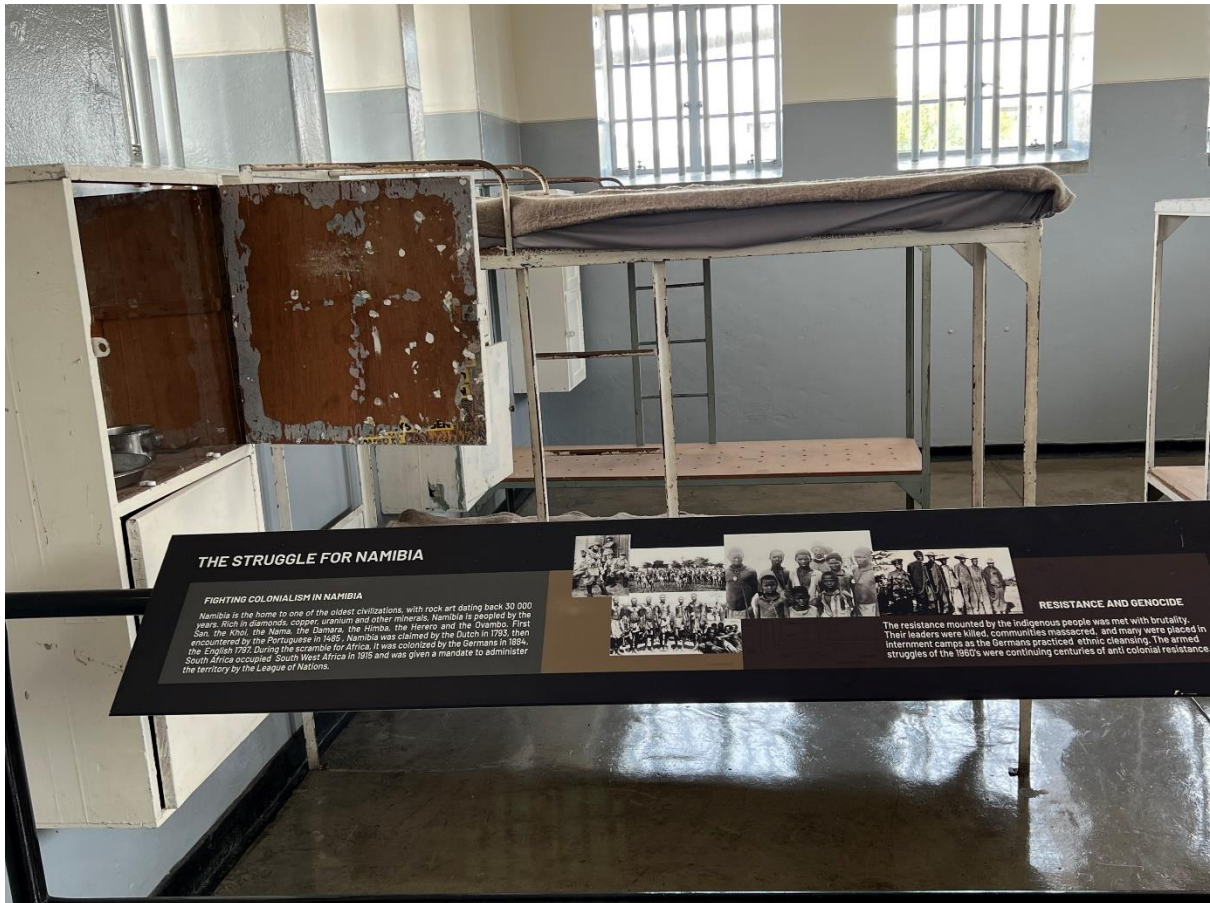


Figure 10: Signage and reinterpretation of prison life in section D



Figure 11: Exhibition showing items used by prison guards to torture political prisoners



Figure 12: Communal cell prison exhibition reconstructed from items donated by ex-political prisoners

Owing to time constraints, we soon head back to the Murray's Bay harbour for our trip back to the mainland. On the return trip, there are more staff members returning to the mainland. The tour guide tells me that due to Covid-19 restrictions, there is only one boat per day travelling between the mainland and the island. Usually, there are two boats per day.

It was evident from the onset of the tour that we would not be able to cover the entire precinct due to time constraints. Perhaps due to how the site is curated, the prison complex becomes more engaging than other areas, or due to the recent nature of the 1960-1991 political imprisonment, this history is at the fore of the tourism narrative. The tour was a more in-depth look at prison life than what visitors get on public tours. Interestingly, tourists do not see the visitors' centre, where political prisoners interact with family members. The women's exhibition that highlights the role of women in the struggle is displayed in the visitor's centre. Mrs Mitchell was keen to show me these spaces and the curatorial interventions made by management to enrich the narrative of Robben Island.

5.2 Group tour of Robben Island

I joined a public tour on the second visit to Robben Island, first engaging with the Nelson Mandela Gateway exhibition. The exhibition space in the Nelson Mandela Gateway forms part of a self-guided tour. I noted that the exhibition details the history of Robben Island and the interaction of humans with the landscape. I noted that the effects of COVID-19 restrictions led to long ticket queues outside the Nelson Mandela Gateway. Perhaps this might be one of the reasons there was no interaction with the exhibition. Tourists were hurried into the waiting boat named after Krotoa (Richards 2017).

The narration of the island's history continues through the video that details human interaction with the island from the 1400s. I noted that few tourists were concerned with this part of the tour. The tourists' gazes were on the beautiful background of the V&A waterfront, visible as the boat left the NMG. As the boat leaves, the background of Cape Town with Table Mountain overlooking the city makes a beautiful sight (Fig. 14). This view seems to excite the tourists as they try to find the best angle to capture the background on their smartphones (Fig 4). Some tourists, not excited by the background, look at their cell phones. It seems tourists do not link the Nelson Mandela Gateway exhibition, the narrative on the boat, as part of the tour.

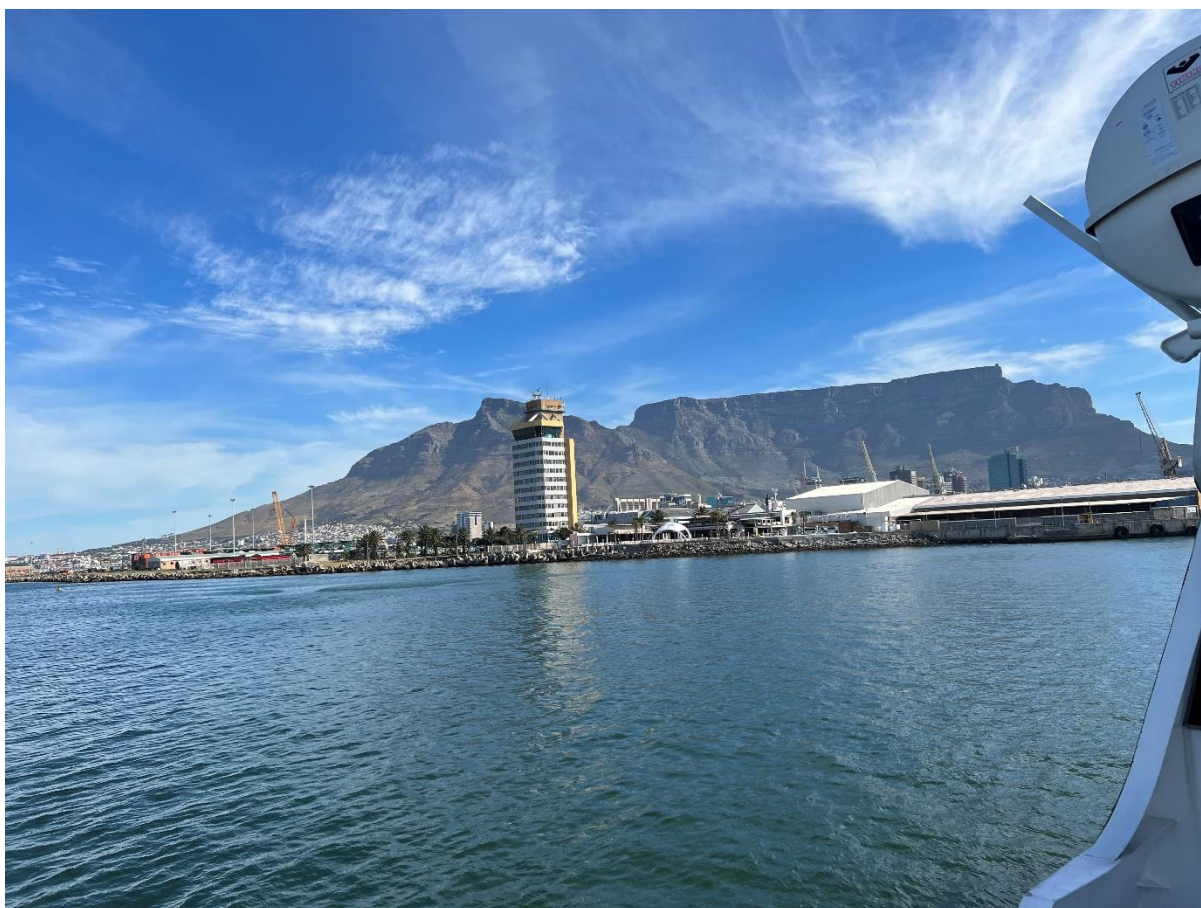


Figure 13: Table Mountain visible as the boat leaves the NMG for Robben Island (author 2021)

However, I observed that the presentation was revamped on the last visit to Robben Island on 12 November 2021. The narrative is crisp and captivating. The sound is audible, and the font is more prominent and easier to read. The pictures have been made larger and are of good quality. There are

no interrupting adverts. Most tourists paid attention to the presentation (Fig.16). The change in the visual presentation with larger images contributes to visitor reception.



Figure 14: Tourists not engaging with the visual display. I observed the smaller font on the screens (author 2021).



Figure 15: Larger visuals captivating to tourists (author 2021)

After thirty minutes on the Atlantic Ocean, the boat docks at the Murray's Bay harbour on Robben Island (Fig. 16). There is a sudden buzz from the tourists as they disembark. They rush to take photos against the Murray Bay Harbour wall with its beautiful murals. The arrival is chaotic, and the tour structure has no clear direction. Tourists seem to want to do their own thing. After a short while, the guides take over and direct tourists to the waiting buses (Fig. 17). The tour guides' interventions reflect the structure of the tour.



Figure 16: Murray's Bay harbour. Part of the wall was constructed during WWII era using remnants from leper buildings.



Figure 17: Buses waiting to take tourist around the island for the first part of the tour (author 2021)

Most tourists were South Africans on our bus, mainly from Gauteng. About four were from India. I established that she was trying to find out how to pitch her tour. Hence, she asked people to indicate their places of origin. She explained that we were allowed to take photographs, but she would do most of the talking, pointing us to important places. The public tour felt different to the previous individual visit. This tour was more touristy as the guide commanded the tour, telling us about places of importance. My perception might be biased as I have read a bit about the tours of Robben Island and the general history.

The tour bus makes its way from Murray Harbour past Sobukwe House and stops briefly for tourists to take photographs. Taking photographs from the bus is challenging. There is no physical interaction with the Sobukwe complex. Understanding of the space is dependent on the tour guide's narration. The tour guide narrates Sobukwe's difficult incarceration period. She lowers her voice as she narrates the special

legislation that the apartheid government enacted to ensure the continued incarceration of Sobukwe. As the guide tells this story, the mood becomes more tense and sombre when she describes how he was isolated from other political prisoners.

As stated in the literature, we learn from the tour guide that the current Sobukwe house is not original. The tour takes about four minutes from the harbour to the Sobukwe House. The ICMP mentions that the Sobukwe complex (Fig. 18 and 19) was initially built during WWII to serve as a mess, barracks, and hygiene facility. Mentioning these could enhance the richness of the place, showing that the entire island is a palimpsest, with many stories written over the various sites within Robben Island.

We spend approximately four minutes outside the Sobukwe house, with the tour guide giving much more history about Sobukwe, his family life and academic involvement. I yearned to physically engage with the space and be aware of the significant space I am engaging with (Gracy 2006; Savova 2009), but this is impossible from the bus tour. When I was on an unaccompanied tour, I was allowed by the guard to take photographs, but from outside. I have since learnt that the introduction of walking tours will encompass the visitor's centre and the Sobukwe complex.



Figure 18: Sobukwe house within the Sobukwe complex. An example of writing over the landscape as the complex had been repurposed several times.



Figure 19: Sobukwe complex

The bus continues past the leprosy graveyard (Fig. 20). The guide's narration focuses on hardships faced by leprosy and mental illness patients in the early 1900s. She informs the tour group of the privileges enjoyed by wealthy patients, such as having a tombstone erected. She informs the group that many unmarked graves dot the island landscape and the possibility of the MSP complex being built on top of graves (Deacon 1996). The story is narrated as the bus moves slowly past the graveyard and the Good Shepherd Church. Observations are through the window, which makes it challenging to take photos from the bus or engage with this part of the heritage. The church, designed by the renowned Sir Herbert Baker, is the only surviving building from the early 20th century. Various people have also used the church over the periods.



Figure 20: Leper graveyard. Tombstones were preserved for the well-off.

The bus makes its way past the Medium B prison and the village. Not much detail is given about the history of the village. She informs that the village's Garrison Church (Fig.21) is used as a wedding venue. The ICMP mentions that the church was of Cape Gothic style in its original finish. Mentioning these nuances might be beneficial to some tourists.

The female asylum building is another site that has the potential to enrich the tour narrative. The British built the female asylum (Fig. 22) on the remains of the Dutch Postholder's house (Weideman 1998). The overlaying of the heritage can be accentuated in this instance. However, these nuances are missed during the presentation of the narrative.



Figure 21: Garrison Church is currently used as a wedding venue. It reflected the Cape Gothic style



Figure 22: Female mental asylum which was repurposed from a Dutch Postholder's house.

The village life during apartheid mirrored life on the mainland, with prison guards living in an environment that entrenched their power. Prisoners were used as labour for the upkeep of the village precinct. The guards lived comfortably on Robben Island and had many privileges. Most houses in the village are from the British occupation era and have been unchanged ever since.

Generally, the village is not seen as part of the heritage of Robben Island. The brutal prisoners had their everyday life in the village, and this life depicted the public life in apartheid South Africa. The forgetting of the past ties in with Riouful (2000)'s assertion about RIM's presentation of not giving voice to the memory of suffering under apartheid.

Observations during the unaccompanied tour are that most of these sites have been identified, and there are detailed information boards (Fig. 23). The information on these boards offers an opportunity for tourists to engage with the site and make their reflections. However, tourists are confined to the bus. The opportunity for reflection and physical interaction with the heritage is lost. The staging of information boards which provide rich content of history is commendable. However, such information on its own not being interpreted and related does not do justice to the heritage.

I note that, perhaps due to sites not being visited, they are not in good condition. Davis (2021) writes that the sites that are not utilised deteriorate, and hence management has converted areas like Medium B prison complex to prevent further deterioration. We can take photographs from the bus with the tour

guide giving historical context of each significant site and pointing out structures that are significant. It was observed that the average time spent on each major site is approximately 3 minutes.



Figure 23: Detailed information boards that dot the island's landscape

The bus stops at the canteen, closer to lush vegetation, with breath-taking views of the island, the ocean, and Table Mountain overlooking the city of Cape Town. The area is designed for tourists, with yellow square metal to take individual and group photos. Tourists disembark and interact with the site. They take photographs, and there is general happiness as they take photos with lush vegetation in the background (Figs. 24 & 25). There is sudden engagement with the heritage site. However, the presentation of this engagement is stereotypical of what the tourists want, to take photographs with an excellent background. The heritage is temporarily forgotten.



Figure 24: Tourists disembark from buses and interact with the heritage, taking photographs in an area designed for this purpose.

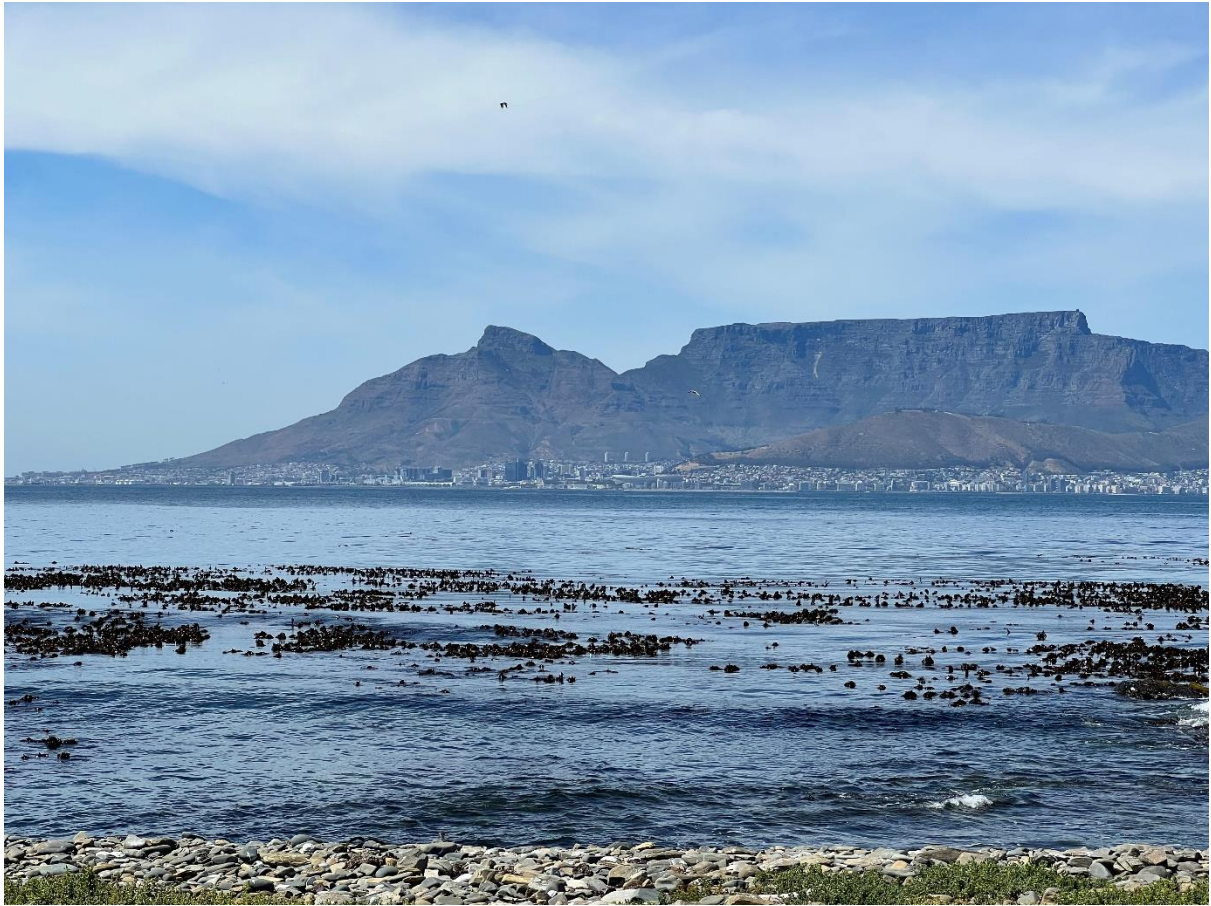


Figure 25: Picturesque background that is an instant attraction for tourists to take post-car photos.

I learn that the area we are in has World War II installations (Fig. 26) and a lighthouse. The guide informs us that we will not be venturing further into this area as that is not the set direction of the tour.



Figure 26: World War II installations observed during the individual tour. Tourists do not get to see these. (Author 2021)

After 15 minutes, we are back on the bus to continue with the bus tour. We make our way past the lime quarry site. The tour guide narrates how political prisoners suffered indignity at the hands of the prison guards as they chiselled through the lime in unfavourable conditions. The tour guide narrates the beatings and humiliation of political prisoners that occurred at the lime quarry site. To enhance the

narrative, she mentions the leaders of the ANC like Ahmed Kathrada, Walter Sisulu, and Nelson Mandela. The rest of the political prisoners are referred to in the collective as other prisoners. The mood in the bus is sombre, and I overhear some passengers expressing their views about the cruel system of apartheid. The guide mentions the blue stone quarry site used during the colonial era to mine blue stone that was used to build many sites in Cape Town, including the Castle of Good Hope (Barker 2003).

I observe at this stage that the tour guide is building the narrative for the human suffering at the prison complex. The mood eases when she mentions the political education among prisoners at the lime quarry site. The context given is that of unity of purpose and ideology.

Generally, the tour guide does well in evoking emotions during certain parts of the tour. Evoking emotions is one of the critical elements of interpretation. However, there are challenges with relating the narrative to different epochs in a manner that stimulates thought and enriches the narrative of the multi-layered site (Jameson 2020).

The ICMP identifies significant sites within Robben Island that contribute to the site's significance. These include the religious sites, the graveyards, the quarries, WWII fortifications, the MSP complex, and its associated sites. I note that the sites mentioned during the tour are on the tour route. There are no linkages made. An overview of significant sites will not take up much time and will help make the tour more educational and thought stimulating.

5.3 Prison complex tour presented by an Ex Political Prisoner tour guide

The bus tour ends at the entrance of the maximum-security prison complex. Generally, the bus tour is not much different to the boat ride from the V&A Waterfront to Robben Island. The difference is the presence of the tour guide on the bus. There is no physical interaction with the heritage space, which is evident for those eager to take photographs and feel the movement within the heritage space (Savova 2009). I will acknowledge the time constraints that make the tour feel rushed. Deacon (2004) details the direction of the bus tour, time spent and what is covered during the bus tour. From what I experienced, the tour's narrative in 2021 is not significantly different from that detailed by Deacon (2004).

We disembark and, after a short leg stretch, are welcomed by another tour guide.



Figure 27: This is where tours to the MSP complex start. The guide gives an overview of the structure of the tour with referencing this photo.

He explains that he is a former political prisoner who was incarcerated on Robben Island in the 1980s for political activities. He had skipped the country, obtained military training abroad and infiltrated South

Africa. He was arrested in Durban and transported to Robben Island for a ten-year prison term. He points out most of his comrades in the picture above (Fig. 27), giving a detailed account of what they were arrested for, their prison terms and their activities and interests in prison. All the prisoners he knew were from the ANC. Seroke (2021) refers to the same photo and remembers the day they were finally released from prison in 1991. Seroke mentions the prisoners and acknowledges their political affiliation (Seroke 2021).

We are walking with the guide as he explains the significance of each part of the prison complex. The tour starts on the football fields between the Kramatz (Fig. 29), an Islamic shrine, and the MSP complex. The tour proceeds to communal prison cells. The spaces are well curated with visible signage that details prison life in these communal cells.



Figure 28: The Muslim shrine on Robben Island.

The tour guide gives a crisp description of prison life in each section. He explains how they interacted with each other from the same political organisation and with one another from different political ideologies, the mutual respect, and the creation of a prison culture fostered through the resistance to unjust prison laws. As we proceed within the communal prison cells, he explains the establishment of various committees among prisoners to look after the political and cultural aspects of prison life and diffuse political tension. These include the establishment of sporting committees and rules that govern these sporting codes.

The presentation focuses on torture, inhumane treatment by prison warders, and sub-standard food and clothing (until the intervention of the Red Cross). This tour barely mentions the Namibian prisoners on the island, who were in section D. Section D is not usually visited. The tour guide informed me that they take visitors there if there is a specific request, which would be from a Namibian citizen.

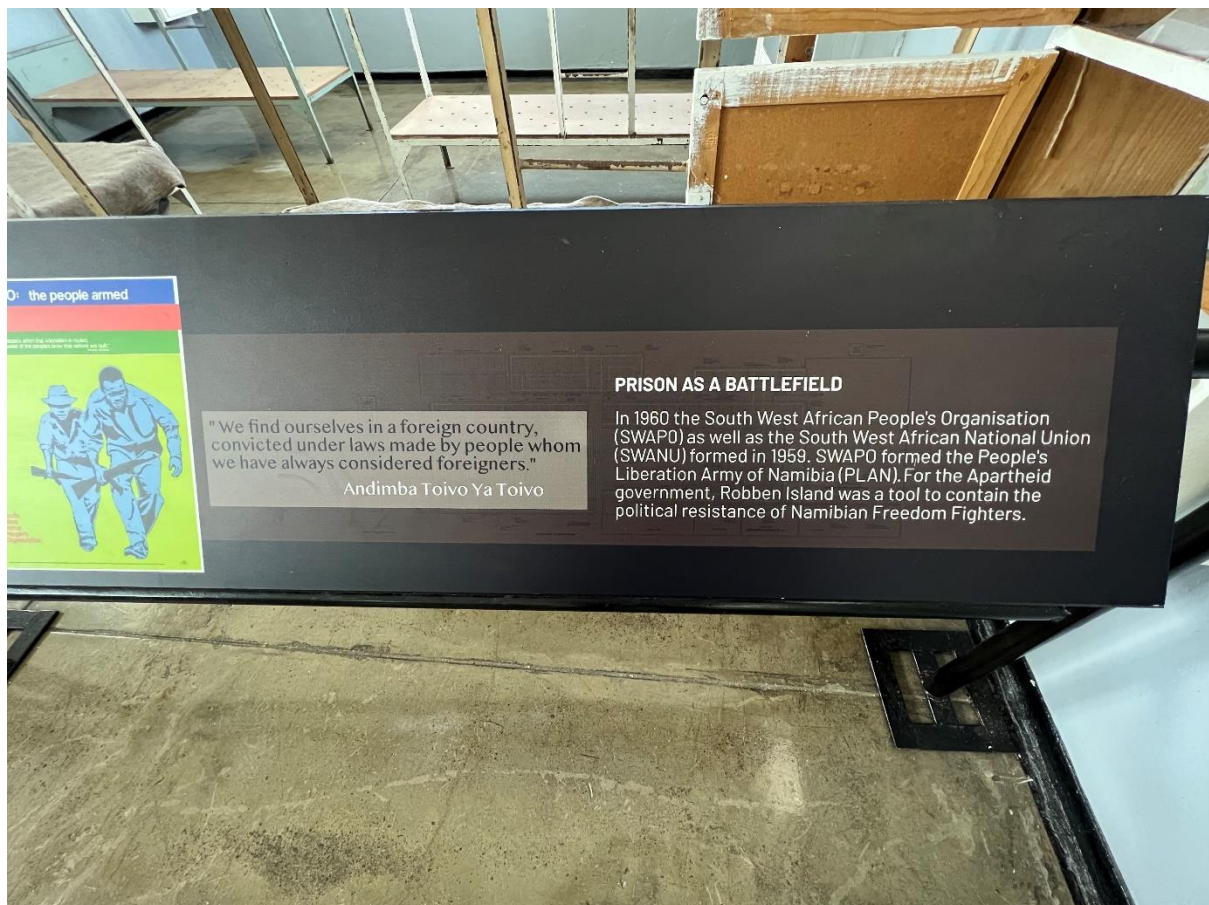


Figure 29: The Muslim shrine on Robben Island and thereafter other political prisoners from the early 1980's.

The tour's emphasis is on the leadership of the ANC, notably Nelson Mandela. The tour guide gives the context of Nelson Mandela on the island as a leader of all political prisoners. There is no mention of whether there were contestations within his party and between different political formations. Perception is created that prisoners came from the same political party. Dondolo (2021) takes issue with this presentation, which places Mandela and the ANC at the centre of the political struggle. Dondolo's views

the presentation in this format as the deliberate exclusion of the PAC and BCM from the Robben Island historical events and the South African political struggle.

The ex-political prisoner draws most of the information from the memory of the lived experience of prison life, thus speaking with authority. In contrast, the bus tour guide uses a tour script perfected over time (Mafune 2021). Thus, there is more focus and interest in the narration by the ex-political prisoner. The bus and ex-political prisoner tour guides are conscious of time. Discussions are encouraged, but the movement within each space is hurried. If one takes time interacting with the space, there is a likelihood of falling behind the group.

The guided tour culminates in section B's famous courtyard (Fig. 31), showing prisoners doing Robben Island chores. Recognisable in the photo are Nelson Mandela, and Walter Sisulu (Fig. 32). At the backdrop of the courtyard are single prison cells. Tourists seem not to be paying much attention to the tour guide. The tourists seem eager to see Nelson Mandela's prison cell, which the tour guide duly points out during the presentation. He mentions the censor room where mail to and from prisoners was opened and problematic parts cut out by the prison warders. During the private tour I had with Ms Mitchell, we ventured to this section, and I learnt that there were secret listening devices planted all over the MSP for guards to listen to prisoner conversations. This technology was dismantled and destroyed in the early 1990s by the apartheid government. Ms Mitchell informs me that the information regarding these devices was obtained from prison warders



Figure 30: Section B courtyard with single cells in the background



Figure 31: The famous photo that shows prisoners chiselling rocks in the courtyard. Mandela and Sisulu having a conversation. The Mandela-Sisulu photo was taken by Breytenbach in 1966. It shows them waits up to ensure the indignity of shorts is not visible (Evans 2019).

From here on, visitors do a self-guided tour of the remainder of the prison. The rush is to the Nelson Mandela prison cell. I ventured into other single cells in section B (Fig. 32). I also visited Section A, which housed militant prisoners and primarily prisoners from the BCM. In the single-cell exhibition, each cell displays the name of the occupant, when they were incarcerated, the duration of incarceration, their interests within the prison, and their profession or political role before incarceration. The exhibition gives life to the other prisoners who are barely mentioned in history books or during the tour .



Figure 32: Single-cell stories exhibition that seeks to give life to the nor so prominent prisoners on Robben Island .



After the tour of the maximum-security prison complex, we rush to the ferry heading to Cape Town. The continuation of the island's history on the television screens draws little attention from the seemingly weary tourists. There is no one taking photographs on the way back. Once the boat docks at the NMG, tourists rush to get out. They disperse into the V&A Waterfront precinct.

I note that throughout the MSP complex tour, there was no mention of any other layer of the history of Robben Island. The focus was on the political imprisonment period. Drawing from the literature, when the group of 1976 affiliated with SASSO came into prison, they were recruited into either ANC or PAC, resulting in a tense environment within the prison. The guide mentions only good relations and mutual respect. The mention of good relations is possible as most of the tension was diffused after 1980 (Solani 2021). The tour guide might not remember this as he was imprisoned after 1980.

The political imprisonment era is accentuated. The MSP is the main focal point. The freedom fighters are not linked to any of those who rebelled against colonialism and wars of dispossession. In an interview with the bus tour guide asking about the dominant narrative of the island, the answer was that everything leads to imprisonment: "the historical events that happened around the island lead to prison." The narrative of political imprisonment is valorised even though there is an awareness of other layers. The prisoners are seemingly an island with no family life. There is no connection with what was happening in the rest of the country.

The valorisation of the political imprisonment era with other layers thought of as additional history is revealed in the conversations with the tour guides. Coombes (2003) notes that the narrative of Robben Island was skewed towards Mandela and the ANC. The inclusion of Sobukwe complex followed an outcry from various sectors. From my observations during the public tour both the bus tour guide and the ex-political prisoner guide narrated the suffering by political prisoners on Robben Island. However, in the prison complex tour the suffering is peppered with reconciliation and forgetting. Riouful (2000) believes that remembrance of past atrocities is necessary so as not to forget the past. I observe that the decorative nature of communal prison cells might have been done to provide a product for tourists.

5.4 Tour guides' perspectives

Initially I had planned to send questionnaires to tour guides. However, upon visiting the island with Ms Mitchell I realised the questionnaires will not work. I kept the nature of the questions as per designed questionnaire.

The first ex political prisoner interviewed, Mr Thulani Mabaso, was arrested in 1986. When he was arrested the leadership of the ANC had been transferred to Pollsmoor prison. However, he maintains that communication with the leadership occurred clandestinely. He currently manages other tour guides on Robben Island. Almost all the EPPs currently working as tour guides were incarcerated from 1983 onwards. The second EPP interviewed was Mr Ntozelizwe "Mgasha" Talakumeni. Mr Talakumeni was arrested for political activities in June 1984, sent to Pollsmoor prison and later transferred to Robben Island in 1986. Both EPPs interviewed are former ANC activists.

I also interviewed Ms Wendy Mbutuma who takes tourist on the first part of the tour.

NRM and the entire leadership were already in Pollsmoor prison when I came in, but there was constant communication with them. We knew before the prison authorities in RI that the entire leadership would be released. We didn't eat lunch that day. We stood out and sang very loud. Prison authorities enquired, and we asked them to watch the television. That's when they realised Mandela was being released. The guards' attitudes changed. They asked us what time we wanted to be locked in. We were excited and proud to see the leadership being released because we took up arms to have them released (Mabaso 2021).

I gather that with leadership reference is made to Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Ahmed Kathrada. In his answers Talakumeni is inclusive of leaders from other political parties:

I was detained in Pollsmoor before being transferred to Robben Island on 18 June 1984. Some of the leadership were in Pollsmoor, but in Robben Island, we still had Govan Mbeki, Wilton Mkwayi, and Japtha Masemola (Talakumeni 2021).

This excerpt reflects the packaging of the narrative of political struggle in general. The leaders mentioned by Talakumeni (2021) are colossal figures within the liberation movements. However, the packaging of popular narratives around famous prisoners like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu relegates them to lesser-known figures. One of the visitors I interviewed was surprised to learn that Nelson Mandela spent eighteen years in Robben Island, not 27 years.

My interactions with Talakumeni reveal the recognition of leadership from other political movements. He mentions BCM's Muntu Myeza, SWAPO's Toivo ya Toivo, and Clarence Makwetu from the PAC. Talakumeni mentions that tourists do not ask whom Mandela was with on Robben Island. He asserts that for tourists, the tour ends at Nelson Mandela's prison cell. I also observed this phenomenon during the tour. Mbutuma (in an interview with the author) blames the schools and popular media for advancing Robben Island as centred around Nelson Mandela. Most tourists wanted to see where Mandela was imprisoned, where he suffered. Dondolo (2021) extends the criticism to presenting the RIM narrative as Mandela-centred. However, from my interactions with tour guides, I appreciated the role played by other political formations in the liberation struggle. The promotion of heroic male figures in the interpretation of the narrative is as espoused by Labadi (2013), Ndoro, Chirikure and Deacon (2017), and Smith (2008) on discussions about the gendered nature of heritage.

We were imprisoned in Robben Island and had ANC, PAC, AZAPO, NUM, and SWAPO. We took those differences away from ourselves and concentrated on building one another. We played sports together. We were one family. It didn't matter which political formation you came from, but you knew at the back of your mind who was from which party. We had opportunities to recruit one another. We had vigorous, healthy, educational, and constructive debates. Sometimes these debates will take the whole week. It is essential to know where you stand (Mabaso 2021).

The debates, discussions and learning that occurred are seen as foregrounding for the negotiations in South Africa, placing Robben Island at the centre of the liberation struggle. The notion of it being a university stems from these robust discussions and tolerance of divergent views. The basics of democracy are aligned with prisoner tolerance, allowing for divergent views and good behaviour on Robben Island:

A little background: the guards didn't want us to interact with one another. We built our democracy to make sure everyone is equal. We had all the banned documents and books in the country. We had them on the island. We celebrated Youth Day on 16 June, the Women's Day on 08 August every year without the authorities knowing. We had our ways (Mabaso 2021).

The stories of suffering stand tall, but there is reasoning that the suffering was for a more significant cause. This notion ties in with my observations during the guided tours where suffering is re-lived by the EPP but finds justification as necessary for a democratic state. Perhaps, as Lowenthal (1998) has observed, the past is used to serve the present need for reconciliation and nation-building.

our most crucial ideal was to liberate South Africa. We needed to rewrite our history. To be on the island is a proud moment to share our sorrow and painful stories. Tourists need to know where we come from and where we are going. People need to know our journey and meaning when we talk of reconciliation. We were guarded by the most brutal guards who called us bantinti, terrorists, and sometimes even cannibals. We did not want to concentrate on their negativity, but we turned that into positivity on our side. Some of them became sympathetic to our cause, but they didn't want to show their colleagues, but we could read the body language and how they communicated with us. We would thus try to engage with them but not in an overt manner to prevent us from falling into a trap and compromising them and ourselves (Mabaso 2021).

Talakumeni adds:

We want to be a beacon of hope to the world that it is possible not to bear grudges. We want to show our white compatriots that we can live together. Sometimes, though, you get South

Africans who justify apartheid. That makes you angry as they don't realise the sacrifices people made for this democracy and national reconciliation (Talakumeni 2021).

The narrative of national reconciliation and the triumph of the human spirit over adversity begins to take shape from these interactions. Riouful (2000) traces the taming of suffering to contestations between two groupings. One group wanted to erase the brutality of apartheid, and the other wanted to preserve the site's significance in the struggle. The former proposed a resort or nature reserve, while the latter offered a site of memory of the "Struggle". Riouful (2000) asserts that the compromise was a commemorative narrative inclusive of these groupings. Deacon (2004) explains the positive narrative accentuated in Robben Island.

I want to tie the tourist experiences by asking the guides what sense they get from tourists listening to them reliving their pain. Obtaining the guides' impression on why tourists come to Robben Island unpacks whether the guides understand the significance of the layered site and their role in enriching the place narrative. The presentation of tours in the prison complex seems to fascinate the tourists. A tour presenter is a person who experienced imprisonment in an apartheid prison. The guards engage with tourists. From my observations, more respect was accorded to the EPPs by the tourists.

Robben Island is a place of homage to all those who suffered. What is concerning is how South Africans interact with their heritage. During the tours, I observe mainly South Africans being disruptive during tour presentations and don't listen to the content of the story. The behaviour of local tourists contrasts with international tourists, who respect the space and ask engaging questions. Most South Africans don't take their history seriously (Talakumeni 2021).

I assess that people come to feel and interact with the space. It's more of a pilgrimage. I talk to them. I engage with them and give them free space to air their views. The challenge is time constraints. Limited time prevents further engagement. When people come to South Africa, the first trip is to go to Robben Island (Mabaso 2021).

Most tourists confirm that they were attracted by learning more about the space. They are keen on learning the history of imprisonment, what prisoners did during this period, and what kept them going. They want to see other layers like the WWII and colonialism periods. Most tourists view Robben Island as a microcosm of South Africa. The struggles faced on Robben Island reflect the country. Tourists decry the brutality of apartheid and the structural remnants of apartheid evident in the society. Tourists want to explore the heritage in its natural setting (Strange and Kempa 2001).

Once I establish reasons for visiting, I venture into whether connections are made with colonial history and the presentation of this narrative during the tours. All guides mention time constraints. There is an understanding of multiple layers, but these are not mentioned in detail. During the tour, our guide concentrated on the political imprisonment period. Talakumeni and Mbutuma explain as follows

With time limitations, I still tell people about wars of dispossession, the beginning of the political struggle when the British were plundering our resources, dispossessing it of its lands. Our people, led by the traditional chiefs, resisted. We tell these stories. These stories are our history. If we don't, we will end up with gaps as we do with Makhanda. Who is to say Makhanda died? He was a thorn in the flesh of the British. If we don't tell our history, someone will distort it for their purposes (Talakumeni 2021).

What I have noticed is that most people who travel are well-read. They have an overload of information. I usually focus on the beginning of the uprisings. However, if people have questions, I elaborate further (Mbutuma 2022, interview with the author).

However, Mr Mabaso has a different explanation. Interestingly, all the guides' explanations foreground the political struggle, thus resonating with Marschall (2010)'s assertions in the literature review of packaging the past as a precursor to the main narrative of the liberation struggle.

We concentrate on the significant sites and advise people to buy books to understand other layers of history. There are many layers of history. We present our tour in such a way that connects South Africa to the World and Robben Island to the World. We link the Dutch occupation of South Africa and the role played by sanctions in the liberation of South Africa (Mabaso 2022, interview with the author).

At this point, I asked about the script used during the tours. As I observed during the tours, the EPPs speak with some authority. They own the narrative as former prisoners, drawing their memories from personal experiences (McDowell 2016). Marschall (2010), supported by Herwitz et al. (2015), explains heritage creation through memory and commemoration. The EPP tour guides acknowledge the presence of an official script. However, they own their stories. Mr Mabaso asserts that if he were to follow the official script, Helen Suzman would be forgotten.

However, one tour guide looks at the guiding through the MSP complex as a catharsis and does not see a need to be guided in telling his story. He acknowledges the various layers of history and does not see the time constraints. He alludes to the probing of tourists to relieve his prison experience.

How can one tell me how to tell my own life story? This prison was my home for many years. I experienced the hardships. I talk from my own experience. I try to tell tourists about other layers of history on Robben Island (Talakumeni 2022, interview with the author).

Talakumeni's explanation challenges the notions of economic and political and global influences on the development of narrative, he has a sense of ownership of the narrative in the prison complex.

Wendy, though not as assertive on the ownership of the narrative, explains that she adds to the narrative to make it exciting for tourists. Thus, I can infer that the tourist gazes are accompanied by a performance from the tour guides (Urry 2005).

As we conclude our conversation, Talakumeni brings an aspect of accessibility of heritage to ordinary people. He recognises that the site's location means only middle-class people can access it. Mpumwana and Ramoupi (2021) opine that Robben Island has transformed the heritage industry taking it away from being a preserve for the rich. However, their assertions are based on ordinary people gaining access during the opening day of the operation of Robben Island. Talakumeni (2021), during the interview with the author, believes the concessions are insufficient as they are on specific days. He brings in real-life stories of pensioners who could never afford the fare.

It is not fathomable that some Cape Town people have never visited the Island. Concessions should not be limited to 09 August. Some people want to pay a pilgrimage and see the visible

graves of their chiefs to reflect on the space where Krotoa, Autshumato, David Stuurman, Langalibalele and many more (Talakumeni 2022, interview with the author).

During these engagements with EPP tour guides, what stands out for me is the selflessness of political prisoners. They endured suffering for a great cause but are willing to relieve their pain by imparting the narrative of lived experiences to tourists. Based on these engagements, the tour guides promote reconciliation and nation-building. Their narrative framing is not based on what tourists want to hear but on their pain and suffering. They own this narrative and feel they must ensure South Africa does not repeat past mistakes. To them, guiding is not a job but a calling. They acknowledge the financial rewards but profess that telling their stories outshines the payment.

5.5 Conclusion

Major constraints alluded to by tour guides are the limited time to do the tour and the tourist's focus on Nelson Mandela's imprisonment. Tourists recognise the multiple layers of history associated with Robben Island. The political imprisonment era of 1961 to 1991 is still the dominant narrative of the heritage place and the person of Nelson Mandela. Other significant layers do not seem to be given much prominence. The connection of those imprisoned on Robben Island to the families left behind is only through association with political imprisonment.

Interestingly, none of the tourists interviewed link political imprisonment with the displacement of people during the 100-year wars of resistance which saw many traditional chiefs serving time on Robben Island. Tour guides make this connection and allude to this era as the intensification of the fight against oppression. There is no acknowledgement of the Khoikhoi, who were dominated by the Dutch and later the British.

Observations from the walking tour are that the information boards are there and detail the historical significance of various areas. Tourists do not physically explore most of the areas through movement within these spaces. Some areas, such as where traditional chiefs were detained, are no longer visible. Perhaps that is the reason the connections are not that strong. This area has not been recreated to reveal its historical significance. There are a few remembrance stones in this area. These are areas not visited by tourists and not accentuated during the tours. One would conclude that the areas not covered are not seen as tourist worthy.

With the prison complex and its narrative looming above all other historic areas, there are still stories not being told that could enrich the narrative of the place. Jaftha Masemola does not get recognition as the longest-serving political prisoner on Robben Island. Govan Mbeki was not in the contingent that went to Pollsmoor prison. He remained in Robben Island until his release in 1987. The release of political leadership did not mean an automatic release of all prisoners. Seroke (2021) points out that prisoners had to resort to hunger strikes to force the authorities to speed up their release in 1991. The criminal prisoners imprisoned together with political prisoners have been obliterated from the history of the place. In an interview with Talakumeni, he narrated how, after 1991, criminal prisoners were sent to Robben Island. The EPPs became concerned that the ordinary law prisoners would destroy their heritage. The EPPs influenced the government to have ordinary prisoners removed from Robben Island.

6 Does World Heritage Badge have an influence on the framing of narrative to appease a tourist audience?

In the previous chapter, I highlighted the narratives of the tour guides to ascertain what stories are being told, the dominant narrative of the multi-layered historical site and which of these layers is given prominence. The tour guides' perspectives juxtaposed with the tourists' provide a sense of what may be occluded during the island tour.

In this chapter, I assess the UNESCO World Heritage framing to understand how this framing has impacted tourist narratives and representations. UNESCO supports the development of sustainable tourism as a form of heritage preservation. The World Heritage Site badge plays a role in attracting tourists to the site. The chapter delves into whether the World Heritage badge and management interventions through the development of the site's Integrated Conservation Management Plans influence the framing of the site's narrative to appease a tourist audience. Packaging the narrative for consumption by tourists may result in selecting layers that are an attraction, thus leading to neglect of some layers that enrich the heritage.

To understand the RIM's interpretation plan, I investigate influences on the development of this plan and how Robben Island has been positioned (particularly in the early stages of its operation) as a beacon of hope for the country. Thus, the National Heritage Resources Act will be juxtaposed with the Nomination Dossier for inscription onto the World Heritage List. The importance of looking at these documents stems from the fact that the nomination process involves two competing complexities (Cuccia, Guccio, and Rizzo 2016). The first is the inscription of the proposed site onto the national Tentative List. The other is ultimate listing onto the WHL. The processes require management to have a comprehensive site management plan, which incorporates an interpretation plan that addresses the preservation of cultural values at a local level. At an international level, the management plans coordinate plans for tourism. The NHRA addresses the local requirements for heritage sites.

6.1 Politics of inscription

Meskel (2018) views inscription as a means by State Parties to create national identities through heritage production. Meskel (2018) contends that over and above creating new identities, State Parties use the inscription processes as a tool to enter economic transactions with others and create economic blocks. Thus, World Heritage properties serve as commodities in strengthening trade relationships among state parties. Frey and Steiner (2011) question the selection process of sites for inscription, opining that it is motivated by political interests and influence of the commercial heritage industry.

Many scholarly texts are available on the nomination process, nomination requirements, the politics involved in nomination, and heritage. State Parties drive the process of nominating sites for inscription onto the WHL. State Parties compile the nomination dossiers. I have delved into the influence of politics and economic needs on the interpretation of the heritage, which might lead to the exclusion of certain aspects of the heritage (Howard 2003; Lowenthal 1998).

Heritage is not static. As Ashworth (2006) has opined, heritage is a human construct that serves a particular interest within a specific context. As elaborated in this text, the nomination of Robben Island as a World Heritage site coincided with changes in UNESCO that sought to have a broader representation of the Heritage List (Gao et al. 2020; Labadi 2005). Labadi (2007) gives the context of global acceptance of sites associated with intangible heritage. Pastor (2021) asserts that accepting intangible values as heritage worthy was to ensure the representation of African and Oceanic nations on the World Heritage List. Pastor (2021) articulates South Africa's transition into a democratic state in 1994 and the celebration of the human spirit over the adversity of apartheid as another critical development. With changes in the cultural landscape in South Africa during this period, RIM was seen as a flagship institution to transition to a representative cultural heritage (Mpumlwana and Ramoupi 2021).

6.2 UNESCO influences on heritage

To unpack the impact of UNESCO on the positioning of heritage sites and narratives at Robben Island, I examined the nomination dossier submitted on 17 June 1998. I juxtaposed it with responses from the experts. The importance of reviewing the nomination dossier stems from the fact that Robben Island is a local heritage before it becomes universal. Thus, it addresses the preservation and valorisation of patrimony at the local level that speaks to local interests (Taruvunga 2021). The nomination dossier's (1998) statement of significance opens with "Robben Island -from incarceration to liberation. From the punishment of the body to the liberation of the spirit." The dossier then delves into the history of banishment. It differentiates the site from similar sites of suffering by acknowledging the "miracle of triumph of the human spirit over such conditions – leading to the birth of nation through freedom and democracy" (RIM Nomination dossier 1998, 4).

I have selected St Helena, Auschwitz and Alcatraz as comparative sites stated in the nomination dossier. Napoleon Bonaparte was imprisoned at St Helena. The RIM nomination dossier states that even though Napoleon was banished, he lived a comfortable life. The Auschwitz memorial is inscribed under criteria (vi) like Robben Island. However, there is no celebration of the positive aspects. It reflects atrocities committed against people. The nomination dossier states that in the case of Alcatraz, the people held there had not been transformed into great leaders who have become statesmen, promoting "democracy, freedom and human rights" (Robben Island nomination dossier 1998).

The statement of significance mentions pain and suffering. It positions the experiences as a lesson to an oppressive social order, and that subjugation should not occur. Riouful (2000) and Deacon (2021) articulate Robben Island's commemoration of the positive aspects of the struggle. National reconciliation sentiments underpin the tour guide's narrative, where pain and suffering are a precursor to a just society.

Walter Sisulu and Nelson Mandela give insights into what the world can learn from the peaceful transition into a democratic state in South Africa. Including these two icons feeds into the narrative of a gendered heritage centred around male heroes (Coombes 2011). Prins-Solani extends the gendered approach of the narrative to the exclusion of women's exhibition, which the ex-political figures felt

belonged to the visitors' centre. During the tours, I saw the women's exhibition, and I noted this area is not yet open to visitors (Prins-Solani 2021, interview with the author).

Taruvinga (2021) asserts that at the UNESCO level, the site's outstanding universal value defined by criteria and conditions such as "authenticity, integrity" is the critical element (interview with the author). Taruvinga says that the convention does not encourage the occlusion of values that are not of outstanding value.

Pascall continues to clarify:

World Heritage has influenced interpretation from an infrastructure perspective, i.e., the need to put out more information for access by the public. These include a digital and virtual tour of the island. Thus, we need to look at interpretation as a nation and determine why Robben Island is essential for the nation. Then look at what the WH has brought in as a positive and a negative. It is important to note that with or without the WH status Robben Island will be vital to us as a nation. It is incorrect to say WH does not allow for other values to be represented. The narrative is left to the state parties (Taruvinga 2021, interview with the author).

In my interviews with Prins-Solani (2021), she echoes similar sentiments that the narrative should be looked at the local context as UNESCO does not impose what stories are told.

It's important to bring in the NHRA as it is concerned with preservation of cultural values at local level.

6.3 The influence of the NHRA on the interpretation of the RIM's narrative

The NHRA's effects on Robben Island's narrative are examined together with the interpretation plan as it evolved from the 2007 - 2012 ICMP to the 2013 -2018 ICMP. The NHRA espouses a layered approach that covers all the layers of the history of Robben Island. Management through the ICMP presents plans for the preservation of the patrimony. The ICMP has another responsibility for poverty alleviation through economic development.

In understanding whether the RIM positions itself for a tourist audience through the selection of a narrative agreeable to tourists, we need to revisit the reasons for the establishment of RIM. During the establishment of RIM, one of the resolutions of the Cabinet memo was to ensure that Robben Island became a Museum for Freedom Struggle in South Africa. This political decision sets the tone for the interpretation of the RI narrative.

Prins-Solani (2021) describes RIM as the first legacy project under the Ministry of Arts and Culture. The legacy projects were developed to change the cultural landscape that was racist and skewed towards the middle class. Mpumlwana and Ramoupi (2021) see the establishment of RIM as disrupting the notion of these institutions as the preserve of "highly cultured connoisseurs." Colonisation and apartheid erased people's identities. In the prisons, numbers were allocated to prisoners, and RIM became critical in restoring the dignity of the people. The challenge identified by Prins-Solani (2021) is the permeation of politics and memory within the South African narrative. The liberation stories of Robben Island can be seen as a continuity of the colonial period of erasing people's identities (leprosy and banishment), leading to stories not deemed important being neglected. In my interview with Prins-Solani, she offered

that the narrative of Robben Island must be looked at in context to the period RIM was established. In this context, the 2007-2012 ICMP prioritised the interpretation of the political imprisonment era.

The 2013-2018 ICMP attempts to give an inclusive interpretation of the multiple layers of Robben Island. This inclusiveness is in tandem with the National Heritage Resources Act.

From observations during tours and interviews with the guides, the primary layer is the imprisonment period. In contrast, the colonialism era is not mentioned prominently but is acknowledged as continuing the political struggle. Perhaps with time, the narrative of the site, as told by the guides to tourists, will be enriched by the multiple layers.

7 CONCLUSION

The exploratory study I undertook intended to explore if the World Heritage badge influences the interpretation of the narrative of Robben Island.

What is evident in the study is that the site has links to political, economic, societal, and cultural transitions. As articulated in the literature review, Robben Island has played a central role in the political trajectory of the country (Harvey 201, Deacon 2004). The early transitional government had many ex-political prisoners in its fold (Pastor 2021). Society viewed the ex-political prisoners as a bastion of moral virtue and good governance. Politically, Robben Island, a place of brutality, sees its past transformed into a positive aspect of nurturing leadership. Thus, the past shapes the present discourse (Lowenthal 1998).

The political imprisonment era is central in the tour narrative, as reflected in the 2007-2012 ICMP. Tourists themselves come to Robben Island to pay homage to former political prisoners. Male heroic figures such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, and Robert Sobukwe are given prominence, thus giving credence to Labadi (2013) that the presentation of heritage is gendered. The contestation by other political parties on what they view as a Mandela-centred narrative of Robben Island (Dondolo 2021) is not driven by a need to be inclusive of different layers of history but by ensuring their struggle heroes are given prominence.

I posit that the inscription of Robben Island on the World Heritage List was politically motivated. Pastor (2021) points out that the inscription of Robben Island coincided with the move by UNESCO to ensure a broader representation of African and Oceanic sites on the World Heritage list. The inscription coincided with the transition of South Africa from a repressive apartheid system to a democratic society. Mpumlwana and Ramoupi (2021) contend that the new government used the inscription to decolonise the heritage representation in South Africa.

As a tourist attraction site, Robben Island feeds into one of the government's critical economic development mandates. The site's opening to local and international tourists boosts tourism revenue. South Africa's voting patterns at UNESCO meetings ensure South Africa aligns itself with similar-minded countries to create economic blocks (Meskell 2018), thus protecting the country's economic outlook.

It is not clear that the UNESCO WHS badge plays a role in attracting international and local tourists to the site. I posit that tourists want to see where Mandela was imprisoned. Most tourists discover other layers of history during the visit to Robben Island. The WHS badge and the involvement of UNESCO in the management of the heritage, as Taruvinga (2021) contends, ensure that Robben Island maintains the Outstanding Universal Values on which the site is inscribed. The Outstanding Universal Values are essential in the preservation of the integrity and authenticity of the site. The presentation of the narrative is done at the local level through the ICMP. Management of Robben Island Museum has moved to encompass other layers, as evident in the 2013 -2014 ICMP. In my analysis, I note time constraints, which make it difficult for tour guides to delve into the entire history of Robben Island.

I could argue that the tour route's inability to physically engage with the fabric and create heritage as we move within the spaces contributes to the tour's feeling geared towards the tourists. The women's exhibition is in the reception area, which is not open to the public. Thus, the role played by women in the liberation struggle is hidden.

The contestations about whose heritage is accentuated are vital to keeping the site vibrant. Contestations will stimulate more research, and new ways of interpretation, thus enriching the narrative.

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APPENDIX

Schedule of interviews

1. Interviews with tour guides: Ex- Political Prisoners

Interviews with tour guides were held online. However, I tried to keep the nature of the questions as per Appendix 3.

Mr Thulani Mabaso – Mr Mabaso's interview was also unscheduled. He phoned me in the afternoon of 21 July 2021, and I had to quickly record the conversation. We had an engagement that was supposed to have been 20 minutes but continued for close to 45 minutes. He is an ex-political prisoner and is a manager of tour-guides on Robben Island.

Mr. Ntozelizwe Talakumeni – I interviewed him on the 14 November 2021. I had phoned to ask for his availability, and we decided to continue with the interview as he was available on this date. I could not digitally record the interview but managed to take down detailed notes of the engagement. The interview started at 10h00 and finished at 10h46.

2. Interview with tour guides: bus tour guide

Ms Mbutuma has been working at Robben Island for 10 years. The interview took place on 25 January 2022.

3. Interviews with experts

- Mr Pascall Taruvinga – Robben Island Museum Chief Heritage Officer. Interviewed on 16 March 2021 via MS Teams.
- Ms Deidre Prins-Solani – Heritage Expert. Interviewed on the 21 April 2021 via MS Teams.

4. Questionnaires were sent to tourist.

I received back about 8 from the 20 I had sent out.

Appendix 3

QUESTIONNAIRE

Mandla Ngewu

UCT MPhil (Conservation of the Built Environment) Dissertation

Title

What is the impact of World Heritage status, and related positioning for a tourist audience, on the meanings and public narratives of Robben Island?

Research questions for interviewees

Interviewee name:

Date of interview:

Place of interview:

Duration of interview: 20 mins

1. 0 Research Context

The aim is to conduct research on whether certain narratives of a multi-layered heritage site are accentuated to make the site more amenable to the tourists, owing to the site being a World Heritage site. This usually means that other layers are glossed over, and their prominence is occluded in the narrative that promotes the World Heritage site to tourists. This could be evident in the manner the narrative of the site is written by management in its conservation management plans, how the tours are conducted, and which areas of the site are emphasised. The tours might promote a particular popular era of the heritage site or they might not touch on other areas of significance.

Robben Island is a unique site to conduct this study owing to its multi-layered history that is intertwined with the development of South Africa. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and it appears to have been expedited to capture the rainbow-nation euphoria that was evident at the time. Nomination and ultimate inscription of sites onto the World Heritage List usually takes a lot of preparation and resources, as the WHC needs to establish whether the site meets the outstanding universal value for it to be listed. However, the listing of Robben Island coincided with the changing political dynamics within the WHC. These dynamics have seen the growing influence of State Parties in the inscription of sites sometimes not heeding the advice of the heritage experts within the WHC. Thus, it is important to explore the process of nomination and understanding the politics involved in the listing process. The site has international significance and locally managed, thus plays a role in local politics.

The aim of the research is to:

- Unpack the politics of listing of sites onto the World Heritage List.
- Unpack whether the World Heritage status confines the narrative of the site to appease to tourist thus leading to occlusion of certain meanings and public narrative.

2.0 General questions to initiate conversation with tourists (audio / written responses).

1. How do you link the early history of the island to the political imprisonment period?
2. What do you do to give a voice to various political ideologies that were prevalent on Robben Island e.g., to reflect diversity of ideologies among political prisoners?
3. What instances make you deviate from the official tour script?
4. As an ex political prisoner how is the experience of relieving your pain and suffering?
5. What feedback do you often get from tourists?

ETHICS APPLICATION FORM

Please Note:

Any person planning to undertake research in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (EBE) at the University of Cape Town is required to complete this form **before** collecting or analysing data. The objective of submitting this application prior to embarking on research is to ensure that the highest ethical standards in research, conducted under the auspices of the EBE Faculty, are met. Please ensure that you have read, and understood the **EBE Ethics in Research Handbook** (available from the UCT EBE, Research Ethics website) prior to completing this application form: <http://www.ebe.uct.ac.za/ebe/research/ethics1>

APPLICANT'S DETAILS	
Name of principal researcher, student or external applicant	MANDHA NGEWU
Department	Architecture, Planning & Geomatics
Preferred email address of applicant:	mandhanm@gmail.com
If Student	Your Degree: e.g., MSc, PhD, etc.
	Credit Value of Research: e.g., 60/120/180/360 etc.
	Name of Supervisor (if supervised):
If this is a research contract, indicate the source of funding/sponsorship	
Project Title	Impact of WH status on meaning and public narrative of Robben Island

- I hereby undertake to carry out my research in such a way that:
- there is no apparent legal objection to the nature or the method of research; and
 - the research will not compromise staff or students or the other responsibilities of the University;
 - the stated objective will be achieved, and the findings will have a high degree of validity;
 - limitations and alternative interpretations will be considered;
 - the findings could be subject to peer review and publicly available; and
 - I will comply with the conventions of copyright and avoid any practice that would constitute plagiarism.

APPLICATION BY	Full name	Signature	Date
Principal Researcher/ Student/External applicant	MANDHA NGEWU		15/12/2020
SUPPORTED BY	Full name	Signature	Date
Supervisor (where applicable)	Naomi Roux		14/01/2021

APPROVED BY	Full name	Signature	Date
HOD (or delegated nominee) Final authority for all applicants who have answered NO to all questions in Section 1; and for all Undergraduate research (Including Honours).	p.tumubweine		2021 03 08
Chair: Faculty EIR Committee For applicants other than undergraduate students who have answered YES to any of the questions in Section 1.			