

The archival records on Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles and ‘freeblacks’
at the Cape of Good Hope (1654 -1838): Conceptualising a digital
curation project.



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Abstract

Despite the growth of digital archives, there is no dedicated repository that systematically compiles the history of Chinese migration to South Africa. This qualitative study used 62 archival records housed at the Western Cape Archives and Records Service, to explore how the application of digital curation (particularly digitisation of materials) can be used in presenting, preserving and sharing the history on the first wave of Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles and 'free blacks' at the Cape of Good Hope (1654 -1838).

The study method consisted of three parts. First, a thorough literature search and understanding on the theoretical, practical and technical components of the subject. Second, the systematic collection and analyses of archival records (through a customised document analysis form) and third, an exploration on what digital curation can offer in terms of facilitating the access to and the preservation of these records. The study exists under a relativist paradigm which believes that reality is a product of power relations.

It was found that the records provide valuable insight into the Cape's political development (from Dutch to British rule) and social hierarchies between Chinese individuals at the time. The archival content, being of historical significance, is in fact at risk of physical and epistemological loss. This loss can be addressed through the application of digital curation which this study explores conceptually from the conception of a digital project to the use, reuse and dissemination of digital surrogates. It is hoped that this study can be used as a foundation or framework for refiguring¹ the colonial archive and bringing other neglected South African histories to the forefront.

¹ The concept of 'refiguring' comes from the book *Refiguring the Archive* by Hamilton et al. (2002)

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------|--|
| BO | British Occupation, First |
| CJ | Court of Justice |
| CO | Colonial Office |
| CSC | Cape Supreme Court |
| DSAC | Department of Sports, Arts and Culture (South Africa) |
| DAC | Department of Arts and Culture (South Africa) |
| DBQ | Document Based Questions |
| DEIC | Dutch East India Company |
| DigitalNZ | Digital New Zealand |
| DISA | Digital Imaging Project of South Africa |
| FHYA | Five Hundred Year Archive |
| GH | Government House |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| KAB | Cape Town Archives Repository |
| LAMs | Library, Archives and Museums |
| MOOC | Master of the Orphan Chamber |
| MOIB | Master of the Orphan Chamber |
| MOIC | Master of the Orphan Chamber |
| NAAIRS | National Automated Archival Information Retrieval System |
| NCD | Cape District Notarial Deeds |
| OAIS | Open Archival Information System |
| OCR | Optical Character Recognition |
| PDF | Portable Document Format |
| TANAP | Towards a New Age of Partnership |
| TEPC | Transcription of Estate Papers at the Cape of Good Hope |
| VOC | Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (a.k.a. DEIC) |
| WCARS | Western Cape Archives and Records Service (a.k.a. Cape Archives) |
| 1/STB | Stellenbosch Magistrate |

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

An archive, often described as a carefully organised and selected collection of historical documents and records, provides evidence of the activities that occurred in the past - usually surrounding a place, institution, or a group of people (The National Archives, 2016:4). Its unique materials, set aside for permanent preservation for current and future use, tell stories that help us understand the social, political, and economic nature of different periods in history (The National Archives, 2016:4; Steedman, 1998: 66-67).

Libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs) have gradually increased their digital curation activities and many now allow public access to their digitised collections within their digital archives (Asogwa, 2011). Digital curation involves the planning, creation, selection, preservation, promotion, maintenance, collection, and archiving of digital assets (Beagrie, 2006:4; Sabharwal, 2015:11). This study sees it as a practical framework for the conceptualisation of a digital project (Sabharwal, 2015:8).

The digitisation of analogue information and the presence of born-digital content has provided many opportunities and challenges to librarians, archivists, and curators. Digital content comes with a new set of practical, theoretical, and technical options and concerns (Abbot, 2008; Garaba, 2014:1).

This dissertation will explore the possibilities to digitally curate the historical records housed at the Western Cape Archives and Records Services (WCARS) (a.k.a. Cape Archives) on Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles, and 'free blacks' who were at the Cape of Good Hope between the years 1654 to 1838.

1.2 Study Background

1.2.1 Personal

Born and raised in Bloemfontein as a second-generation South African Taiwanese, I have always been aware of my position as a minority. My forebears immigrated to Taiwan from Fujian, China, in 1895. Around thirty years ago, my grandparents (along with two other families) took the opportunity to immigrate to the Free State (South Africa) in hopes of a better future. This was only possible with the help of a Taiwanese investor who took advantage of Taiwan's fast-growing trade partnership with apartheid South Africa.

Growing up in a dominating Afrikaans society, I found myself navigating between worlds that seldom met. Not knowing to which I belonged most, South Africa, Taiwan, or China, led to the interest in finding out how my intergenerational Chinese/Taiwanese story fits into the larger narrative in the making of South Africa's history.

This research investigation began when I enrolled in a Public Culture course in African Studies at the University of Cape Town in 2019. I took up an internship at the IZIKO National Museum's Social History Centre, where Mr Paul Tichmann (Director of Collections and Digitisation) was my supervisor. My investigation discovered that the history of Chinese convicts and slaves at the Cape is largely left marginalised. Today, Cape Communities still bear this legacy with ancestors that can be traced back to this specific demographic.

1.2.2 Pre-colonial southern Africa

Chinese links to Africa predates the Cape Colony and can be traced to the Silk Road where Chinese traders brought home large bird eggs and rhinoceros from North Africa (Yap & Man, 1996: 2). Another link can be seen through the voyages of Zheng He in 1418 where he travelled to the east coast of Africa (Hagras, 2019:6). Currently there is little known research on the physical contact between China and pre-colonial South Africa, though a new area of scholarship is emerging to explore the ancient trade history of the Indian Ocean through linguistics and music².

² This can be seen with the *Re-centering AfroAsia* project hosted by the University of Cape Town. It is a multifaceted research, mapping and archival project that aims to create an AfroAsian community of

The first inhabitants of present-day South Africa were the San (hunter gathers), who settled at least 20 000 years ago, and the semi-nomadic Khoe (pastoralists) at least 2000 years ago (Oakes, 1989:12; Richards, 2017:65). It is believed that by 300AD, Nguni- speaking people settled in present-day southern Africa (Richards, 2017:65). Between 900 and 1300 AD, the Mapungubwe Kingdom was established on the border between present-day Zimbabwe and South Africa (Richards, 2017:65). During the 16th and 17th centuries, the people at the Cape were no strangers to visiting ships and crews (Richards, 2017:65). As a bustling port used as a strategic stopover location for the East India trade route, the Cape eventually became a subject of interest to the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) (Oakes, 1989:27-28). The DEIC, established in 1602, saw its first permanent trading post in Indonesia in 1603 (Banten, West Java) and later in 1611, in Jayakarta (which they renamed Batavia) (Ricklefs, 2001:35).

1.2.3 Van Batavia³

In Blussé's (1981:159) paper, he provides insights into the power dynamics between the Chinese community and the DEIC in Batavia. Since the 13th century, Chinese people have lived in the Indonesian archipelago; most came from Fujian's Southeast Chinese province and worked as merchants. In 1619, the DEIC seized the port and renamed its new headquarters Batavia. With time, the population was considered a hybrid settlement described as Sino-Dutch - the town, which looked like a Dutch city, was run and built by a Chinese society (Blussé, 1981:159). This collaborative enterprise came to an end as Dutch colonial rule established anti-Chinese policies (Blussé, 1981:160). In 1740, 10 000.

Chinese men, women, and children were massacred in Batavia (Blussé, 1981:177). Though there is no evidence to suggest that there was a causal connection, it does show that the partnership between the Chinese and the DEIC in Batavia slowly deteriorated as the Company became intimidated. The majority of Chinese present at the Cape were

scholarship. Its research focuses on the musical and human migrations in the precolonial period 700-1500AD (*Re-Centring AfroAsia Project*, n.d.).

³ The 'van' is commonly followed by a geographic destination (For example, Akir van Batavia means that Akir was originally from Batavia).

unwanted exiles and convicts banished from the DEIC headquarters in Batavia (Armstrong, 1997:4-5; Harris, 2009:8)

Terms associated with Chinese individuals at the Cape included *geshoren*, an attribute that distinguished converts to Islam, accompanied by an Islamic name like Ismael and Barak (Armstrong, 1997:12). *Peranakan* was used for those born to Chinese fathers and Javanese mothers, who formed a large part of Batavia's population (Armstrong, 2012:104). The toponym "van Batavia" is surprisingly rarely found in association with Chinese names, even though most Chinese at the Cape were from Batavia (Armstrong, 1997:4-5; Harris, 2009:8). However, the terms *van Chinees* or *Chinaman* are consistently found to be used alongside Chinese names (1654-1838) (Armstrong, 1997:4).

1.2.4 Chinese at the Cape of Good Hope (1654-1838)

Shortly after Dutch commander, Jan van Riebeeck's arrival at the Cape in 1652, he wrote to the DEIC (in Batavia) requesting skilled Chinese agriculturalists and fishermen to assist with the refreshment station⁴ (Harris, 2009:5). His request was unsuccessful, the company replying (on the 24th of December 1652) that: "The Chinese in Java did not regard the Cape as a worthwhile risk...they did not want to leave for such a distant land and with such uncertain prospects" (Leibbrandt, 1898:84).

However, in 1654, the first Chinese convicts were exiled to the Cape (by the DEIC in Batavia), and between the years 1722 and 1757, another larger group of 149 was sent to the Cape where 15% of them were convicts (other percentages, unknown)(Armstrong, 1997:3). By 1795, the total number of Chinese persons at the Cape was estimated to have been about 350 (Armstrong, 1997:4-5). The distinction between convicts and exiles was blurred as both were exiled from the East Indies as a form of punishment, with some listed interchangeably as *gebannen* (banished) or *bandieten* (convicts) (Armstrong, 1997:5). Though described as such, they were housed in the Slave Lodge with the slaves and were fed and worked in the same way as the slaves.

⁴ This request was based on the experience of the DEIC with industrious Chinese who had helped the DEIC develop their headquarters in Java and 'Batavia' (Harris, 2009:5).

Convicts constituted a mostly unrecognised part of the DEIC's history of forced labour (Armstrong, 1997:4). Between the years 1722 and 1757, 50% of the population of slaves were convicts from different ethnic backgrounds: Singhalese, Indian, Indonesians, and Chinese (Armstrong, 1997:5 & 23). The colonial powers⁵ had no incentives to treat the convicts differently from their slaves; slavery was part of the punishment for these prisoners. Most were rebels, political prisoners, smugglers, or illegalimmigrants from Batavia⁶. Others had engaged in criminal activity such as arson, murder, and theft, while some were simply in chains because of debts owed to the Company (Armstrong, 1997:14; Harris, 2009:8). Between the years 1730-59, out of 247 cases, only seven were criminal cases (Armstrong, 1997:25).

The Chinese 'community' at the Cape was also made up of a small number of *vry banneling* ('free exile' or 'free blacks'), a title given to Chinese convicts and slaves when they survived their term of banishment. Those that were exiled for political reasons did not have this option (Armstrong, 2012:105).

Some free exiles became slave-owners and eventually owned land. Examples can be seen in the *opgaafrols*, where the Company recorded an annual census of the free population and their assets (Harris, 2009:6). In 1834, slavery at the Cape was abolished; however, every slave had to undergo four years of 'apprenticeship', which "did not in practice mean training or instruction; for most ex-slaves, conditions of service did not change" (Saunders, 1984:37).

Although little information is available on this group, historians like James C. Armstrong, Robert Shell⁷, Nigel Worden, Karen Harris, and Gabeba Baderoon have managed to compile some information that can provide us with a better understanding of what the lives of the Chinese 'community' at the Cape may have been like at the time. This was done

⁵ Dutch occupation at the Cape spanned the years 1652 - 1795 and 1802 -1806 and was followed by the British occupation (1795 -1803 and 1806 - 1961(Oakes, 1989:39-40).

⁶ In 1656, Van Riebeeck pointed out in a letter that there were Chinese in chains in Batavia in conscience of debts that were owed to the company (Armstrong, 1997:4).

⁷ Shell's work on the Cape's slave society provided Armstrong the foundation to further explore and understand the Chinese Community during the DEIC Period.

through the process of "reading against the archival grain" (Stoler, 2002:99), forming a complete history of convicts, slaves and exiles at the Cape of Good Hope and remains a challenging task given the limitations laid out by the colonial archives that "has had the effect of rendering indigenous and enslaved people experiences...marginal and invisible" (Stoler, 2002:99; Baderoon, 2014:14). The works of the above mentioned historians are further explored in Chapter 2, and have been used to substantiate the colonial archive's negative ramifications.

The stories of Chinese individuals at the Cape (1654 – 1838) only exist in fragments and finding information on them can be difficult. Armstrong (2009:1) describes it as "a mosaic-building process of cumulative facts about individual lives and where possible, generalizing from the broken patterns that emerge". Typical information on Chinese convicts can be found in Sentences (documents related to a crime) that included a name, their sentence, and sometimes a date of death. Although they were described as convicts, they were treated like slaves and as a result, their identities were insignificant to the Company (Armstrong, 1997:4).

1.2.5 Traces of Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles and 'free blacks' in today's era

Besides the work of the authors mentioned, a large part of this history remains 'unearthed'. As stated by Worden (2014:40), "Slaves in the DEIC paper world might be elusive, but they are not absent and can be evoked".

Today, traces of the Chinese community from the colonial period can be seen at the Tana Baru Cemetery, a Muslim burial site located on the side of Lions Head in Cape Town. Yap and Man (1996:12) write about William Assaw, who petitioned the Cape Governor in 1829 for a suitable burial ground for his countrymen. A piece of land on the side of "Lion'sRump" was provided. Today, the cemetery is unkempt and has no contextualization of its history on-site (Yap & Man, 1996:12).

A few families today have found links to this part of history through archival records, which is a difficult task due to creolization, which can be seen in the naming system at the time (Mellet, personal communication 2019, May 11). For example, a child of Van Madagascar

and Van Batavia would be called Van de Kaap. The third-generation child would take a surname which is their father's first name: John Moses (Mellet, personal communication 2019, May 11).

In the case of Chinese names, the Dutch also did not have a firm orthographic grasp of their language and consequently, numerous variations were recorded. For example, Onkonko, Loquanko, Onko, Onka, and Hoquanko refer to the same individual (Armstrong,1997:4).

Through these examples, it can be seen why it can be incredibly challenging to find an individual's lineage that may be of Chinese slave, convict exile or 'free black' descent. Today, the most frequent avenue in finding information on this part of history is through the Cape Archives and National Archives in The Hague, Netherlands (Worden, 2014:25).

1.3 Research Problem, Objective and Questions

It is evident that there is a rich history of Chinese migration to the Cape and that access to this history is imperfect. There is no dedicated repository that systematically compiles the history of Chinese migration to the country. Most information on this topic exists as archival records that are neither stored collectively nor easily accessible.

The research objective of this study is to explore how the application of digital curation (particularly digitisation of materials) can be used to present, preserve, and share this part of history that is specific to the years 1654 (the year when the first recorded Chinese convict was brought to the Cape) to 1838 (the year Cape slaves were emancipated).

The following research questions have been formulated to help achieve the objective:

- How much information on this part of history is readily available at the Cape Archives (quantity)?
- In what signal(s), medium(s), and format(s) do the historical records exist?
- To what extent do the records provide insight into the socio-political background of the time?

- To what extent are these historical records at risk of loss?
- What are the digital curation activities that need to be considered to curate these records in a way that maintains their authenticity and allows for their access and use in the future?

1.4 Significant of the study

A country's social and political history greatly influences its society's thinking around migration and public and private space. Within South Africa's context, its early history of colonization and slavery at the Cape has left ramifications that are still visible to this day. For example, existing as last names of individuals that are directly linked to the month their ancestors were brought as slaves (Shell, 2016).

Studies on the Western Cape's social history have changed throughout the years. In the past decade, there has been a new emphasis on research into the neglected social groupings of slaves, sailors, soldiers, artisans, and in this study, Chinese convicts, exiles, slaves, and 'free blacks'.

These historical silences, also described as "symbolic annihilation", are applicable in the absence of representation in media and in that of archives (Gerbner & Gross 1976:173). Gerbner and Gross (1976:173) explain that it is a means of maintaining social order and relationships within a system. In South Africa, this system was that of its colonialists and later its apartheid regime - both centring on Eurocentric ideals like white supremacy and the oppression of people of colour.

Through over 300 years of colonial enforcement, Eurocentric ideologies have taken root and become powerfully institutionalised. Anti-colonial and anti-apartheid activists have begun to challenge colonial, imperialist, and apartheid ideologies. The apogee of this resistance was in 2015, with the Rhodes Must Fall movement ignited at the University of Cape Town, spreading globally, and questioning the collaboration of colonial heritage and the archive (Nielsen, 2021:396).

This study is interested in how the practice of digital curation can be used to unearth these invisibilised histories and enabling discussions surrounding their preservation, access, and control. It also acknowledges the importance of representation and the consequences of the lack thereof. It aims to contribute to the growing literature on digital curatorship and intends to contribute to the empowerment of individuals and communities of marginalised groups in bringing their stories to the forefront and encouraging them to get involved in archiving their own stories for the eventual act of preserving their cultural heritage. This study aims to find ways to provide a richer and more diverse understanding of the country's legacy, filling in the gaps in normative historical narratives. The research positions DEIC (at the Cape) in a broader geographical and cultural context, as identities then and now are still shaped by transnational interchanges. It also allows researchers to use precursors that have led to past historical events in examining the present and future.

1.5 Research Methodology

The overarching paradigm in which this study was conducted is Interpretivist. The archive being the source of inquiry has been critically engaged as a subjective legacy that reflects the power of those that created it. In conducting the research, I am aware that I come with my own cultural and historical experiences that may shape the data's observation and interpretation.

This explorative, qualitative study consists of three parts. First, a thorough literature search and understanding of the subject's theoretical, practical, and technical components. Second, the systematic collection and analysis of archival records from the Cape Town Archives Repository (KAB), and third, an interpretation of the data to explore what digital curation can offer to facilitate the preservation of and access to these records.

The last two, strongly dependent on the first, mean that a bedrock understanding of the topic is necessary. Literature regarding the subject was obtained as far as the end of the study, as collecting data depended largely on existing literature. In sourcing the documents used in the study, a stratified random sampling method was used.

1.6 Delimitations of the Research

This study focuses on archival records from 1654 to 1838. With its chosen demographic being Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles, and 'free blacks' at the Cape of Good Hope, samples were only retrieved from the KAB which is one of 14 databases in the National Automated Archival Information Retrieval System (NAAIRS).

1.7 Organisation of this dissertation

Chapter 1 presents an introduction to the study's background, research problem, objectives, significance, methodology and delimitations.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature used in formulating the research. This includes a thorough investigation of the history and development of archives (specifically Cape Town, South Africa); an exploration on existing digital archival projects surrounding the topic; digital curation and the benefits, challenges, and concerns that may accompany the creation, management, maintenance and dissemination of a digital project.

Chapter 3 presents the research paradigm, approach, design, and chosen method for the study. Alongside this, it discusses the general population which was sampled and how the data was analysed. The study's research ethics, trustworthiness, delimitations, and limitations are also discussed here.

Chapter 4 presents the data collected from the document analyses. The findings have been structured in accordance with the research questions laid out in Chapter 1.

Chapter 5 offers a discussion on the findings presented in Chapter 4. Recommendations for future research are provided here.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature relating to the study's research objective and questions. With the archives being the primary source of inquiry, it begins with a brief introduction into archival history and critical theories explored by Derrida and Foucault. Secondly, it briefly presents the Archival Platform's 2014 analysis of the state of South Africa's national archival system. Thirdly, digital interventions on the subject of interest, such as, Towards a New Age of Partnership (TANAP), Transcription of Estate Papers at the Cape of Good Hope (TEPC), and Diaspora to Diorama, are reviewed. Following this, the management of digital content and collections is addressed through the lifecycle model provided by Digital New Zealand (DigitalNZ). Finally, it presents the gains, challenges, and concerns that may arise during the creation, management, maintenance, and dissemination of a digital project.

2.2 The Power of Archives

According to O'Toole and Cox (1990:28), the act of preserving records can be seen as early as the 4th millennium BCE from ancient civilisations in the Near East. 'Archives' was a term designated for all collections that consisted of written records. Usually produced by official bodies, they were preserved because of their lasting administrative usefulness (O'Toole & Cox, 1990:28).

In 1652, the south western peninsula of Southern Africa was colonised by the DEIC. Initially only interested in establishing a refreshment station for their passing sailors, their incentives soon included claiming the land for themselves - a sentiment shared with the British who took over in 1795 (Oakes, 1989:36).

Between the years 1658 and 1800, about 63 000 men, women, and children were brought as slaves to the Cape, including people from India, East Africa, Madagascar, Angola, Java, Mauritius and Mozambique to name a few (Armstrong, 1997:23). With this influx of slaves (that the imperialists saw as 'stock'), the Company needed to keep a record of such movement. The Cape's colonial archive houses records of maritime trading activities and matters on the land (including the transfers of slaves to and from different countries), and

they are comprised of day journals and dispatches sent by local commanders to the legislative bodies in the Netherlands (Worden, 2014:25). According to The Archival Platform (2015:20), “South Africa’s national archival system has its origins in the legislative and administrative mechanisms that regulated colonial rule...”.

2.2.1 Archive as Subjective

Even though archives should be representative of the experiences of their people, not all achieve this goal. Drawing on Derrida's work *Archive Fever* (1996:11), Carter (2006:219) describes archives as a place of violence where only the ideals of those in power are reflected - they decide who gets access, how, and where. The voices that conform to the standards of the dominant group (in the case of South Africa, the powerful Western frame of reference) make their way into the archives, and those that do not, are ignored.

When archival information is available, it can provide a group with a sense of belonging as their legacy is acknowledged. In some cases, what is available echoes the violence which their community endured - this is seen through texts on the Khoen and San in South Africa, where they are dehumanised and compared to animals (examples in 2.2.2) . Not only can the lack of representation be seen as an 'archival silence' but also the abundance of misrepresentation.

The concept of 'archival silences' is discussed extensively in Carter's (2006:216) work: *Of Things Said and Unsaid: Power, Archival Silences, and Power in Silence*. He explains how omissions and erasures in national archives are inevitable as not every story can be told and, therefore, they are unable to represent the complete elements of their society. He also mentions how limited resources and an archivist's lack of understanding of significant material can lead to content being denied a place in the archives (Carter, 2006:219). The archivist's decision to include or exclude is not always conscious as their subjectivity and organisational constraints may come into play, sometimes detrimental to the 'subject' of interest (Carter, 2006:226). Although archival silences are commonly seen as negative, Carter (2006:228) mentions that some communities may choose silence and exempt themselves from the archives. This allows them to decide when they want to speak or be silent.

The Cape colonial archive⁸ had the power to decide who it wanted to include and exclude, what to record and what to suppress. This kind of imposition of “one group’s knowledge (colonisers) on another group (those being oppressed by the colonisers) leading to the near total destruction of the latter’s epistemology” is referred to as “epistemicide” (Bennett, 2007:154; de Sousa Santos, 2005: xviii). The colonial domination stripped the colony and its inhabitants’ (including slaves) identity. Derrida describes this act in *Archive Fever* (1996:12) as a type of violence that can be found in the heart of archiving as archives are created by the powerful for the powerful to exercise political, social, and cultural power (Stoler, 2002:88).

Archives and archival practices have stood at the heart of empires and nations, which have since defined the modern world (Yale, 2015:334). Thus, archives are not neutral spaces where statements speak for themselves but rather, they exist in a system that governs its appearance (Foucault, 1972:30). It is imperative that while working with archives, this is kept in mind as when 'revisiting history' we are confronted with such instabilities (Stoler, 2002:109)

Derrida (1996:17) suggests that Freud has provided us with the tools to expose 'suppressed texts'; similarly, psychoanalysis is applied to the 'understanding' of the mind. A similar approach could be made so with the archive (Derrida, 1996:18). It is vital that we re-conceptualise the archive and understand it as a potentially troubled space that is volatile (Derrida, 1996: 24; Harris 2002:66).

Like Derrida, Foucault's (1972:7&139) concept of the archive is figurative; historical records should be seen as 'monuments' in and of themselves and need to be understood within their specific fields of unspoken rules. Foucault argues that an archive is a collection of *statements* (ideas that have been predetermined, pre-structured and prescribed and are therefore un-original or not from the source) (Foucault, 1972:116-117).

⁸ This includes the apartheid archive that came subsequently. In Derrida’s seminar hosted at the University of Witwatersrand in 1998 he stated that the apartheid memory institutions (like the archive) “legitimised apartheid rule by their silences and their narratives of power” (Harris, 2002: 66).

Foucault offers a few questions that need to be answered when analysing statements and unpacking a statement's *rules of formation*: why was this statement created?, how did it accumulate and what function does it serve?, and how they have been put into their specific organisational systems?; are only a few of the many questions that may help to understand the conditions, rules, and orders of the time (and also how they have changed over time) (Foucault, 1972:46). Derrida and Foucault have greatly influenced the humanities' "archival turn," where scholars have followed similar routes in looking at archives as an abstract notion (Yale, 2015:335).

2.2.2 The Cape Colonial Archive

Africans featured in the Cape Archives through ethnographic surveys that were instrumental in establishing power and control over the land and its people (The Archival Platform, 2015:20). This can be seen through early European travellers' works which were institutionalised as critical works on South Africa's past within the colonial archive. For example, in *The Present the Cape of Good Hope* by Kolb (1731:36-37), he writes: "The Hottentots are the laziest people in the world and the filthiest in their diet". In another work, titled, *Compendium of the History and Geography of South Africa*, Theal (1878:53), writes: "Nothing that would be considered eatable by a baboon or a vulture came a miss to them...their great vices were idleness and filthiness". Such works played a role in shaping the world's perception of the indigenous as brutal, uncivilised, and unruly.

As an increasing number of Europeans visited the colony, more works like these were created, which formed the foundation of the institutionalised South African archive. One of the more influential collections is that of Bleek and Lloyd. Bleek and Lloyd were interested in exploring the ideas about races, anthropology, and evolution at the Cape in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Their explicit interest in comparing the indigenous language with apes' sounds was a distinct transition from the 19th century's hardened racial stereotyping to the 20th century's intellectual racism (Bank, 1999:7&13). Though it is often argued that there was mutual respect and co-operation between interviewers and interviewees, there were apparent power inequalities between Bleek and Lloyd and 'their indigenous subject' (Bank, 1999:4). Being a subject of a study in itself is already an admission of power.

The colonial representation of Africans in the Cape colonial archives commences with when they were brought to the Cape as slaves, including those from East and West Africa, comprising 25,3% and 1,1% respectively of the total Cape slaves that arrived between the years 1652 -1808⁹ (Shell, 1994:14-15). Simultaneously, 22,7% were brought from the Indonesian Archipelago and 25,9% from the Indian subcontinent (Shell, 1994:14). These values explain how the colony was made up of a diverse population that included Indonesians, Chinese, Sri Lankans, Madagascans, East Africans, and West Africans, etc. (South African History Online [SAHO], n.d.; Armstrong, 2009:2-4). Unlike the carefully preserved records on white settlers, nearly all information on the slaves only survived by "default rather than by design" (Worden, 2014:26-27).

This archival silence has made it difficult for researchers, historians, and 'slave descendants' to locate the stories of these individuals, as enslavement included the process of erasure and invisibilisation (Worden, 2014:23). As stated by Worden (2014:23), the DEIC "controlled, constructed and delimited the presence of slaves in the paper world" as the archive "matched the concerns of the administration" of the Company. This impacted the enslaved Chinese at the Cape and their representation in the colonial archive from the mid-1600s.

2.2.3 The Archival Turn for South Africa

This turn only began in South Africa in the 1990s when the country gradually underwent a negotiation of change from apartheid to democracy (Harris, 2002:75; The Archival Platform, 2015:4&13). In 1996, as a product of the country's transformation discourse, the creation of *National Archives of South Africa Act No 43 of 1996* aimed at the following: a) turning archives into an accessible public resource where citizens' rights can be exercised, b) using archives in support of post-apartheid programmes for redress and repatriation, c) actively documenting the experiences of those that were excluded or marginalised in the colonial and apartheid archives, d) the inclusion of imaginative and participative public

⁹ Shell (1994:14-15) does not include Madagascar's (25,1%) as part of Africa.

programming; and, e) providing more transparency on the archival administration processes (The Archival Platform, 2015:4).

In *The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory and Archives in South Africa* (2002), Harris (2002) emphasises how archives are far from “simple reflections of reality”, “constructed windows into personal and collective processes” (such as, the archivist selecting what they will preserve there for the records being a sliver of memory (Harris, 2002:62-64)). Archivists in South Africa were starting to be seen as active documenters of society and shapers of social memory (a critical change for the benefit of the transformation)(Harris,2002:77). This, exactly like that of Foucault and Derrida’s concept of the archive, sees the archive as a biased environment that can mould with the time and society in which it exists.

The archival turn also influenced LAMs to question their long-established orthodoxies and to document oral histories and struggles against apartheid (Harris, 2002: 76). It also saw an increase in non-public institutions committed to filling the gaps in the country’s social history, which included the Mayibuye Centre at the University of Western Cape (1992), District Six Museum (1994) and Robben Island Museum (1997) (to name a few). All these centres contributed significantly to the transformation discourse while illustrating alternative archival practices (Harris, 2002:76). South African academics and historians started to write about the country’s previously marginalised groups. This process was greatly impacted by Stoler’s (2002:99) work which brought attention to reading “along the archival grain”, as in seeing how the structures of the archival records reflect the power structures and decision-making processes of the time. Worden (2014:25) suggests that “reading between the lines as well as hunting outside the archive for what has been forgotten or suppressed” is also imperative.

2.2.4 The State of the Archives in South Africa: Summary

According to the Archival Platform's 2014 State of the Archives report¹⁰, the country's systematic approach to its vision of a renewed archival system in the 1990s has since worn off. Reasons include the lack of an overarching policy framework and the lack of both

¹⁰ A joint University of Cape Town-Nelson Mandela Foundation project) on the basis of a detailed analysis undertaken over two years (2012-2014) (The Archival Platform, 2015:4).

funding and the political will required for change (The Archival Platform, 2015:4). The following deductions on the current state of the archives were made – that public archives are not equipped or positioned for proper records auditing and record management (as required by their mandates), which has hindered their accountability and service-delivery (The Archival Platform, 2015:5). Most public archives have not transformed themselves into active documenters of society — leading to oral history projects being undertaken in modes that were found profoundly problematic. This could result from the apartheid-era patterns that have proved resilient (The Archival Platform, 2015:5). The archives have remained the elite's domain and very little outreach to encourage its use has been done by other users. Lastly, the archives have not harnessed the potential that digitisation can serve in the preservation of and public access to its materials (The Archival Platform, 2015:5).

2.3 Digital Curation and Archives

The term 'digital curation', introduced in 2001, stood out as a cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary concept, offering different meanings within the various fields it exists in (typically LAMs and humanities research) (Sabharwal, 2015:11). According to Sabharwal (2015:11), digital curation in digital archives are focused on preserving digital content (in the context of archiving). They have determined interests in collaboration, bettering access, preservation and adding value to their collections.

According to McGovern (2010:4), digital content preservation had already started around the 1960s, by archival programs at data and national archives. By the 1990s, LAMs came together with the common objective of preserving their growing collections of digital images and born-digital content for their current and future users (McGovern, 2010:4).

A digital community only took form with the publication of the *Preserving Digital Information Report of the Taskforce on Archiving of Digital Information* in 1996 which was a collaborative effort in addressing the challenges of digital preservation (McGovern, 2010:4). The rapid evolution of technology has pressured LAMs to find innovative ways to harness their community's collective memory and heritage. According to the Department of Sports, Arts

and Culture¹¹ (DSAC) (2010:12), the only practical and economical methods for widespread heritage recording lie in the production in digital format, in other words, its digitisation.

Though digital technology and digitisation may promise advantages to institutional collections (through preservation and access), the numerous challenges that come with it can prevent developing countries like South Africa, from achieving their goals in digitising their country's cultural heritage materials (Waters & Garrett, 1996:2).

2.4 Digitisation in South Africa

South Africa's first attempt at 'digitising' its archival records came in the form of the NAAIRS collection of databases. Commenced in 1974 and web-enabled in 2002, NAAIRS is described as "the first of its kind in the world" (The Archival Platform, 2015:65). With over six million records available on the system, it is used as a finding aid for the users of South African archives (both nationally and provincially). According to the DSAC (n.d.), a new database has been developed to facilitate a more "user friendly way of searching for information". The migration from old to new is still underway (Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, n.d.).

With the advent of democracy, the country moved all arts, culture and heritage sectors into its national transformation program (The Archival Platform, 2015:170). Under this national incentive, the digitisation project, Digital Imaging Project of South Africa (DISA) was established in 1997. DISA's first phase consisted of digitising literature relating to local resistance movements to apartheid. Made accessible on the World Wide Web in 1999, it entered its second phase in 2003 to build on the serialised digital resource through archival content about the liberation (Pickover, 2008:193; DAC, 2010:17-18).

In 2009, an audit on South African Digitisation Initiatives was undertaken by the National Research Foundation, as the first phase of an extensive exploration on the national needs for efficient and effective digitisation and preservation of valuable heritage collections in

¹¹ In 2019, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) was changed to the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture (DSAC) (National Government of South Africa, n.d.).

South Africa (Pickover & Mohale 2013:2). In 2010, the DAC finally published a *National Policy Framework on the Digitisation of Heritage Resources*.

By 2017, the Western Cape Government drafted a Digitisation Policy to guide, among other things, digitisation strategies aligned with international standards, preservation of digitised paper-based records, digital rights management, and the compilation metadata records (Western Cape Archives and Records Service [WCARS], 2017:6). The policy laid out general digitisation objectives, preservation strategies, standard technical principles and copyright matters, to name a few (WCARS, 2017:3 - 4).

According to the Archival Platform (2015:66), digitisation of public records by archives has been limited. When available, it has been primarily created in partnership with other organisations that have made the information available through their digital platforms. Examples of digitisation projects on the history of slavery at the Cape include Towards A New Age of Partnership (TANAP), Transcription of Estate Papers at the Cape of Good Hope (TEPC) and Diaspora to Diorama.

2.4.1 TANAP and TEPC

Towards a New Age of Partnership (TANAP) was a “Dutch, Asian and South African program of cooperation based on a mutual past” (Towards A New Age of Partnership [TANAP], n.d.). Developed in 1997 by the Netherland’s National Archives and the Research School for Asian, African and Amerindian Studies at Leiden University, it shared initiatives to provide: 1) scholarships for graduate students; 2) digital access and linking of the DEIC archives in Asia, South Africa and the Netherlands; 3) training and educational programs in Asia; and 4) workshops and conferences (TANAP, n.d.). It produced digital transcriptions of records from the Council of Policy of the Cape of Good Hope (1651-1795) which are housed at the Cape Archives.

From 2004 to 2008, the Transcription of Estate Papers at the Cape of Good Hope (TEPC) followed. As a joint project between the Universities of Cape Town, Western Cape, the Cape Archives and the National Archives at The Hague, it aimed to provide equitable access to significant archival resources associated with the history of the Cape (TANAP,

n.d.). TEPC produced digital transcriptions of manuscripts from the Cape Archives about people and places at the Cape of Good Hope (1673-1834). This included inventories, auction lists and estate accounts, to name a few. The TANAP and TEPC transcriptions are now available on the internet and CD-ROM (upon request) (Gophe, 2008).

2.4.2 Diaspora to Diorama

Diaspora to Diorama comprises nine volumes of transcriptions of archival records from the Cape Archive and The Hague surrounding the history of the Slave Lodge in Cape Town. Published in 2013, it is proof that historians are increasingly aware of the challenge and opportunity posed by the digital revolution as they find customary ways of conducting research and presenting findings (Brown, 2015:134). *Diaspora to Diorama*, comprising 9531 pages stored on a CD-ROM, can be opened with Adobe Acrobat Reader and easily queried through its *Find* tool (Command + F). Shell (2013:13) describes it as a tool that prepares the researcher for a trip to the archive. Many may feel intimidated and uncertain about where to start. It provides original archival references that can be used in searching for the original documents. Shell (2013:9) suggests that its CD-ROM storage medium allowed for more content (For example documents) to be added.

As additions to the collection, commissioned aquarells (by John English) and a 3D model of the Slave Lodge (by Peter Laponder) were created (Shell, 2013:7). Both added a visual component that enhanced its users' experience of the history.

The collection is described by Van Heyningen (2014:156) as "enormously thorough" and "meticulous in recording" has been slow to react, this, probably a result of the technology at the time, has not been a contemporary issue. The collection categorised the content into themes and subjects – covering census lists, manumission lists, lists of ships, voyages and baptisms, to name a few (Shell, 2013:39).

2.5 Getting Digitisation Done

Digital New Zealand ā-tihi o Aotearoa (DigitalNZ) is a search engine run by the National Library of New Zealand and funded by the New Zealand Government. Launched in 2008, it

is today linked to more than 31 million items from more than 200 organisations (DigitalNZ, n.d.a.). Their goal, aligned with Open Access principles, is to bring the wealth of New Zealand's digital content into one easily searchable place (Rollitt, 2009:142). The site also provides guidelines that are commonly adhered to by individuals, groups and institutions who are interested in the process of digitisation (DigitalNZ, n.d.a.; Rollitt, 2009:141; Witten, Cunningham & Apperley, 1996). Although there are other lifecycle models, such as from the Digital Curation Centre whose generic lifecycle can be applied to most disciplines, this study has used DigitalNZ's 'Make It Digital' lifecycle as their instructions are clear and descriptive, making it easy to apply. It is a framework that is used by a variety of content partners (libraries, museums, galleries, government departments, community groups, to name a few) which shows that it is flexible and lends itself to different contexts (DigitalNZ, n.d.a.). In the same way the *National Archives of South Africa Act No 43 of 1996* aims to actively document the experiences of those that were excluded or marginalised in the colonial and apartheid archives (The Archival Platform, 2015:4), DigitalNZ has established a plan to prioritise content relating to the marginalised Māori community (DigitalNZ, n.d.a.). Below are the stages presented by DigitalNZ.

2.5.1 Defining and Assessing Reasons to Digitise

When considering digitising, it is crucial to clarify the reasons for doing so. According to DigitalNZ (n.d.b.), "not all opportunities for increasing access, discovery and use of non-digital content need leads to digitisation". Reasons for doing so may include preventing the original from added damage (an act of preservation) and enabling use of the digital form where not possible or practical to use the original (DigitalNZ, n.d.b.; Roberts, 2008:402-403). At this stage, a digitisation strategy will help put in place the purpose, audience, beneficiaries and stakeholders of the digitised content (DigitalNZ, n.d.b.; DAC, 2010:42-43).

2.5.2 Selecting to Digitise

According to Roberts (2008:402), it is a common misconception that whole archive collections can or should be digitised. At this stage, most projects may create a *selection and collection policy* where the drives and purposes of the digitisation project are

established: what will be included and excluded from the process, a list of skills, resources and planning needed for managing the whole digital content life cycle, and concerns regarding copyright, moral rights and privacy rights (Roberts, 2008:409; DigitalNZ, n.d.b.).

2.5.3 Creating the Digital

As stated in SA's National Policy on the Digitisation of Heritage Resources, "digital surrogates are not replacements for original heritage resources but form part of the management of these objects" (DAC, 2010:43). When digitising, care should be taken not to damage the original. In addition, the technique and equipment used should be fit for purpose, as it will determine the usability of the digital object (DigitalNZ, n.d.c.; Witten, Cunningham & Apperley, 1996). The three main methods for the digitisation of text include Optical Character Recognition (OCR)¹², transcription and mark-up, and digital scanning (DigitalNZ, n.d.c.). It is crucial to consider which medium and format will best suit the purpose as not all are interoperable. Also, on account to the Western Cape Digitisation Policy, digital files should be interoperable. The Open Document Format (ODF) is the most flexible in terms of interoperability between different software products (DigitalNZ, n.d.c.; Findlay, 2008:484). For digital curation to be successful, the creation of accurate, authentic and meaningful records should be a priority (Cunningham, 2008:3).

2.5.4 Describing the Digital

Accurate, clear and descriptive metadata and file-naming ensures that digital object can be found and used over time (Liebetrau & Mitchell, 2010:2). Metadata includes ownership and rights information, describes what the digital object is, where it came from, and who can use it (DigitalNZ, n.d.d.). There are numerous metadata standards available such as the Dublin Core, Text Encoding Initiative and Data Documentation Initiative, to name a few (Liebetrau, 2010:31-32). Within Dublin Core, the elements included are title, creator, subject and keywords, description, publisher, contributor, date, resource type, format, resource

¹² Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is a conversion of printed or scanned text images, handwritten text into editable text for further processing (Patel, Patel & Patel, 2012:50).

identifier, source, language, relation, coverage and rights management (Sugimoto, Baker & Weibel, 2002: 26). It is best to answer each one of these elements for the digital object.

2.5.5 Managing the Digital

According to DigitalNZ (n.d.e.), there are three kinds of software used in managing digital content: 1) databases (For example centralised, relational, operational, etc.), 2) content management systems, and 3) repositories (Groenewald, 2010:21). Each has a different focus and function.

The first, which is used to track the collection's content, does not store anything more than the essential elements of the digital object (metadata). This software is commonly used in libraries and archives as part of essential records management of holdings (for example NAAIRS) (DigitalNZ, n.d.e.).

The second, which is applied to digital assets, electronic records and web-oriented content is chosen when a collection includes only born-digitals or digital copies that replace the original. "This is most often used in environments that produce or publish new materials using the stored digital content" (DigitalNZ, n.d.e.).

The third, which is "used for centralised storage of, access to, and management of digital content" focuses mainly on storage and access. Repositories are most popularly used by "libraries, archives, universities, research institutes, and other institutions to manage and store digital content over the long term" (DigitalNZ, n.d.e.).

Cunningham (2008:3) stated that digital archiving is "not just end-of-life-cycle collection management" but rather an active archival intervention across the entire records continuum. Collections may continue to develop over time by adding, removing and updating content as required (DigitalNZ, n.d.e.).

To successfully manage the entire lifecycle of digital content, a careful and well-designed workflow process from acquisition or creation to store content for future access and retrieval needs to be created (Bettington, 2008:152). This process, often supported by a

collection policy, identifies what it is about, how changes are made, who can access the collection and who is responsible overall (DigitalNZ, n.d.e.; Groenewald, 2010:17-18).

2.5.6 Preserving the Digital

O’Flaherty (2015:209) mentioned that DigitalNZ also recommends using international preservation standards like the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model to assist digital archives and their managers to ensure long-term access and preservation of their digital information (Open Archival Information System [OAIS], n.d.; DigitalNZ, n.d.f.). The OAIS model being beneficial for many institutions, like the British National Library, Library of Congress and our very own IZIKO South African Museum, to name a few, is not without criticism and has been subject to ongoing discussion, updates and revisions (OAIS, n.d.; Robertson, n.d:2). According to the National Policy on the Digitisation of Heritage Resources, each digital project must make decisions on whether it is access or preservation is the core priority for their digitisation activities. If it is preservation, a long-term preservation strategy should be put in place at the start of the digital project (DAC, 2011:16).

When working with archived files (master file and its copies), it is important to verify their integrity and completeness (Findlay, 2008:484). Commonly carried out with a simple MD5 checksum (an algorithm that can be accessed online), the algorithm confirms whether the file has been modified or corrupt (DigitalNZ, n.d.f.).

Good file-naming schemes, inventories and a designated person responsible for entering information and undertaking back-ups, may also minimise the risk of unintended loss of digital content. With the rapid advancement of technologies and software, digital contents in a collection should be backed-up and prepared for migration possibilities (DigitalNZ, n.d.f.; Findlay, 2008:501).

2.5.7 Enabling Use & Reuse

One of the most significant challenges that may appear at this stage includes usage rights. They ensure that digital content is not misused or wrongly distributed. Although this would

have been carefully considered in stage one, there may be unexpected consequences regarding how content is reused (DigitalNZ, n.d.g.). According to DigitalNZ(n.d.g.), there are six steps to help a project through the process of copyright clearance: 1) determining the content type (for example film, sound recording, etc.); 2) identifying the creator; 3) identifying when it was created; 4) identifying when it was published; 5) identifying the publisher; and 6) establishing the copyright status (DigitalNZ, n.d.g.).

According to Nicholson (2010:10) (within the South African context), if public domain material is included in a digital project without any changes, then no copyright costs should be charged for using that material. However, users may be charged for access and related administrative costs. If the work in the public domain is enhanced to create a derivative work, which meets the requirements for protection under the Copyright Act, then copyright would subsist in that new product.

2.6 Similar Studies

The below-mentioned cases have undergone digitisation as a means of further preserving their paper-based records and making them more widely accessible. They are presents as examples from which lessons on digital curation of content, which is neglected and/or at a risk of loss, can be learned.

2.6.1 Ahom Manuscripts Project

The Ahom Manuscripts Project digitised the written legacy of North-eastern India's Ahom Kingdom (Morey, 2015:43). The methodology of the project included the following steps: locating the manuscripts, seeking permission from the owners for them to be copied, cleaning and ordering the manuscripts, photographing the manuscripts, data management, metadata preparation, transcription, and lastly, translating and revising the metadata (Morey, 2015: 32).

While there are several Tai Ahom manuscripts held in public institutions, even more are kept in the Ahom priestly caste homes. Most have been kept safely but others are seriously damaged, with pages out of order (Morey, 2015: 36). The Ahom script was used on

numerous materials including sasi bark, paper, cloth, stone and brass plates, of which paper seemed to be of the lowest quality (Morey, 2015:37). The materials, once located, were too fragile to be moved and, once permission was granted to copy them, needed to be cleaned and photographed at the scene (Morey, 2015:32).

Before taking the photographs, a lot of time was spent organising the manuscripts' pages (Morey, 2015:34). A camera with a fixed distance lens was used to avoid distortion at the photograph's edges (Morey, 2015:33). With larger manuscripts sized at 35x45 cm, the photographer had to stand far above to get a shot of the whole page. All artefacts were laid out on a white sheet alongside a colour correction template (Morey, 2015:33-34).

Although there were some difficulties accessing the manuscripts, most of the owners were pleased to have their manuscripts photographed and available for study (Morey, 2015:33). A privacy concern surfaced after the fact that there is a belief among some families that the manuscripts' knowledge should not be shared; this was respected by the team (Morey, 2015:33).

This risk of loss, materially, was not only the project's concern; other threats included the Ahom community's diminishing ability to read and interpret the texts (Morey, 2015:52). The project addressed this by transcribing and translating the manuscripts (Morey, 2015:60).

The project considers the best metadata to allow for the greatest usability - the process to ensure this was somewhat challenging as the Tai Ahom manuscripts required translating (Morey, 2015:46). The team sourced experts in similar languages so that reliable translations could be created. They decoded the manuscripts and provided necessary metadata such as date of creation, content, and (for some) original location. This allowed for a better catalogue identification (Morey, 2015:40-41).

The achievements of the overall project include an online Tai Ahom dictionary database containing the digitised images and metadata (Endangered Archives Project website - British Library) (Morey, 2015:31). It attempted to make the records more accessible by creating digital surrogates. This secured the 'information' encoded if the original records be destroyed or irreversibly damaged (Roberts, 2008:402).

Unfortunately, after accessing all the literature available on the project, and the inclusion of additional correspondence with Morey (personal communication 2020, August 6), himself, I found no apparent maintenance plans for this digital collection and would therefore need to abide by the regulations set out by the British Library.

2.6.2 Jeghers Medical Index

Harold Jeghers, an established medical educator of the 20th century, contributed to defining Peutz-Jeghers syndrome and maintained a print collection of about one million medical articles (the 1800s - 1990s) (Gawdyda et al., 2017:249). The collection made its way with him through several teaching hospitals and academic centres, before finally settling in Youngstown, Ohio in 1982, where it became known as the Jeghers Medical Index (JMI). (Gawdyda et al., 2017:249).

Initially existing under an anatomic filing scheme (and later incorporating Medical Subject Headings), as the collection grew, the system limited article retrieval efficiency (Gawdyda et al., 2017:249).

Additionally, due to notes written on the articles by indexers and patrons, its legibility was affected and its paper deteriorated. As a response to this, the staff at the St. Elizabeth Youngstown Hospital converted the articles into Portable Document Formats (PDF) and via OCR to obtain searchable text (Gawdyda et al., 2017:250).

The articles were individually scanned and now exist as tagged image file formats (tiff), incorporated into its specialised, searchable, digital, relational database system (for example TESIS) which enables standards-based bibliographic metadata searches in both specific fields as well as the text (Gawdyda et al., 2017:250).

All bibliographic data were manually entered over two years (Gawdyda et al., 2017:250). Throughout the first phase, its team was made up of two full-time workers - a librarian and an assistant.

In total, the project took two-decades to complete and remains an ongoing curatorial project by one full-time librarian (Gawdyda et al., 2017:253). Gawdyda et al. (2017:253) express

that the project has resulted in “a low-maintenance, compact, and searchable collection of select medical literature” that can be easily accessed online.

2.7 Gains of Digitisation of Archival Collections in South Africa

The creation of digital surrogates helps reduce the rate of physical consultation and deterioration of the original. It also increases the educational value of source materials when collaborations with other institutions (both nationally and internationally) bring together their disparate collections and make them more useful and retrievable to scholars (Asogwa, 2011). This can be seen with the Five Hundred Year Archive (FHYA), an experimental digital research tool that combines diverse selections of materials online, from local and international institutions as well as from personal collections (Five Hundred Year Archive [FHYA], n.d.). Digitisation can also help raise the profile of modern African institutions (Asogwa, 2011). The National Policy on the Digitisation of Heritage Resources (DAC) (2010:6-7) indicates that a unified approach in creating digital heritage can allow for the incorporation of other digital records beyond those of the traditional memory institutions.

2.8 Challenges and Concerns in Digitising and Archiving Digital Information

Although the decision to digitise collections comes with many benefits, such as enhancing access and improving preservation, numerous challenges inevitably exist (Asogwa, 2011). Challenges include concerns around funding, technological obsolescence, technical expertise and inadequate technological infrastructures, etc. (all that falls under practical and technical matters) (Waters & Garrett, 1996:5; Asogwa, 2011). Other issues may relate to moral and ethical challenges concerning ownership rights and access to the digital content. This issue was thoroughly explored by Britz and Lor (2004:218) and has been considered within African documentary heritage.

2.8.1 Practical and Technical Challenges & Concerns

Digital projects are expensive and involve a lot of time and planning that may include frequent hardware and software updates and purchases (for example subscriptions) (Asogwa, 2011). In the *Preliminary guideline for the digitisation of natural sciences*

collection (Robertson, n.d:3), great emphasis is placed on staff training and the outsourcing of technical experts who can assist with the migration and preservation of data. Although obtaining funding may be a challenge in itself, funding organisations may introduce terms and conditions that require the transfer of rights of the digital material to the funder (DAC, 2010:45). This can be seen with South Africa's DISA project where the lack of a national policy and confusion surrounding ownership in a digital environment became a strain (Pickover, 2008:193). Due to the agreement that existed under a contract of funding and partnership, it subsequently led to DISA's "loss of independent identity and to some extent its purpose and direction" (Pickover, 2008:193).

Technological obsolescence is another challenge that digital projects face, caused by the continuous changes in computer hardware and software; it is a threat to preserving digital objects (Asogwa, 2011). To overcome this, archivists have adopted the technique of 'refreshing' digital information by copying it onto a newer media. Without proper training and Information and Communication Technology (ICT), infrastructure preservation cannot be insured (Waters & Garrett, 1996:5). Other concerns may relate to what Asogwa(2011) describes as "computer phobia". This, a product of the global digital divide, is seen where developing and emerging countries lack ICT infrastructure. Significantly linked to poverty and questions surrounding access to digital collections, it merges with moral and ethical challenges that may arise in digital projects, especially when considered within the African context, and in this case, South Africa (Britz & Lor, 2004:217).

2.8.2 Moral and Ethical Challenges & Concerns

Britz and Lor (2004:218) explore the ethical concerns that may arise in digitising Africa's heritage, raising essential questions about its exploitation: 1) How many African's will be able to benefit from the digitisation of their heritage (taking into consideration the digital divide that exists in the continent), 2) whose priorities and interests will determine what material gets digitised, and 3) will digitised 'texts' be freely available to African scholars? These concerns relate to matters around access that many digital projects face; It is imperative to explore these matters when working with Africa's heritage as there is a legacy of misrepresentation that needs to be considered. As described by DAC (2010:7), it "redefines our notions of collective memory and knowledge and opens up new

opportunities for capturing and holding memory and providing access to these memories". Universal access can become an issue as it is uncertain whether global rules on intellectual property can protect common heritage from becoming exclusive and private property (Britz & Lor, 2004:218). Britz and Lor (2004:219) suggest that there is a need for a social contract based on social justice where peoples of Africa have "the right to control their own documented heritage". This implies that they have the right to decide "which categories of information can be made available to the public and which not" and "even to withdraw access to material already digitised" (Britz and Lor, 2004:219).

2.9 Summary

This chapter has illustrated that archives are not neutral and reflect those who created it. As a result, stories surrounding the oppressed are often marginalised. After the archival turn in South Africa, historians began to address this phenomenon. Having found ways to bring these stories into the foreground, one way included the use of digital platforms to make such historical records more easily accessible. There is a wider range of tools and possibilities, including digitisation which comes with its own set of benefits (gains), challenges and concerns. Without the proper act of digital curation (the selection, preservation, promotion, maintenance, collection and archiving of digital assets), a digital project's outcome may be unsuccessful.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a brief introduction to the research paradigm; it draws upon an exploratory design as a way of finding, collecting and synthesising data. Using document analyses as its primary source of data collection, the chapter describes the customized forms used in analysing 62 archival documents chosen from the KAB (within NAAIRS). Following this, the procedure used to analyse and synthesise the data has been presented alongside the study's research ethics and reassurances on its trustworthiness. Lastly, it mentions the delimitations and limitations that were set out and appeared during the process of conducting the research.

3.2 Research Paradigm: Interpretivist

The ontological assumption for this study is that reality is a product of power relations. As the primary source of inquiry, the archive has been critically engaged as a subjective legacy that reflects the power of those who created it. The epistemological assumption supports these ontological beliefs because knowledge is political and value-laden (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:110). Therefore, the investigator and the investigated has been assumed to be interactively linked, with the researcher as an active participant in the process where their values inevitably influence the inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:110; Krauss, 2005:767). The research exists within an interpretivist paradigm which accepts that there is no single correct route or particular method to knowledge (Antwi & Hamza, 2015:218).

3.3. Research Approach: Qualitative

This study was approached qualitatively. As Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013:6) suggest, qualitative efforts "should be concerned with revealing multiple realities as opposed to searching for one objective reality". This approach, often seen within social sciences studies, does not aim to provide absolute answers but rather generates data to further understand real-world problems (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013:18). A qualitative approach which is "typically used to explore new phenomena and to capture ... interpretations of

meaning and process”, was considered best suited to respond to the study’s research questions (Given, 2008:xxix).

According to Krauss (2005:760), qualitative researchers allow for questions to emerge and change instead of constructing a fixed instrument or set of questions (as seen with most quantitative approaches). Therefore, this approach allows for the use of a flexible range of techniques to collect and analyse data (Guest, Namey & Mitchell., 2013:3).

In answering the first research question (How much information on this part of history is available in the Cape Archives?) quantitative aspects appear in the study. This was a significant but small component and was not seen as an approach in itself, but rather, a means of enhancing the qualitative approach.

3.4 Research Design: Exploratory Research

The chosen research design for this qualitative study was exploratory as it allows for a better understanding of the topic without needing to draw any conclusive results (Given, 2008:328). This design is in line with the research paradigm and aims to gain a more holistic perspective through the exploration of “multiple realities” (Given, 2008:328;Grbich, 2012: 7). The design, which researchers often use when the topic or problem of the study has not been previously studied in great depth, seemed to be most suitable for this study (Given, 2008: 328).

The study was conducted to better understand the recorded history of Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles and ‘free blacks’ at the Cape and to evaluate what digital curation can offer in further preserving and managing it. It is hoped the study will provide the groundwork for future studies, which is a feature of exploratory research design (Campbell, 2014:3; Given, 2008:328). Although the design offers benefits like flexibility and adaptability to change, its disadvantages include interpretations that are subject to bias.

3.5 Research Method

The chosen research method for the study was document analysis; defined by Bowen (2009:27-28) as “a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents”, it entails

finding, selecting, appraising, and synthesising the data contained in/on an object (the textual representation of discourse) (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2010:16). Document analysis can be applied to different texts including advertisements, minutes of meetings, books, diaries and more (Bowen, 2009: 27-28). Its strengths include being a low-cost, unobtrusive and nonreactive method to obtaining empirical data. Its weaknesses include it being a method that is susceptible to bias (Bowen, 2009: 38). In order to minimise bias and demonstrate credibility, the study used existing literature in supporting the information gathered from the document analyses. The items of interest in this study are paper-based records on Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles and 'free blacks', housed at the Cape Archives. The documents were individually and collectively analysed to formulate themes and categories that can assist in answering the research questions. In this study, the process of reviewing literature was fundamental.

3.6 Sampling Frame

According to Armstrong (1997:4-5), it is estimated that before 1795 there were no more than 350 Chinese present at the Cape. One of the traces left of these individuals includes archival records housed at the Cape Archives and in The Hague, Netherlands (Cornell, 2000:68). As mentioned previously, the tracing of Chinese individuals at the Cape between the years 1654 and 1838 can be rather tricky - slavery was a process that dehumanised and anonymised people, those that were regularly or accurately recorded were only burghers and 'free blacks' (as can be seen with the *opgraafrols*). The KAB was chosen as the source of the sampling frame. The KAB allows for advanced search capabilities and instant results when queried. After querying it with the search terms *Chinees, Chinese, China and Chinaman* with the specified date range from 1654 to 1838, 102 documents resulted.

These terms were chosen because they are consistently used to describe Chinese individuals at the Cape. The term (*van*) *Batavia* was not used, despite being the predominant location from which the group came. Batavia was made up of a diverse population of slaves that predated the existence of the Cape Colony (Blussé, 1981:167).

3.7 Sampling

A portion of these records can be found at the Cape Archives, all of which are paper-based (due to the period from which they exist). The archival records can only be accessed once you have given the archivist on duty the unique reference code provided to you when querying the KAB. The KAB also provides you with the year in which the record was created and comments surrounding the record's content.

With KAB's basic results, if the goal is to find all records on Chinese individuals at the Cape between 1654 and 1838, each series and source related to the period and slaves would need to be individually examined. This process being incredibly time-consuming, fell outside of the requirements of this minor dissertation.

For this study, a stratified and random sampling method was used to select half of the items found in the KAB. Although not ideal for a qualitative study, this sampling method helped obtain a sample that represented all categories (source code) of document types in the sampling frame. Among the 102 search results, ten different source codes, representing eight different government departments were presented (as shown in Appendix A and discussed in detail in 3.8). Fifty percent (rounded to the closest tenth) from each source code was randomly sampled, except for those with two or fewer documents. In such a case, all documents available were used. In total, 62 documents were included in the sample, as shown in Table 1.

The reason why there were 36 documents sampled from the CJ was because it contained two life events: Sentences and Testaments, from which each was individually sampled (also, at fifty percent).

Table 1: Cape Town Archives Repository (KAB) Results

| Cape Town Archives Repository (KAB) | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>*Search Terms: Chinees, Chinese, China and Chinaman</i> | | |
| <i>* Search Dates: 1654 - 1838</i> | | |
| Source Code | Total Documents Available | Total Documents Sampled |
| CJ | 61 | 36 |
| CSC | 1 | 1 |
| MOOC | 2 | 2 |
| MOIB | 1 | 1 |
| MOIC | 2 | 2 |
| BO | 2 | 2 |
| CO | 18 | 9 |
| GH | 2 | 2 |
| NCD | 11 | 5 |
| 1/STB | 2 | 2 |
| | 102 | 62 |

3.8 Government Departments¹³

The study's sample contains the following government departments listed below. They come from the colonial period and are distinctive in the making of the colonial archive¹⁴. The majority of the information provided here is from the Cape Archive's inventory room. The inventory room is a room within the archive which houses a complete list of the records (documents) held by the archive. In the inventory room I found explanations about each government department, they are as follows:

¹³ The KAB describe this as 'Government Departments and Offices, Parliament, Committees'. The study has chosen to only use the term 'government department' for simplification and to relate it to the period from which each document comes from.

¹⁴ The few that are mentioned here are specific to sample used in the study.

3.8.1 Court of Justice (CJ) & Cape Supreme Court (CSC)

The Court of Justice was established to deal with all judicial matters at the colony¹⁵. By 1828, the British renamed it the Cape Supreme Court (CSC). All CJ documents in the Cape Archives date until 1843 (Breytenbach, 1945).

3.8.2 Master of the Orphan Chambers (MOOC, MOIB, MOIC)¹⁶

The Master of the Orphan Chambers at the Cape of Good Hope was established circa.1673 under DEIC rule. It continued during the British Period under the High Court jurisdiction (Cornell & Malan, 2005:25). Before MOOC arrived at the Cape, it had already existed in the Netherlands and was extended to Batavia in 1624. At the Cape colony, the department was used to administer and keep a collection of the property of persons who died there (Cornell & Malan, 2005:25).

3.8.3 British Occupation, First (BO)

The British Occupation, First (1795–1803) was established when the Cape colony was surrendered to the British government after the Battle of Muizenberg in August 1795. It comprises a selection of documents received during the time, for example letters, memorials, ship bonds, all its formal correspondences, etc. (Bronkhorst, 2016).

3.8.4 Colonial Office (CO)

The Colonial Office (1806-1911) functioned as a mediator for all communications between the Governor and all public departments as well as private persons. Being made up largely of dispatches and correspondences (for example letters and memorials) it also keeps a smaller collection of permits, contracts and licenses (WCARS, n.d.).

¹⁵ The Council of Policy (C) which does not appear in the sample of the study. It came prior to the CJ.

¹⁶ MOIB and MOIC are considered to be part of the Master of Orphan Chambers department. The slight variation "IB and IC" is used to distinguish subcategories within it.

3.8.5 Government House (GH)

The Government House (1806-1910) was established after the surrender of the Cape by the Batavian Government to the British forces. GH comprises papers received and dispatched from the Secretary of State (London), British Colonies, Foreign Governments, “African Tribes, Agents and Officials”, Cape of Good Hope Departments and Individuals (Bronkhorst, 2016).

3.8.6 Cape District Notarial Deeds (NCD)

Initially, all Notarial deeds were drawn up by the Council of Policy and CJ. Only in 1790, the Cape District Notarial Deeds (1790-1998) was established as formal notaries were appointed to keep protocol and register of deeds created by them at the Cape colony (Bronkhorst, 2019).

3.8.7 Stellenbosch Magistrate (1/STB)

In 1679, Simon van der Stel, the Commander at the Cape, established a settlement in Stellenbosch. Shortly after, the Stellenbosch Magistrate (1683-1981) was created to include all matters and correspondences on land. Information collected includes minutes, criminal cases, post-mortems, civil cases, farm registers, census returns, road records and much more (de Wit, 1989).

3.9 Data Analysis

Each of the 62 records underwent the process of document analysis. Templates forms created by Document Based Questions (DBQ) Project (Appendix B) (DBQ, n.d.) and the National Archives of the United States (Appendix C) (National Archives, n.d.) were used to create a customised data analysis form. Both forms are aimed at helping students critically engage with written texts, and so they seemed most suitable for analysing and better understanding the documents used in this study.

The DBQ Project describes itself as a program that “strives to help teachers help students read smart, think straight, and write clearly” (Document Based Questions [DBQ], n.d.). Their template requires basic information about the document (for example document number or letter, date of the document, whether it is a primary or secondary source, author of the document and possible author bias) and information gained after reading the document (for example what important facts can I learn from the document, what inferences can I make from this document and what is the main idea of the document, and how can I use this document in my essay?).

The analysis form from the National Archives (US) has additional questions like: “for what audience was the document written, why do you think this document was written, what was going on at this time and, If someone created this text today, what would be different?”.

These templates were customised for this study. My template was made up of two parts (see Appendix A). First, it asks for basic information provided by KAB. Second, a more in-depth analysis of the document after reading (regarding its content, accessibility and physical state). Questions are not numbered or placed in any hierarchy, meaning that they can be answered in any order. A brief description of the headings presented on the template appears below. The template was first filled in manually on paper and then fully transcribed into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet.

3.9.1 Section 1

The first section of the template requires basic information on the record provided by the KAB. Starting with the document’s archival source, volume and reference (for example CJ, 2604, 11), it is a unique code that can be used in retrieving the physical record from the Cape Archives. The year in which the document was created and the associated event is also included. It allows for further confirmation of the purpose and period from which it comes. Also, if available, names of individuals are included under ‘*Name(s) of Person(s) Associated*’.

3.9.2 Section 2

The second section contains twelve questions in total. In the “*Document Description*” block, any information describing the archival record was included - its size, the language in which it was written, visual markings present (for example stamps, official seals, letterhead) and the number of written sides. Such details provide a basic understanding of what is physically presented. Evaluation of the record's physical state is not included here as the form contains a dedicated section for this purpose.

In answering the second question on the template, “*What important facts can I learn from this document?*” the reader must directly engage with the records' content. Being rather general and open-ended, the answer does not require full transcriptions, but a summary of the document's essential ideas. This can be answered through direct interpretations or direct quotations.

By addressing what information has been excluded (“*Who or what was left out?*”), the third question requires critical engagement with the document's content. Not only bringing significance to what is being shown, it suggests that what is not present can provide insight into the period's socio-political context. Following the study's research paradigm, this notion recognises that with archives being subjective, there may be important facts that lay hidden.

The questions: “*What does it tell us about the time period?*”, “*Overall, what is the main idea of the document*” and “*Why does this document exist*” seem similar to one another. They attempt to gather as much information as possible by assessing all aspects of the document's content. By re-placing the documents within the context in which they were created, traces of the historical period are made present (Bowen, 2009:33).

The next questions require a foundational understanding of the historical period so that inferences can be made based on evidence and reasoning - “*What inferences can you make from this document?*”.

To draw the documents back to the purpose of the study, the question “*How does this document help to answer your research questions?*” was included. This question reminds

the reader that the individual records were produced independent of her research agenda, consequently, not directly answering the research question on their own.

Other document analysis questions refer to the records' physical state and accessibility. *"Comments on the documents physical state"* allows for descriptive or straight forward answers. The documents will be assessed and the file to which it is bound (as a whole). *"Any differences between database record and physical record?"* *"Information gained after using the inventory room and/or with the help of the archivist on duty:"*, guide the assessment of the record's accessibility and usability.

3.10 Methods for Data Analysis and Data Synthesis

After completing a thorough analysis of each document, the preceding activity included examining and interpreting the data to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009:27). No longer seen as individual 'objects', the records were immersed together in groups to form collective meaning. For this process, the study used the procedures advised by Ruona (2005:240-245) and Bowen (2009:27-38).

Stage one consisted of preparing the data into a form that is easy to work with. In this study, the content collected from the document analysis was copied into an Excel spreadsheet. With the software's assistance, specific dates and names could be instantly queried and responded to (Ruona, 2005: 240). To ensure that no information was lost, the data was regularly backed up onto a computer, external hard drive and to the Cloud.

Stage two, which included the process of "familiarisation", was time spent to gain a deeper understanding of the documents' content (Ruona, 2005: 240-241). In correlation with the study's exploratory nature (of being flexible with when and how data is found), the process of re-reading and adding new literature to the research was constant (Liebetrau & Mitchell, 2010:4). While completing stage one, stage two was underway as notes were taken during the process. As Merriam (1988:181) describes, one is having a "conversation" with the data by asking questions and making comments on it.

At *stage three*, themes and categories were created. Ruona (2005: 241) described "coding" as organising the information into meaningful categories. Also known as data simplification

(reduction), it aims to grasp the essence of the phenomena by assigning labels, definitions or descriptions (Ruona, 2005:241).

Finally, at *stage four*, ("generating meaning"), after engaging with the "factual data" and "cautious analysis of the data", interpretations were made (Ruona, 2005:244). Using the categories (codes) created at stage three, under the research paradigm of the study questions like: "How do these themes fit together, what does it mean if you link the themes together, what contrasts, patterns and outliers are presented, what further questions need to be asked?" (Ruona, 2005:245) were explored.

3.11 Research Ethics

According to the Provincial Archives and Records Service of the Western Cape Act 3 of 2005 (2005:4), "a public record in the custody of the Service must be available for public access if a period of 20 years has elapsed since the end of the year in which the record came into existence". The documents used in the study, aged at a minimum of 182 years, far exceeds that; thus, the procedure in accessing them and using their information for the study did not become a problem. An access license had to be signed to include photographed examples in this study. It permits only one-time use for publishing. The study did not undergo the University of Cape Town's ethical clearance as it did not involve human subjects as part of its process for data collection.

3.12 Trustworthiness

As only primary sources were used in the study, as suggested by Golafshani (2003:601), data consistency can be achieved using raw data. In writing up this study, all procedures and information have been presented as clear and upfront as possible to avoid any confusion for the reader. The study has also been meticulously planned with the help of the literature and professionals within the field. Following the research paradigm presented in (3.2), the findings will not be presented as truth but as interpretations. The customised document analysis form is attached to the appendices of this study.

3.13 COVID-19 and the Study

Although COVID-19 did not limit the study, significant insight surrounding the access to the study's sample was revealed while conducting it. Under the COVID-19 regulations, only ten visitors were allowed in the archives at a time (with no time limit within the working hours between 10h00 to 14h00), a maximum of five volumes were allowed to be taken out a day. These restrictions have greatly affected those that need to research the archives. It has not been consistent on which day in the week the archives are full of visitors; however, from personal experience on time spent there, numbers have been adding up to more than thirty a day during this study. Because restrictions are not known to everyone (although stated on the WCARS website), they have seen visiting groups from as far as Johannesburg expressing anger towards the staff for not being informed about access restrictions. This situation has brought to light the possible benefits that open-access digital archives (and moreover the digitisation of archival documents) can bring.

3.14 Summary

This qualitative study was conducted under an interpretivist research paradigm that used existing literature and the application of document analyses to help answer its research objectives. With the research design being exploratory, it allowed flexibility and understanding of the topic without drawing any conclusive results. The first part, providing information necessary in grappling with the research problem, allowed for a better understanding before the examination of the records. The analysis of documents helped uncover meaning, develop knowledge and discover insights relevant to the research problem. By thoroughly analysing and synthesising the physical state and content of the individual records, it collectively assisted with the next step which included the exploration of what digital curation can offer in terms of facilitating preservation and access.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to present the data collected from the 62 documents sampled for the study. It begins by describing the study's sample - the government departments from which they were created and the life events with which they are associated (for example Sentences). Secondly, it looks at each of the document's formats, explains how they are arranged and the standards they follow. After this, it presents the sizes of the different documents (such as their respective dimensions and the number of pages they contain) to give an idea of the available quantity of data. Lastly, the chapter presents findings regarding the social stratifications, connections and signatures ('visual portraits') found within the documents.

4.2 Description of the Sample

From the 62 documents sampled for the study, eight document types were identified that come from eight different government departments sampled. They are identified as the following:

1. Testaments from the Court of Justice (CJ), Stellenbosch Magistrate (1/STB) and the Master of Orphan Chambers (MOOC) of which there are 31.
2. Memorials from the Colonial Office (CO) and British Occupation (BO) of which there are 11.
3. Sentences from the Court of Justice of which there are eight.
4. Notarial Protocols from the Notarial Protocol Department (NCD) of which there are five.
5. Insolvent Liquidation and Distribution Accounts from the Master of Orphan Chambers (MOIB or MOIC) of which there are three.
6. Paper Dispatches from the Government House (GH) of which there are three.
7. One Record of Proceedings from the Cape Supreme Court (CSC).
8. One Death Notice from the Master of Orphan Chamber (MOOC).

Appendix D lists the 62 documents used in the study. The information provided was gathered from the KAB: It shows the document type (for example Sentence, Testament, etc.), source code (for example CJ), volume (for example 2609) and number (for example 3). In combination, the study has written it as the following: CJ 2609, 3.

Document CJ 792, 24, was randomly sampled four times. This is possible because the document contained more than one of the searched terms.

4.2.1 Type of Document

4.2.1.1 Sentences

All Sentences (eight documents) come from the CJ. The Sentences also described as *vonnis* are documents related to a crime which one or more persons have committed. A sentence document often includes the details of the crime(s) committed and the sentence that was imposed as a consequence.

4.2.1.2 Testaments

Twenty-eight Testaments come from the CJ, one from MOOC and two from the 1/STB. The terms 'Testaments' and 'Wills' have been used interchangeably in the archives. The term Testaments will be used for the study. Testaments were created as a legal document that expressed what individuals would like to do with their assets after death.

4.2.1.3 Memorials Received

Nine Memorials Received come from the CO and another two from the BO. These are formal requests made by 'civilians' to the different authorities in power at the time.

4.2.1.4 Notarial Protocols

The five Notarial Protocols come from the NCD. Notarial protocols are documents drawn up by notaries appointed by the Cape. These relate to legal affairs surrounding trade, transfers and requests.

4.2.1.5 Papers Dispatched

The two Papers Dispatched come from the GH. Although all the above mentioned 'type' of documents were sent or addressed to their respective authorities and can thus be considered as papers that were dispatched, the documents that have been categorically listed under this type are those associated with the GH and relate to activities to do with the import and export of goods to and from the colony.

4.2.1.6 Death Notice

The one Death Notice used in the study comes from the MOOC. The title is self-explanatory - the document is a notice issued after the death of an individual.

4.2.1.7 Insolvent Liquidation and Distribution Accounts

The three ILDAs come from the MOOC - specifically MOIB and MOIC. These documents are accounts of individuals that became insolvent. They often contain tables with values and names alongside one another (possibly of those to whom the individual owed money).

4.2.1.8 Record of Proceedings

Only one Record of Proceedings from the CSC appeared on the KAB and thus only one was used in the study. This type of document is similar to that of Sentences. Instead of being from the CJ, they belong to the CSC. They include details of the crime(s) committed (who, what and when) and the punishment carried out.

4.3 Signal(s), Medium(s) & Format(s)

In the study, the document's 'signal' refers to the handwriting or printed text that conveys information (for example meaning), the 'medium': the material that serves as the carrier of its content and the 'format': how its content has been organised.

All of the 62 documents used in the study are paper-based and adhere to a specific format. The documents display 1) an original document number (which has not been standardised to a particular place on the document, appearing on either the first or second page of the document and in no specific font size), 2) page number (given by the archives themselves), 3) year(s) (when it was created) and 4) signatures of those that were involved in creating the document. For example, seen in the physical document GH 23/1,20, the document number is 20, page number within the volume is 88, the date is 1807 and is signed by "CALEDON".

Only some documents contain a cover page which is original to the document. Cover pages provide a summary of each document. Within the sample used in the study, coverpages accompany the majority of the Testaments (from the CJ), one Record of Proceedings (CSC 1/1/1/8, 5) and one ILDA (MOIB 2/346, 97).

Each document type comes with a format that serves the purpose of its creation. Information regarding the document creator, who it is about and to whom it is addressed, is not always explicitly stated. Those who usually have all three documents relate significantly to the colony's administrative processes and decisions, such as trade. This can be seen through documents like the Memorials Received (CO and BO) and Papers Dispatched (GH).

4.3.1 Sentences

All eight Sentences from the CJ are handwritten. They immediately begin with the date on which the document was created, followed by a summary of the names and ages of persons involved. Thereafter, a detailed description of the crime(s) committed, and the sentence that would be carried out as a consequence are described. At the end of the

document, signatures of those present at the hearing are shown (this excludes the person who is being sentenced). As seen in document CJ 791, 24, the creator's rank is stated: "EXECUTIE", and below that rank, an elaborate signature is provided. There is no clear writing around it that clearly states the name of the document creator and thus the signature seems to be the only feature that can be used to decode the Executive's name.

4.3.2 Testaments

All the Testaments in the study are handwritten. Twenty-four contain cover pages, and seven do not. Each Testament's covering page is single and flat and fits the size of the file that it is bound to. All begin with: "DIT TEEGEL BEHOORT TOT DE INLEGGEND TESTAMENT VAN DEN CHINEES (NAME(S)), OP DEN (DATE(S)) GEPASFEERT" (for example 28. CJ 2607, 15). This title tells us when the document was created, why it was created (for example as a testament) and to whom it belongs. At the end of each document, signatures of witnesses, trustees and persons to which the testament relate scan be seen.

4.3.3 Memorials Received

With the Memorials Received, requests are addressed to "HIS EXCELLENCY" or "EXCELLENCY GENERAL". Their names, not always stated, have included: "...GREY LIEUT. GOVERNOR & COMMANDER IN CHIEF AT THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE" (CO 3886, 30), "...SIR LOWRY...GOVERNOR OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE" (CO 3936, 32) AND "... DUPIE EARL OF CALEDON, GOVERNOR OF COMMANDER IN CHIEF" (CO 3880, 611). Two out of the 11 Memorials Received include printed and handwritten text. The rest are all handwritten.

4.3.4 Notarial Protocols

None of the Notarial Protocols that appeared in the study have cover pages. All are handwritten. They are to the point, starting with the date the document was created and the name of the notary in charge (for example NCD 1/10, 283): "HEERDEN DEN 13 JUNY 1796 COMPAREERDE VOOR MY JOHAN JACOB FREDERIK WAGENER, NOTARIS

PUBLIC... ". This information is followed by a description of the minutes of the deed. The document ends with signatures of those that are associated with the event.

4.3.5 Papers Dispatched

The two handwritten Papers Dispatched (GH) documents are addressed in the same way, as "MY LORD". The name of this individual is nowhere to be found in either document. The documents end similarly along the lines of "(I HAVE THE HONOR TO BE) MY LORD, YOUR LORDSHIP'S MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT". Each is signed by two different people, includes "R.S. DOU..." (GH 23/6, 29B) and "CALEDON" (GH 23/1, 20). Both of these documents related to activities related to import and export of goods (such as "CHINA ARTICLES" and "CONSTANTIA WINE") via ships, namely "TWO CHINESE SHIPS", "CHINA FLEET" and "SHIP LION". All Papers Dispatched follow standardised margins and indentations that help to delineate where texts should begin and end.

4.3.6 Death Notice

Although only one death notice was used in the study, all in the file MOOC 6/9/8 follow one format - a printed template that is manually completed. The headings are as follows: "NAME OF DECEASED", "BIRTH PLACE OF DECEASED", "NAMES OF THE PARENTS OF DECEASED", "AGE OF DECEASED", "CONDITION OF LIFE", "MARRIED OR UNMARRIED", "WIDOWER OR WIDOW", "THE DAY OF THE DECEASE", "AT WHAT HOUSE, OR WHERE THE PERSON DIED", "NAMES OF THE CHILDREN OF DECEASED AND WHETHER MINORS OR MAJORS" and "WHETHER DECEASED HAS LEFT ANY PROPERTY, AND OF WHAT KIND".

4.3.7 Insolvent Distribution and Liquidation Accounts (ILDAs)

The cover page for the ILDA (MOIB 2/346, 97) is somewhat different from the rest of the study's documents. Instead of being a single and flat page, fitting the book's size (like those mentioned above), it is A2 in size and wrapped around a seven-page 'booklet'. The other two ILDAs, are bound to their respective files MOIC 2/346 and MOIC 2/39. In these documents, assets have been listed in detail, with their values calculated on the far right (See Figure 1).

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| de Stedelyke Kas voor burgerlyke Belastingen | 7. | 26 |
| Hermanus Müller Hermanus Zoon op een onderhandsche Obligatie de dato 12 April 1820 | 100 | - |
| Roos van de Kaap, Slavinne van de huysvrouw van Hermanus Müller Hermanus Zoon, blykings rekening | 106 | - |
| C. Koch blykings rekening | 36 | - |
| Jan Andries Horak Senior ad idem | 41 | 42 |
| Hendrik Andreas Smit era geleende Constanten volgens Inventaris | 50 | 36 |

Figure 1: An extract from “Azamko’s” Insolvent Distribution and Liquidation Account MOIB 2/346, 97. (1822).

4.3.8 Record of Proceedings

The Record of Proceedings (from file CSC 1/1/1/8) is made up of both printed and handwritten texts.

The document contains a printed cover page (that is in the size of the file that it is bound to) and its content is presented as follows: first, the government department in which the document is associated with (top left corner) “SUPREME COURT OF THE COLONY OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE”, second, an introductory phase “THE JURORS FOR OUR LORD THE KING, UPON THEIR OATHS, PRESENT:” (in the middle of the page) followed by a summary of the crime (who committed it, how it was committed and when it was committed). Lastly, it is signed off by the “ATTORNEY-GENERAL, WHO PROSECUTES FOR AND BEHALF OF HIS MAJESTY” (bottom right-hand corner for all documents).

The handwritten part of the document can be found on the reverse side (back) of the physical document. With CSC 1/1/1/8, 5, information regarding the “PLEA. (NOT GUILTY)”, “NAMES OF THE JURORS SWORN...”, “VERDICT. (GUILTY)” and “SENTENCE. (TO BE TRANSPORTED TO SOMEONE OF THE BRITISH CONVICTS SETTLEMENT...)” can be seen.

4.4 Legibility of documents



Figure 2: An extract from the document CO 3961, 35 (1833) (Colonial Office, Memorials Received). Associated with “AYEN and AKONG”.

Throughout the 62 documents, different handwriting styles can be seen with some being easier to read than others. It has thus proved difficult to read names correctly. For example, in Figure 4.4, an extract from document CO 3961, 35 showing a name is presented. Being written in English and dating to 1833 (during the second British Occupation), it is safe to assume that it is probably an English name: J-O-H-N. The Second name, not as easily legible, is believed to start with a C.

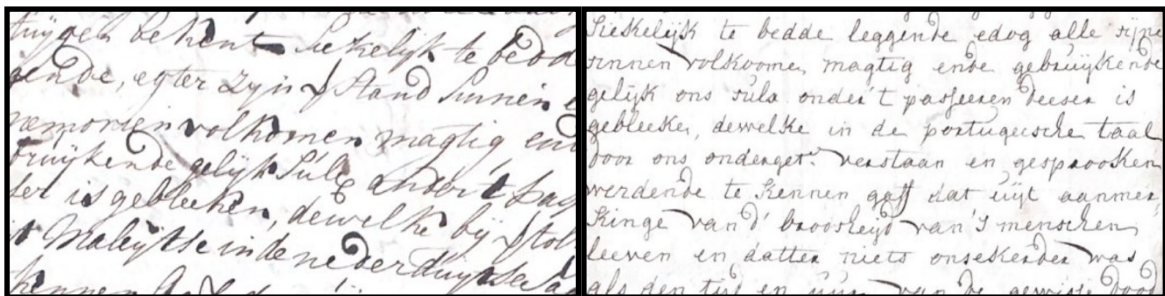


Figure 3. Left. An extract from the Testament CJ 2609, 31 (1741). Associated with “NITHINKO”.

Figure 4: Right. An extract from the Testament CJ 2609, 1 (1739). Associated with “OEYLINKO”.

Figures 3 and 4 are extracts from Testament CJ 2609, 31 and CJ 2609, 1. Both contain different handwriting styles that make the document either easier or more challenging to

read. Compared to one another, the latter, CJ 2609, 1, has consistent spacing between its letters and words, making it easier for a reader to decode, clearly showing where a sentence starts and ends. Unlike CJ 2609, 31, the ink's weight is steady and has not obscured the words within the document.

Out of the 62 documents, 64,52% (40 documents) consisted of the style like the image on the left (nearly illegible) and the other 35,48% (22 documents) like the image on the right (neat and defined).

4.5 Size of the documents

Each of the documents comes in differing sizes that do not vary too much from one another. While analysing each one, its length and width were measured. Also, the thickness of the file in which each is bound was measured. The thickest file is recorded at 9 cm (for example MOOC 7/1/3) and the thinnest at four centimetres (for example CJ 2608) (average being 6,5 cm). The widths of the documents were all quite similar, with the majority measuring between 20-22 cm. Outliers include documents at 25cm. The length of the documents was mostly between 34 and 36 cm. Some outliers went as low as 31cm and as high as 38cm.

4.6 Number of Pages

The number of pages within each document varies. For the study, each page has been calculated to be equivalent to a written side. The maximum number of written sides is 22 pages (and can only be seen with document CJ 792, 27. The minimum number of pages is one, and can only be seen with document CO 3886, 21. In total, the average number of pages for one document is 5,26.

4.7 Physical Condition

The analysed documents are all bound to a file (which pertains to the specific volume in which the document exists in). For example, document CJ 2608, 8, is the eighth document in the file CJ 2608.

In analysing the documents' physical conditions, the volume (file/book) in which each is bound also underwent assessment. Thus, two sets of responses have been provided

below, one regarding the single document and the other, the respective file in which it exists.

Although the ink on some documents is more faded than the others, all are still clear. Inevitably, due to the documents' age, all except five have crumbled edges that disintegrate when working with them. Only four files have been re-bound with each page taped across its edges (these include all BO and GH files used in the study) (See the yellow tape in Figure 6).

The majority (82,26%) (51 of the 62 documents) are in files that contain a binding defect. For example, due to its spine being wholly detached, the files MOIC 2/39 (which is an Insolvent Liquidation Distribution Accounts associated with the document number 325) and MOOC 7/1/3 (a Testament associated with document number 92) are held together with strings and two cardboard sides (both in front and the back) to keep its pages from falling apart. A total of six files can be seen to be bound with such a technique. The others need to be more delicately handled to avoid further damage to the physical record.

Other defects can be seen with file NCD 1/11 where, through ageing, its hardcover has become soft. It is one out of eight documents which were described in the document analysis form as "BITTEN" as it seems to have been damaged by insects (see below, Figure 5).

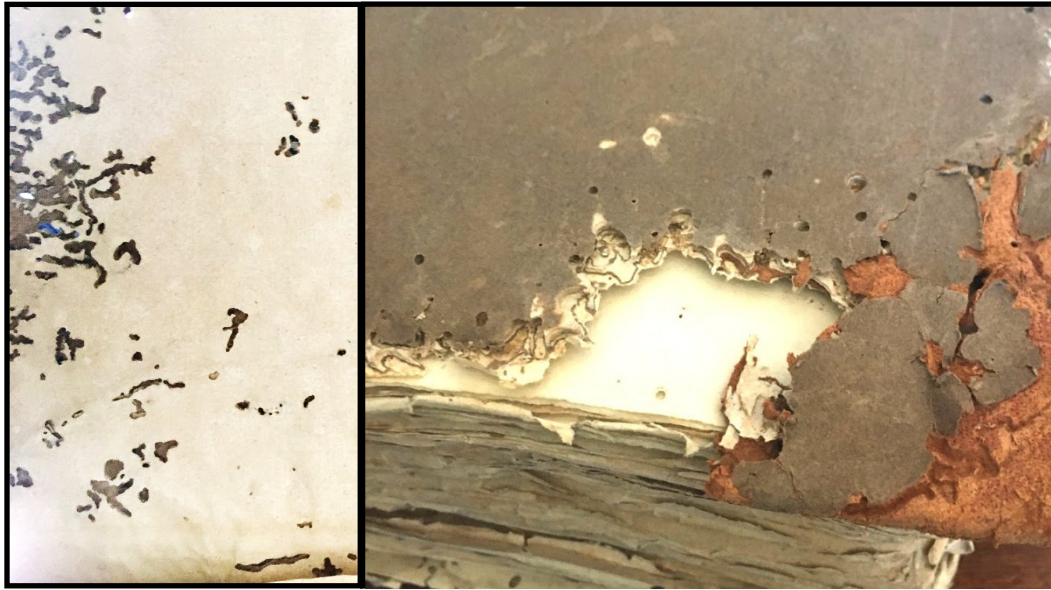


Figure 5: Photographs of bitten documents from the file NCD 1/11

The other 17,74% (11 of the 62 documents) are well intact. According to the archivists on duty, all files that are bound are not allowed to be photocopied. When doing so, force is applied to the spine of the file, causing damage.

All 62 documents in the study were in bound files, which means none of them can be photocopied. Although all are supposed to be labelled with “OWING TO POOR PHYSICAL CONDITION, THE DOCUMENT MAY NOT BE XEROX COPIED”, 46 out of the 62 documents are in files that do not have this notice. This is because some notices have fallen off and have not been stuck back on.

Instead of being photocopied, on request, the physical documents are photographed by the archive’s technician, printed out and then given to visitors. The label does not seem to provide any useful information in reading the document; however, it informs the technician¹⁷ and this study on what measures have been put in place to avoid further damage to physical documents.

¹⁷ In reality, the technicians do not rely on the label to know which documents can or cannot be photocopied as they are well trained and informed.

4.8 Dates

The years in which most of the documents originated are between the years 1700 and 1750 (24 documents). The second most are from 1750 to 1800 (21 documents) and third, between 1800 and 1850 (17 documents). Surprisingly, there were no documents that appeared between the years 1650 and 1700. The earliest document is dated 1724 and the latest, 1838.

Each document, created by a specific government department, provides dates that can be used to understand the political and administrative history of the colony. Although this study sampled only around half of the documents provided by the KAB, the data helps illustrate how events unfolded and progressed and what government departments have transpired throughout the years.

Of the 62 documents sampled, five had dates that did not match those of the actual document. For example, the physical documents show that the year provided by the catalogue for CO 3996, 5 and CO 3996, 6 is 1837, instead of 1838 (one year ahead).

Other inaccuracies can also be seen with all the ILDA. Documents MOIB 2/346, 97; MOIC 2/110, 897 and MOIC 2/39, 325 did not mention when each document was created but have numerous years that may be associated with it. For example, in document MOIB 2/346, 97 which belongs to (or associated with) "AZAMKO", the dates 12 April 1820, 8 April 1820, 3 February 1822 and 10 July 1822 are listed throughout the document. Some are paired with a name and others as titles preceding an assortment of information regarding the individual's property. This is similar to that of document MOIC 2/110, 897 and MOIC 2/39, 325.

4.9 Language

Out of the 62 documents, 75,81% (47 documents) were in Dutch/German, 22,58% (14 documents) in English and one document in French. With only a basic understanding of Afrikaans (a derivative of Dutch), I could decode only a minimal amount of information from the documents.

The Cape Archives do not provide any translation services for the documents they house, however, the archivists on duty usually have a good idea of what the documents are about and if not, where help can be found.

The KAB proved to be more informative than the actual document itself. This is because the metadata (provided by the database in English) acted as a 'translation' of the actual document in Dutch/German.

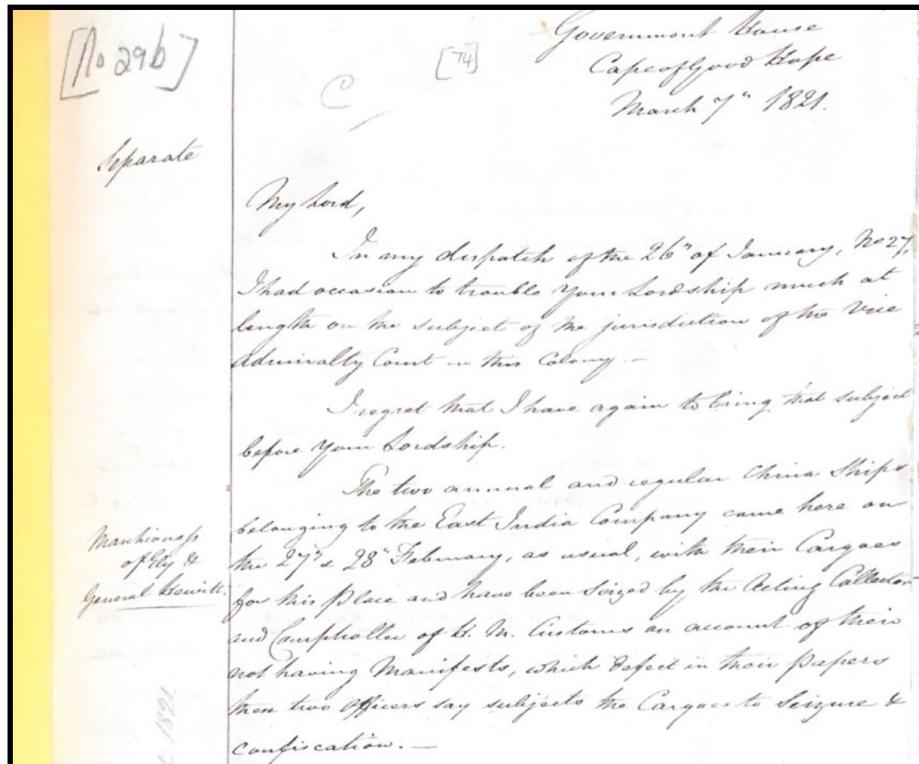


Figure 6: An extract from the document GH 23/6, 29b (1821)(Government House:Papers Dispatched).

Of the 14 documents in English, all are written quite elaborately (perhaps grandiloquently) and some in styles that are challenging to read. An extract from GH 23/6, 29b (dated 7th March 1821) (Figure 6) reads:

“MY LORD, IN ANY DISPATCH OF THE 26TH OF JANUARY, NO 27, I HAD OCCASION TO TROUBLE YOUR LORDSHIP MUCH AT LENGTH ON THE SUBJECT OF THE JURISDICTION OF THE VICE ADMIRAL COURT IN THIS COLONY. I REGRET THAT I

HAVE AGAIN TO BRING THAT SUBJECT BEFORE YOUR LORDSHIP. THE TWO ANNUAL AND REGULAR CHINA SHIP BELONGING TO THE EAST INDIA COMPANY CAME HERE ON THE 27TH AND 28TH FEBRUARY, AS USUAL...”.

This document is five pages long (written sides) and in summary, could have been presented on one page.

The single French document was BO 115, 150. The description provided by the KAB states: “MEMORIAL RECEIVED. G GOETZ. REQUESTING PERMISSION TO LANDSOME CHINA ARTICLES FOR HIS WIFE”. This summary provides the reader with a general idea of what the document is about, and with this, further deductions can be made. In the document, it can be seen that other items were also requested and were intended to be gifted (“petit present”) to “Madame Goetz”.

What seemed unusual is that there are documents dated from the Second British Occupation, written in Dutch/German. These are only of Testaments from the years 1807 to 1838. Documents that are ‘consistent’ to this period (in English) included the Death Notice and Memorials Received. Of the documents in the study that dated from the Second Occupation, 82,35% (51 documents) are in Dutch/German and 17,65% (11 documents) in English.

4.10 Names

As mentioned, information regarding Chinese individuals at the Cape of Good Hope between 1654 and 1838 is minimal. With the sample drawn from documents resulting from a search for *Chinees*, *Chinese*, *China* and *Chinaman*, sixty out of the 62 documents contained names of Chinese individuals. The study used the names to unearth clues surrounding the population's nature – how they may have been depicted, treated and perceived in the period.

Table 2: 53 names that appeared in the Description Entries of the 62 documents provided by the KAB.

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|
| COINKO | OEYLIMKO | AZAMKO | TANTANKO |
| TOEAKO | OEYLINIKO | APO | CHIOEAHOEKO |
| TSANTIKO | POINTONKO | ABDOL | TJANKO TIO |
| PANSISAY | TERJIENSAN | JD KARNSPEK | KOKIEKO |
| TIEUWKIKO | POINTONKO | JJF WAGENER | TSJOKO LI |
| ONSONKO | QUETIONGKO | J AGGERSBORG | WILLIAM ASSUE |
| COITINKO | OUNKOUKO | G GOETZ | AYEN |
| TIEUNKIKO | OEIJ TJOUKO | W BIRD | AKONG |
| KOONYTIONGKO | ONKONKO | EBEN | BRAHIM |
| NITHINKO | TANIONKO | WATTS | HONLOKO |
| OEYLINKO | SOUTAKO | ASSING | ATIM |
| LIMKOKSAY | TANTJANKO | IYOU | OEYLINKO |
| KOONYTIONGKO | HOUNKO | JOHN | NITHINKO |
| | | | WILLIAM ASSAN |

Table 2. shows a compilation of names that appear within the metadata provided by the KAB and in the physical documents. Of the 62 documents, 55 of them are names of individuals whom the document is about. Five (all Notarial Protocols (NCD)) are names of Notaries who authorised the protocols (documents), and the other two do not contain any names.

Although there are only 53 names present in Table 2, a few appear more than once. These include “POINTONKO” (a total of two times), “AZAMKO” (two), “ABDOL” (two), “JJF WAGENER” (four) and “WILLIAM ASSUE” (two). The entry descriptions that show more than one name, such as “AYEN AND AKONG” have been separated into two. Of the 62 documents 47 contain Chinese names. Two documents from the Government House (GH 23/1, 20 and GH 23/6, 29B) did not show names and were not included in the table. Out of the 62 documents, 51 documents had *description entries* that mentioned Chinese individuals (for example CJ 2607, 5 (“COINKO”)). From there, it can be seen that the names most popularly end with “KO” (at 68,63%).

4.10.1 Not Chinese Names

Eight documents contain names that are atypical of the majority of Chinese names found throughout the documents. These names include Abdol (1/STB 18/27, 28 – a Testament) and Brahim (CJ 791, 24 – a Sentence). Both names are from the Arabic language and strongly associated with Islam. The first means “Servant of Allah” (Abdul) and the latter “Father of Nations” (Ibrahim)¹⁸.

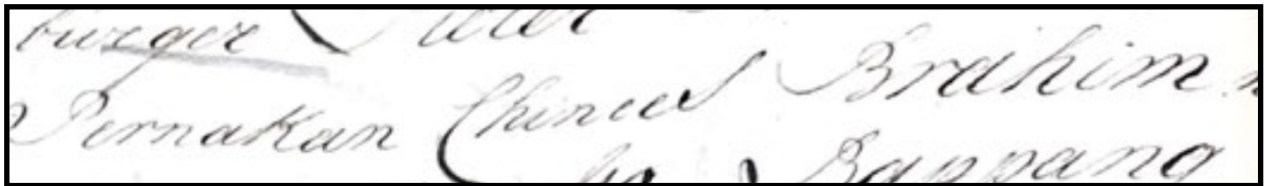


Figure 7: An extract from the Sentence CJ 791, 24. Associated with “PERNAKANCHINEES BRAHIM” and more.

Alongside the name Brahim the term "PERNAKAN" is used to describe the individual (See Figure 7). This identifier, independent of any religious connotations, was used at the time to suggest that the individual was of mixed descent, specifically from Chinese fathers and Indonesian mothers¹⁹.

Other non-Chinese names include Dutch or German and English names which appear in a few Notarial Protocols and Memorials Received documents. These are "JD KARNSPEK" (NCD 2/16, 31), "JJF WAGENER" (NCD 1/10. 283), "J AGGERSBORG" (BO 114, 132), "G GOETZ" (BO 115, 150), "W BIRD" (CO 3886, 21) and "EBEN and WATTS" (CO 3886, 30).

Two metadata entries provided by the KAB do not contain names, these come from GH 23/1, 20 and GH 23/6, 29. No names could be seen on the documents themselves.

¹⁸ This translation is taken from the website *Behind the Name* which is compiled by Mike Campbell (1996).

¹⁹ This statement is also supported by Armstrong (2009:28).

4.10.2 Van ('Place of Origin')

Only one out of the 62 documents used in the study provide specific detail on the Chinese individuals' place of origin. This can be seen with the Sentence (CJ 792, 27), where the Chinese individuals' names are followed by "VAN EIMOEIJ" and "VAN TANTJONG" which were ports in China²⁰. The rest of the documents which are not specific, state: "VANDEN CHINEES" (for example CJ 2608, 9), or merely "CHINEES".

4.10.3 Names on Database Records versus Actual Records

Out of the 62 documents, five documents showed naming inconsistencies between the information provided by KAB and the original document, with four being "Testaments" and one, "Memorials Received". An example includes the document CJ 2610,43 (Testament), where the database provided the name "TERJIENSAN", which is contrastingly different from that of the actual document "TIOJIENSAY". Below, the figures show that this how this could have happened.



Figure 8: Right. An extract from Testament CJ 2610, 43.

Figure 9: Left. Another extract from Testament CJ 2610, 43.

Instead of being one name, as seen in Figure 9, the original document also shows the name separated into three words (Figure 8). A possible reason for the database transcriber to have incorrectly recorded it is that the document was not thoroughly examined. Only the first page (in this case, its title page) was used to determine the individual's name. In figuring out the spelling for this study, all five pages (written sides) of the document were closely

²⁰ In James C. Armstrong's paper *The Chinese at the Cape in the Dutch East India Company Period 1652-1795* (2009:6), he mentions that the term "Eijmoij" could have referred to Amoy, now known as Xiamen. A possible translation for "Tantjong" cannot be found in his paper, nor anywhere else in the literature used in the study.

examined. Throughout, the name appeared three times; thus, all were looked at in arriving at the most likely version of the name.

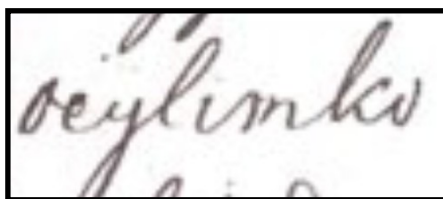


Figure 10: An extract from Testament CJ 2608, 46. It is associated with “OEYLIMKO”.

Other smaller differences can be seen with document CJ 2608, 46. As part of the description provided by the KAB, it states: “OEYLINKO, DEN CHINEES. TESTAMENT”. In the actual document, the name is spelt “O-E-Y-L-I-M-K-O”. This mistake should not have been made as the name is legible on the document's title page (See Figure 10).

With the same name presented in document CJ 2609, 1, the database once again spells the name as “OEYLINKO” instead of “OEYLIMKO”, which the actual document shows. The Same is found with document CJ 2609, 51, where the database shares “OEYLIN-I- KO”, but has an additional “i” added to the name, and where the actual document shows “OEY LIMKO” as two separate words. This inconsistency makes it difficult to identify whether all of the names mentioned above refer to a single person. After consulting the head archivist, it was brought to light that the possibility of an individual with more than one testament is high.

4.10.4 A Network of Social Interactions

Although more than one name is presented in every document, the KAB nearly always only shares one (such as the person who is mainly associated with it). Only two out of 62 database entries, both “Memorials Received”, mention two names. These include CO 3886, 30 (associated with “EBEN AND WATTS”) and CO 3961, 35 (associated with “AYEN AND AKONG”)

In CO 3961, 35, besides Ayen and Akong, the name of authority who created it is also present and signed as “A CHIAPPING”. On another page, another signature can also be seen: “JOHN ...”. Neither of these latter names was included in the database, and thus all documents relating to these individuals are not presented if queried.

With document MOIB 2/346, 9 (Insolvent Liquidation Distribution Account), the database description is: “AZAMKO, THE CHINESE. INSOLVENT LIQUIDATION AND DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT”. The actual document, on the other hand, mentions other individuals who can be seen to be associated with the same document. These include: “C KOCK”, “JAN ANDRIES HORAK”, “HENDRIK ANDREAS SMIT”, “... MILLER HERMANUS”, “AHAN” (“DEN CHINEES”), “JOSEPH ...”, “NICHOLAAS ...”, “CHRISTIAAN BAM” and more.

The document CJ 2608, 9 can be seen as another example of a social network. Its database description stated as: “TIEUNKIKO, DEN CHINEES. TESTAMENT.”. The testament subsequently mentions people whom Tieunkiko may have known as it expresses the general ‘property’ (included slaves) he owns and those he wanted to include in his testament. Although not all of his slave’s names were mentioned, the ones presented included “AGAR VAN BATAVIA” and “JORIES VAN BATAVIA” whom he wished to free after his death.

Those with a similar social status as “TIEUNKIKO”, and whom he wanted to leave his belongings to include “TIOEPEKLO” and “SIOETANKO”. At the end of the document, two Chinese men acted as witnesses in drafting the will; their names are “TANSOEKO” and “LIEMKOEKSAY”.

“LIEMKOEKSAY” could be the same person mentioned as “LIMKOKSAY” in Testament CJ 2608, 47. This cannot be known for sure, as mentioned earlier, many variations of one name exists, and it is also possible that more than one person had a similar name.

Another example of social networks is in “OEYLINKO’S” Testament CJ 2609, 1. Within the document, the following individuals are also mentioned: “TOENKO”, “TEWATKO”, “TIEAKETKO” and “OEYSIKO”. None of these names, appearing in any other documents used in the study, assist in finding groups that may not be represented in the archive.

4.11 Representations of Chinese

All 62 documents used in the study provide a glimpse into the social stratification that existed at the Cape during the time (1654 to 1838). Below, each document type has been discussed in accordance with this statement.

4.11.1 From Sentences: 'Slaves and Criminals'

From KAB, only two document types from the Court of Justice were available to be sampled from; this included Sentences and Testaments.

From the eight Sentences that were used in the study, all crimes are associated with theft. The earliest is dated 1725 (CJ 784, 34) and the latest in 1771 (CJ 792, 27). Their contents are described below.

On the 31st of October 1771, Tantjanko van Eimoey (aged 39) and three other slaves (described to be Akir van Batavia (37), Sacoedien van Java (25), and Oensien van Tantjoeng (50) were taken to court for stealing a *geldkas* (box of money). As punishment, all were whipped (*gegesel*), burnt (*brandmerk*) and banished to Robben Island - some for life, others ten to fifty years²¹ (CJ 792, 27).

Crimes of theft also led to hangings (*gehang*). In 1766, eight slaves were caught stealing goods from "BROODERS SE STOOR" (CJ 791, 24). Five out of eight were Chinese (their names were Brahim, Koekieko, Tsoa Tsayko, Li Tsjoeko and The Hauwko) where two were provided with a death sentence²².

Some thefts were more elaborate, as can be seen with a case in 1725 (CJ 784, 34) where Caatje van de Kaap and Pieter (both women) from Batavia appeared in court for theft. The Chinese Tio Tjanko, who appeared with them, was the organiser of the crime. Other accomplices that were mentioned included four more Chinese men and a free black. As

²¹ This event is mentioned and confirmed by Hans Heese in his book *Reg en Onreg* (1994). This book covers all criminal sentences from 1700 to 1800.

²² This event is also mentioned and confirmed by Hans Heese in his book *Reg en Onreg* (1994).

Tio Tjanko's punishment, he was branded on each cheek and was forced to work in chains for life²³.

The only Sentence created by the Cape Supreme Court (CSC 1/1/1/8, 5) in 1835, relates to a Chinese man called "JOHN CHINAMAN", a mason and cook. The statement goes: "UPON THE 10TH DAY OF AUGUST, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1835, AND AT LONG-STREET...THE SAID JOHN, ALIAS "JOHN CHINAMAN", DID WRONGFULLY AND UNLAWFULLY ASSAULT JACOB FREDERICH SIEBER, NOW OR LATELY A COOPER AND NOW OR LATELY RESIDING IN SIR LOWRY-STREET, IN CAPE TOWN AFORESAID, AND DID, WITH A KNIFE, OR SOME OTHER INSTRUMENT TO THE PROSECUTOR UNKNOWN, STAB AND GRIEVOUSLY WOUND HIM UPON THE LEFT SIDE...".

Even though the Chinese individuals mentioned in the crimes were not always labelled as slaves, they collaborated with at least one person who is described as a slave in the documents.

From these Sentences, it can be seen that the Chinese individuals mentioned in these documents held the position as criminals who were unmercifully punished. Their lives were not valuable to the authorities, and they were brutally punished with some sent to be hanged as a consequence of theft.

4.11.2 From Testaments: "DEN VRY CHINEES" and "SLAVEN LODGIE"

In the sample, 12 out of 31 Testaments described their Chinese individuals as "DEN VRY CHINEES" (free Chinese). CJ 2608, 8 illustrates this: "TIEUNKIKO", described as a "VRY CHINEES" owned about five slaves he requested be emancipated after his death. Some of their names are mentioned and include: "JORIES VAN BATAVIA" and "AGAR VAN BATAVIA". Another example can be seen with "LIMKOKSAY" (CJ 2608, 47). The cover page states: "TESTAMENT VAN DEN VRY CHINEES LIMKOKSAY OP DEN 19 NOVEMB 1730".

²³ This event is also mentioned and confirmed by Hans Heese in his book *Reg en Onreg* (1994).

In the remaining 19 Testaments, the Chinese individuals that were mentioned were not described as “VRY” (free) but only “VAN DEN CHINEES”. In these 19 documents, 13 of them contain names paired with the words “SLAVEN LODGIE” (Slave Lodge) - possibly because they were recently released from the Lodge or are/were associated in some way.

There is a striking difference between the Chinese individuals mentioned in the Sentences and those in the Testaments. As seen in the Sentences, they are positioned as slaves and criminals who face harsh consequences for their actions. In the Testaments, they are depicted as ‘free’ enough to possess a testament, property and/or even slaves.

4.11.3 From the Death Notice: “UNKNOWN”

The Death Notice MOOC 6/9/8, 1475 that was used in the study did not provide much information. Out of the ten questions listed for analysis, only 50% could be answered; the rest were unknown. The only details that could be retrieved were as follows: Atim, born in China, died on the 5th of May 1836 at the age of 50 (approximately) at Somerset Hospital. The names of his parents, spouse and children are unknown and could not be contacted about his passing. The condition of his life is also unknown, and thus the kind of life he may have lived remains a mystery to the reader of the document.

4.11.4 From Insolvent Liquidation and Distribution Accounts (ILDAs):

“AZAMKO” and “APO”

The three ILDAs are associated to: “AZAMKO” (two: MOIC 2/110, 897 and MOIB 2/346, 97) and “APO” (one: MOIC 2/39, 325). As stated in (4.2.2.7), they belong to individuals who have become insolvent. To be in such a position, it means that Azamko and Apo could trade, possess and borrow goods on credit.

4.11.5 From the Memorials Received: Requests

From the 11 'Memorials Received' used in the study, seven were requests by Chinese individuals. As mentioned in (4.3.6), document CO 3961,35 (by²⁴ "AYEN AND AKONG") and CO 3880, 611 (by "IYOU") are both requests to remain in the colony. Document CO 3984, 18 on the other hand (by "ASSING") was for the opposite - to gain "PASSAGE TO HIS NATIVE COUNTRY". Document CO 3936, 32 shows "ASSHAM" requesting remission of a fine and CO 3996, 5 and CO 3996, 6, are both requests from "WILLIAM ASSUE" to "INCREASE THE RATE OF ALLOWANCE FOR MAINTENANCE OF AGED CHINESE". Such requests can be considered rather bold in contrast to the Sentences depicted in (4.12.1).

The two documents from the British Occupation, show that voyages to China were rather usual. From document BO 115, 150 (dated 1799), it can be seen how Chinese articles (such as "PORCELAINE") may have arrived at the Cape (as they could be requested to be 'delivered' to the colony). The latter document BO 114, 132 shows that another ship called "KROON PRINCE" travelled to China in the same year.

Documents from the Colonial Office show similar events, for example, in CO 3886, 30 (dated 1811), there was a "REQUEST TO SHIP ON BOARD THE PERSEVERANCE BOUND TO CHINA 36 ELEPHANT TEETH". Another, CO 3886, 21 (dated 1811), shows a request to export a quantity of cloves from the colony to China. Some requests were even more unusual and can be seen with document CO 3941, 36 where "WILLIAM ASSAN" "INQUIRES WHETHER THE MALAYS WERE AUTHORISED TO CONVERT FOR THEIR OWN USE PART OF THE BURYING GROUND FORMERLY USED BY THE CHINESE...".

4.11.6 Travelling and Trading Goods

From the section above, it can be seen that goods from China were sought through requests. Trading activities can also be seen with Notarial Protocols (NCD) and Papers Dispatched (GH). Some have already been mentioned, others include "ROELOF

²⁴ This term "by" does not mean that the persons mentioned wrote up (or created) the documents. It simply means that they verbally requested permission to do something.

JACOBUS DOZY”, the “HEAD OF CHINESE TRADE” in NCD 1/10, 283 (dated 1796)), a “CHINESE PERSON LIEM TAUNEA TRANSFERRING THE SLAVE FLORA OF BOUGIES TO THERESA OF CEYLON, A FREE WOMEN” from NCD 1/39, 243 (dated 1798) and a “REPORTING THE SEIZURE BY THE COLLECTOR OF CUSTOMS OF TWO CHINESE SHIPS” from GH 23/6, 29B (dated 1821).

4.12 Please Sign Here

Paintings or drawings representing Chinese subjects did not appear in any of the documents that were analysed. The closest visual element that exists are signatures, only present in Testaments. These markings come in the form of crosses (See Figure 11), characters suggestive of names (Figure 12) and full Chinese characters (Figure 13).

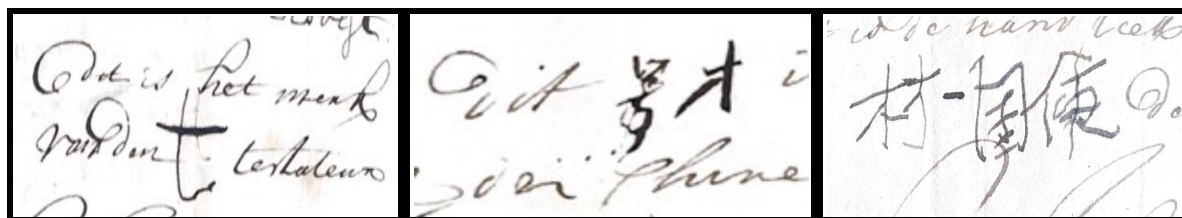


Figure 11: Left. A cross replacing a signature in Testament CJ 2609,1.

Figure 12: Middle. A signature left by “SOUTAKO” in Testament CJ 2620, 71.

Figure 13: Right. A signature left by “LIMKOKSAY” in Testament CJ 2608, 47.

It seems that crosses were used because some Chinese were not literate and thus marks were made to stand in place of a signature (See Figure 11 for the word “MERKS”).

When full Chinese characters are present, some come in pairs but most often in threes. Like that of the text written in English or Dutch/German, the legibility of these characters depends on the style of handwriting. These signatures are striking because they can stand as a ‘portrait’ of a Chinese individual from the Cape between 1654 and 1838.

4.13 Summary

The data presented in this chapter relate to documents' -type, -medium and format, -size, -number of pages, -physical condition, -mentioned dates, -language, -legibility, -mentioned names, -different representations of Chinese and -signatures. Subsequently, the next chapter will offer discussions on the findings presented here and respond to how digital curation (particularly digitisation of materials) can present, preserve, and share this part of history.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings, Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by addressing the study's research questions in relation to the reviewed literature and findings gathered from the customised document analysis form. In response to how the application of digital curation (particularly digitisation of documents) can be used in presenting, preserving and sharing the history of Chinese convicts, slaves, exiles and 'free blacks' at the Cape of Good Hope (1654-1838), the digital curation activities provided by DigitalNZ have been used as a guideline in doing so. Lastly, the study's limitations are presented along with possible future studies.

5.2 The amount of information that is readily available on this part of history in the Cape Archives

This section discusses the availability of the archival records housed at the Cape Archives in terms of *accessibility* and *findability* in order to answer my first research question. Availability refers to the degree to which the documents can be obtained, and findability refers to the degree to which the documents can be located.

Although this study was not directly aimed at quantifying the total number of available documents on this part of history (at the Cape Archives), its findings (under the delimitations set out by its sampling method) has provided some insight.

With the chosen terms queried, the KAB provided results for 102 documents; only containing a portion of what is physically housed by the archives. This reveals that there might be more available than what the database shows. As stated in (3.7) if the goal were to find all records on Chinese individuals at the Cape between the years 1654 and 1838, each *series* and *source* that relate to the period and Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles and 'free blacks', would need to be individually examined. This process of examination is rather difficult due to causes that surround the archives' subjective legacy and what Worden (2014:23) states as the process of enslavement: erasure and invisibilisation (Carter, 2006:219). Considering that colonial archives were created for administrative purposes and

that slaves (including convicts) were seen as a commodity; they were therefore recorded as such – this can be seen in the study's sample with how individuals are labelled (through creolization), named, and represented in the archival records.

The following factors have affected the documents findability and availability in the archive:

5.2.1 Creolization

Although creolization is a natural process that occurs when different cultures merge, slaves experienced it violently²⁵ through a strict labelling system laid out by colonialists. This inconsistency in naming from generation to generation reveal how difficult it may be to trace the history of individual slaves as the initial inheritance of names was a privilege only available to Europeans (for example BO 114, 132 - J. Aggersborg).

5.2.2 Spelling of Names

As shown in the data and as reported by Armstrong (1997:4), numerous variations of one name can be found. The colonialist's lack of attempt in recording the names correctly showed that it was not essential for their administration. For example, as seen with the two Testament's CJ 2608, 9 (1737) and CJ 2608,47 (1738) and: "LIEMKOEKSAY", a witness in the first could be the same person mentioned as "LIMKOKSAY", a testator in the second. Although this cannot be confirmed (as the spelling does not match), Armstrong's (1997:4) example with the name Onkonko proves the possibility of both being related. This form of 'erasure' affects researchers' attempts to map out a Chinese individual's cohesive and detailed personal history.

²⁵ This refers to Carter's (2006:219) concept of archives as a place of violence where those in power govern the appearance and access its "statements".

5.2.3 Social Status

As seen in the data, Chinese individuals with a higher social status (for example ‘free blacks’ - as seen with Testaments and ILDAs), have some personal information recorded, such as what they own and their circle of confidants. In comparison to Sentences, slaves and convicts are simply defined by the crime they committed and for which they will be, at most times, unmercifully punished (CJ 791, 24). This contrast in status shows the diverse social stratification that existed amongst Chinese individuals at the Cape.

With that being said, the total number of available paper-based documents at the Cape Archives is currently unknown, and a significant amount of future research is needed to obtain a more accurate number.

5.3 The Signals, Medium and Formats in which these historical records exist

This section will discuss archival records’ signal, medium and format (incl. its language, size and number of pages) in relation to accessibility. *Accessibility* refers to degree in which the documents can be obtained, read and understood.

5.3.1 Signal

The illegible handwriting that can be seen on some documents has negatively affected the contents’ accessibility. Drawing on an example, document CJ 2610,43 shows the KAB inaccurately transcribing the name “TIOJIENSAY” to “TERJIENSAN”. This not only prevents effective and accurate retrieval of documents from the database but also leads the reader to believe that the latter spelling is correct. With the few documents in print (for example CSC 1/1/1/8, 5), the text is clear and defined, and the ink has shown no trace of fading. This advancement in recording information shows how technology can benefit the long-term preservation of and access to physical documents.

5.3.2 Language

Because most of the documents are written in Dutch or German and no translation services are provided by the archives, users who cannot read the language are left to their own devices in decoding the content. Although this study did not translate any documents, doing so would provide better accessibility to the content. Unfortunately, in some cases, translation is not possible (for example CJ 2609, 31), as handwritten texts are entirely illegible, leaving no way in accessing the document's content.

5.3.3 Medium

Confirming that the colonial archive is a "paper world of the DEIC empire" (Worden, 2014:23), all documents used in the study were found to be paper-based. This is accurately conforming to the historical period; this was the most popular way of recording official information. As paper can be easily damaged (as per Morey, 2015:37), if not adequately preserved, it can significantly affect the accessibility of the physical document and content. As seen in this study, access to the document's content is not yet negatively influenced by its medium (paper quality) but may become more of a problem in the future as the paper deteriorates.

5.3.4 Format

Although all document types have their formats to which they adhere, those with cover pages (which contain summaries) and those which are well ordered (for example the ILDAs where writing is on the left and numbers on the right) are easier to decipher. Therefore, because most Testaments, one Record of Proceedings and one ILDA contain cover pages, their content is easier to understand than that of all the Sentences that do not.

5.3.5 Size & Number of Pages

If carried one at a time, the files in which the documents are bound are easy to handle. Throughout the study, there were times when only one document (for example CJ 792, 27)

was needed to be accessed from one large file; but this can become a struggle if many documents are requested from the archive to be carried to one's station for inspection.

5.4 The extent of which the records provide insight into the socio-political background of the time (1654 – 1838)

The documentation used in the study support Steedman's (1998:66) statement that archives share information on the identity of its people and its ruling powers. This is seen through the document types and departments from which they come.

5.4.1 Social Stratifications

Four out of the eight document types found in the archives can be used to exemplify the different social statuses Chinese individuals held at the colony. Below they have been discussed from 'invisible to more visible'.

First, in *Sentences*, Chinese individuals are positioned as slaves and convicts who were unmercifully punished for their crimes. Information on them is minimal, and all that is shared about them is the crime they committed, their sentence, name, sometimes their age and where they were from. This lack of information is explained by Worden (2014:23) as an act by colonists in delimiting "the presence of slaves in the paper world of the VOCempire".

Second, in *Testaments*, free Chinese individuals could draw up their wills in case of death. Information including the property they owned and to whom they would like to leave it is shared. With this document, these individuals' signatures are present, marking a more visible presence than that of slaves and convicts.

Third, *ILDAs* shows the highest status a Chinese individual could hold, which includes the opportunity to trade, possess and borrow goods on credit – an act entirely unimaginable for slaves.

Four, the documents surrounding trade depict Chinese goods as highly desirable (for example BO 115, 150 & GH 23/6, 29B). Being in an economy that was fuelled by trade, Chinese individuals were, as a consequence, also seen as a commodity. This is depicted in

van Riebeeck's request for skilled Chinese agriculturalists and fishermen to assist with the refreshment station in 1652 and subsequently, being a failed attempt; he instead sought for Chinese convicts and slaves (Leibbrandt, 1898:84).

Due to the period in which the documents were created (a time when slavery was a prominent aspect of society), the dehumanisation and anonymisation of Chinese slaves and convicts can be seen by how they have been depicted, associated and recorded in the documents. This act is precisely what Derrida (1995:12) and Stoler (2002:88) describe as an act of violence, with the powerful (colonists) exercising their political, social and cultural power over those without.

5.4.2 Political Developments

The department from which each document originates has illustrated the political developments within the Cape between the years 1654 and 1838. Encompassing the to and from transitions between the Dutch and British ruling, departments were renamed to suit the administration in power, for example, the CJ being replaced by the CSC during the British Occupation in 1828 (Breytenbach, 1945).

As seen with the MOOC, before the department arrived at the Cape, it was already an established sector in the Netherlands and Batavia (Breytenbach, 1945). Being an effective administrative body, it was extended to the Cape as the Company needed to record their increased influx of slaves (Armstrong, 1997:23).

This direct link between the archive and colonial expansion shows that the colonial archive is politically laden. As Worden (2014:23) describes, it is the powerful “controlling and constructing” presence of its citizens of the colony.

Being a time where profits were a product of subjugation and inhumanity (slavery), how the colonial archive has depicted South Africa's history is a version that only serves imperialism. Verifying Foucault's (1972:27) concept of the archive, it is therefore not a neutral space where *statements* speak for themselves but rather exist in a system that governs its appearance. Thus, using the Cape archival documents to better understand the

history can be seen as counter-intuitive. So, the process of reading along and against the “archival grain” has been used to maintain critical inquiry into the subject and investigating a mostly unrecognised part of the Company’s history of forced labour (Stoler, 2002:99; Worden, 2014:25).

5.5 The extent to which these historical records and information are at a risk of loss

The physical and epistemological loss of these documents goes hand-in-hand and is not mutually exclusive from each other. If the documents are physically damaged, the retrievability of their content will be threatened. On the other hand, if this part of history is not acknowledged, its physical embodiments (for example documents) will be largely neglected.

5.5.1 Physical Loss

Although most of the documents used in the study contain a binding defect – with edges that are crumbling and disintegrate when touched – all are free for the public to view and physically handle. With the oldest document being 295 years old and the youngest 182, their deterioration will only become more of an issue over time. The fading ink, while still legible will fade over time and should be preserved.

It is not evident why the BO and GH files have been rebound and not the others. Testaments like MOOC 7/1/3,92 are simply kept together with strings and cardboard sides and with NCD 1/11, what once used to be a hardcover file has become soft.

If the same preservation approach that was applied to the BO and GH files is used for the documents in frail condition (especially NCD 1/11 which has been “bitten” through), they should be rebounded with their sides taped to prevent further crumbling.

In retrospect, the archive has no special incentive to prevent the documents that were used in the study from suffering further damage. With this in mind, documents like these can easily become neglected. As seen with projects like the Thai Ahom Manuscripts, to address

similar preservation issues a successful approach has been to digitise paper-based records which are at risk of loss.

5.5.2 Epistemicide

Although there have been a few historians who have attempted to bring the history of Chinese convicts, slaves, exiles and 'free blacks' to the forefront, its stories are still largely left unsung.

One reason for this surrounds the documents' accessibility – as this study has mentioned, there is no dedicated repository that systematically compiles, preserves and disseminates this part of history and there are issues around locating and accessing what is in the archive. The collections on this part of history that currently exist (for example TANAP, TEPC, etc.), look at the general history of slavery at the Cape rather than specifically those of the Chinese, thus direct access to all these records are not readily available to the public.

Another reason surrounds the trauma from the archival violence and silence that was bestowed by imperialism (dehumanization – slavery) and (subsequently) the colonial archive (through lack of representation or misrepresentation – as seen with *Sentences* (Carter, 2006:219)).

Thus, if the archive, as Carter (2006:216) and Foote (1990:370) describe, has a significant influence on its "public memory", "groups and societies", the ideological loss that currently exists needs to be interrogated and refigured.

5.6 Considering Digital Curation Activities

5.6.1 Deciding to Digitise

On considering the activities needed in order to curate the records in question for authenticity, access and future use, following the process provided by DigitalNZ (n.d.h.), the first step of *defining and assessing the reasons to digitise* must be followed.

Although not all opportunities for increasing access, discovery and use of non-digital content need to lead to digitisation, there are potential benefits it can produce. To maintain

and enhance the public's access to the archival documents, the decision to create digital surrogates of the documents on Chinese slaves, convicts, exiles and 'free blacks' at the Cape Good Hope assists in addressing the physical and epistemological loss which will only be exacerbated by time (DigitalNZ, n.d.b.; Roberts, 2008:402-403). Benefits of digitising the collection include increasing the access and use of its content and preserving its original documents.

Access – these digital scans can be easily converted into various formats as required (for example pdf, tiff, jpeg, etc.) and copies can be made. Making digital copies avoids the original documents from additional handling as technicians are used to photographing them upon a visitor's request for a copy. Suppose the scans of the documents are made openly available online (like that of the *Ahom Manuscripts Project*, it will mean that they can be accessed from anywhere by anyone provided that they have the appropriate technologies (Morey, 2015:31). This will also help alleviate the public (for example SouthAfrican citizens and researchers) having to travel great distances to access the physical archives. Digital scans can also ensure long-term access to documents whose ink might fade or be eaten through by insects.

Use – As presented in the previous chapter, there are times when only one document is needed to be accessed from a thick file. Instead of paging through hundreds of documents, specific digital scans can be drawn up – avoiding unnecessary handling. Digital surrogates can also improve discoverability as the NAAIRS record can link directly to the digital object, or the object can be found via a search engine, depending on repository capabilities.

How digital surrogates are created and curated can facilitate new and different types of 'use' that are not possible with the original documents (DigitalNZ, n.d.b.). For example, as seen with the 3D model created for the Diaspora to Diorama collection, visual components for the study's sample can be similarly constructed (Shell, 2013:7).

Preservation – the creation of digital surrogates can prevent the original from further deterioration. Instead of allowing each visitor to access the original, digital scans can be provided to reduce the rate of physical handling and further damage (DAC, 2010:43).

5.6.2 Selecting What to Digitise

DigitalNZ (n.d.) suggested the second step would be to establish an appraisal and selection process where a clear criterion is set for the 'why and what documents will be digitised'. From the sample of this study, reasons to digitise include the above-mentioned need for improved *preservation, access and use*.

Since there is no existing, dedicated repository that systematically compiles the history of Chinese migration to South Africa, specifically to the Cape during the colonialist occupation, the interest to include all documents on Chinese slaves, convicts and 'free blacks' is quite a challenge.

Therefore, to make the digitisation more feasible, specific priorities could be set. This could include the decision to only digitise documents from one department (for example the CJ) or select a few that can stand in for each governmental department as, during the study, much repetition was found in the sample.

From the assessment of the documents' physical condition (See 4.7), the order of digitisation should begin with documents that are at higher risk to lower the risk of physical and epistemological loss.

With this being said, creating an all-encompassing collection would take the form of a rather complex and demanding project that will take a long time to complete. Allowing the project to take on a characteristic that is ever growing' and 'constantly evolving' may be the best way to begin.

5.6.3 Creating the Digital

After selecting what to digitise, preparations for creating digital surrogates will follow.

Since most of the handwritten documents used in the study show issues regarding legibility (for example CJ 2609, 31), the use of OCR for all documents will become a problem. This is because the majority of documents contain messy to illegible text that is already difficult for humans to decode. Although this method may be useful for the few documents in print

(for example CSC 1/1/1/8, 5), they do not capture the different font styles and any textual information provided by the documents.

Transcriptions were used with the TANAP and TEPC Project. This process is more time-consuming as it involves people manually typing what they have encoded in the document, into a computer program.

With the additional use of mark-up (for example HTML, XML, TEI etc.), more information can be included. For example, if the signatures present in each of the Testaments (see Figures 11- 13) are tagged, they will be able to be drawn up and compared alongside one another when queried on a database (DigitalNZ, n.d.c.)

Digital scanning is another option that is used for digitising the document. The method essentially takes a high-quality photograph of the document, capturing most of its visible physical and visual data. Like the *Ahom Manuscript Project*, if the documents are too delicate to handle, DSLR cameras should be used instead of flatbed scanners where the spine of books/files is compressed. When photographing the documents, each needs to be laid out on a standardised background (for example white sheet) alongside a colour correction template for post-production (Morey, 2015:33-34). In this study, digital scans are beneficial as they allow the user to make a first-hand interpretation of what the texts are about.

Because all of the documents used in the study are in the public domain, before digitisation, negotiations on how the public will use the digital surrogates will need to be made and recorded as proof (licensing). This will help avoid any use and reuse complications associated with the digital content.

The files in which these digital surrogates are created should be in an interoperable format (for example Open Document Format) to ensure long-term access to its content as it allows it to be easily opened on different software products (DigitalNZ, n.d.c.; Findlay, 2008:484). Since surrogates are not replacements, the originals will not be discarded after digitisation.

5.6.4 Describing the Digital: Metadata

This study has shown how a digital object's findability can be significantly affected by how it has been described. When successfully described, the description can prove to be more effective than that of the actual record (for example provided translation).

Much jargon and many acronyms are used on the KAB. These include abbreviations of the different document types (for example Notarial Protocols abbreviated to NCD), the department and offices to which they belong (for example NCD) and each document's volume and reference codes (for example 2/16, 31). This information, crucial in better understanding its content and access to the original, needs to be explained alongside a digital surrogate's presentation. Original terms should also be included in the digital object's metadata; for example, with the *Sentences*, *Vonnis* should be present as it is an alternative term used to describe it.

Like the *Ahom Manuscript Project* (Morey, 2015:46), this study considers the best metadata to be those that allow for the greatest usability of the content it is describing. To ensure that the original records are easily located, the digital surrogates should adhere to the same standards and regulations used by the Cape Archives to describe and reference the originals. For example, if the document is referred to by the archive as CJ 2609, 1, the digital archive should do the same.

As the KAB provided a minimal amount of information in their catalogue, the metadata created for the digital surrogates should include more, such as a detailed account of the document's provenance (for both the physical and digital) and full transcriptions.

To provide the best metadata for each document, those in Dutch/German and French need to be fully translated. Like that of the *Ahom Manuscript Project*, a team of experts should be sourced to do this. Also, assistance from experts on the historical period is needed as from there, the elements within the chosen metadata standard (for example Dublin Core) can be more confidently filled in (Morey, 2015:47).

Lastly, there are various spellings for one name (for example CJ 2608, 46). Each digital object's metadata should provide the user with all the variations presented in the original document.

5.6.5 Managing and Preserving the Digital

Due to the fact that curation of digital objects is an ongoing process, well-planned workflows (such as a sequence of activities, from the initiation to the ongoing preservation of the digital project) should be put in place from the very start (Cunningham 2007:3; DigitalNZ, n.d.e.). For example, when creating the digital surrogate, step-by-step instructions on how to create them will assist in standardising and regulating the process. Workflows can be applied to all digital curation activities mentioned by DigitalNZ and can exist alongside more than one workflow simultaneously (DigitalNZ, n.d.e.).

With the creation of workflows, a *digitisation and collection policy* should be put in place (DigitalNZ, n.d.e.). In the case of this study, a digitisation policy includes identifying short-to-long term plans for the project. For example, without a careful evaluation on the extent to which these original documents are at risk of loss and which of them are historically significant, it would not be impossible to take on the next step of providing an identified purpose for digitisation (DAC, 2010:). A collection policy will include what the collection is about, who can access the collection and who has overall responsibility (DigitalNZ, n.d.e.). As mentioned in (2.4), some policies already exist in the Western Cape; thus, the digitisation project proposed will need to take them into account.

Another factor to consider when managing and preserving a digital project includes funding arrangements – because digitisation is often an expensive endeavour, financial support is essential. It assists with operating costs (for example backing up data), acquiring digitisation equipment and other additional resources (for example dedicated staff, software) (DAC, 2010:14). Similarly, the archives' original documents exist under a management and preservation system developed by the archives; the digitised collection should have the same. Storage to house the digital objects needs to be arranged, and precautions to keep them safe (from damage and loss) need to be put in place. There are archivists, conservationists and curators within the Cape Archives, so there should also

be digital archivists, digital conservationists and digital curators for the digital collection. International preservation standards should also be drawn upon in managing the preservation of the digital collection, this could include the use of the OAIS reference model.

From the three kinds of the software suggested by DigitalNZ (n.d.e.) to be used in managing digital content, creating a digital repository will be best suited for the study's documents. It is very different from that of its 'counterpart' (KAB – a database), which contains essential elements of the original document. It will also include high-quality scans or photographs, transcriptions and translations of the original document. The inclusion of a relational database alongside the repository will help connect related digital documents.

Since the total number of documents available on this part of history is currently unknown, the collection may continue to grow over time. It is thus essential to leave room to add content as required.

5.6.6 Using and Reusing the Digital

Although all the documents used in the study are in the public domain, a license agreement with the WCARS needs to be arranged before the creation and dissemination of its digital surrogates.

Because the documents are free for the public to view and use, the digitised versions should also remain that way. Unfortunately, with universal access, Britz and Lor's (2004:218) concern on whether global rules and intellectual property can protect common heritage from becoming exclusive and private property should be taken seriously. In addressing this concern, terms and conditions of the digital object should be clearly stated to the digital archive user.

Lastly, the digital divide in the country is significant and should be considered and addressed during the creation of the digital project (Asogwa, 2011). For example, the interface of the digital archive should be easy to learn, use and understand. With this, free and regular workshops hosted at public libraries and archives will significantly assist the greater public in effectively accessing the digitised content.

5.7 Limitations of the Study

With most of the documents being written in Dutch or German and as the study did not undertake any formal translation efforts, access to its content was limited. Ideally, the suggested digital curation activities would be tested to ensure its reliability and applicability, however, the study remains only as a conceptual assignment (supported by existing literature and the analysis of documents) that is preliminary to the creation of an actual digital archive. The KAB limited my population as it only contained a portion of what the Cape Archive physically houses. Fortunately, my study was not negatively affected by COVID-19 and was completed in the expected time frame.

5.8 Future Studies

Future studies can extend this exploratory study to multiple national and international repositories like the Hague in the Netherlands. Also, comparative studies can be conducted in increasing the data that can be analysed.

As mentioned in the study population, other databases can assist in this process; this includes TANAP, TEPC and Diaspora to Diorama, which has made specific use of the documents housed at the Cape Archives. With more time, individual sources and files can be examined to trace down all records on the subject and period.

Although all the documents used in the study are paper-based, there are other intangible artefacts such as oral histories and landmarks (for example Chinese cemetery at the Tana Baru) that can be included in future studies as they can be seen to be rather crucial to the history as a whole.

Lastly, the act of finally digitising the documents can assist in providing a more hands-on and realistic outcome of what a digital product may entail and look like.

5.9 Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to conceptualise a digital curation project surrounding 62 archival records sourced from the Cape Town Archives Repository on the Chinese convicts, slaves, exiles and 'free blacks' from the Cape (1654-1838). Being an under-explored topic, existing

literature, projects, and models, as well as the data from analysing the archival documents, have been used in supporting the decisions and discussions presented above.

In conclusion, the mentioned digital curation activities, modelled from Digital New Zealand, are essential components that need to be considered during the conceptualisation, creation, management and dissemination of the digital project.

The first two, *Deciding to Digitise* and *Selecting What to Digitise* offers a foundation that supports the reasons to digitise the collection. This includes the fact the documents are historically significant as they provide information on the period's socio-political background and are at risk of physical and epistemological loss. Furthermore, digitising the collection may offer alternatives in deconstructing the colonial archives.

With the perspective that traditional archives are not neutral, digital archives should be seen as no different. How the digital objects are described and organised will inevitably reflect the project's vision and mission and the limitations set out by the software in which it exists. To disassemble the 'colonial power' embedded within the original documents, new and innovative ways of deconstructing the old and reconstructing the new should be interrogated.

My long-term goals are to create a real-life digital archive that houses all digitised records on Chinese individuals at the Cape (1654 to 1838) – which may take years to achieve. This study is a step towards addressing the research problem that there is no dedicated repository that compiles and preserves this part of history that is significant to the history of the making of South Africa.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Customised Document Analysis Form

| Document Analysis Sheet | |
|---|---|
| DOCUMENT NUMBER OR LETTER TITLE OF DOCUMENT DATE OF DOCUMENT TYPE OF DOCUMENT PRIMARY SOURCE SECONDARY SOURCE TERTIARY SOURCE | |
| Complete after reading the document: | |
| DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION (LANGUAGE, SIZE ETC.) | WHO OR WHAT WAS LEFT OUT? |
| | |
| WHAT IMPORTANT FACTS CAN I LEARN FROM THIS DOCUMENT? | WHAT DOES IT TELL US ABOUT THE TIME PERIOD? |
| | |
| | OVERALL, WHAT IS THE MAIN IDEA OF THE DOCUMENT? |
| | |
| WHY DOES THIS DOCUMENT EXIST? | WHAT INFERENCES CAN YOU MAKE FROM THIS DOCUMENT? |
| | |
| HOW DOES THIS DOCUMENT HELP ANSWER YOUR RESEARCH QUESTIONS? | |
| | |
| COMMENTS ON THE DOCUMENT'S PHYSICAL STATE | ANY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DATABASE RECORD AND ARCHIVAL RECORD? |
| | |
| INFORMATION GAINED AFTER USING INVENTORY ROOM OR HELP FROM THE ARCHIVIST ON DUTY | |
| INVENTORY | ARCHIVIST ON DUTY |
| | |

Appendix B. Document Based Questions (DBQ) Document Analysis Form

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SHEET

| | |
|---|--|
| | (NAME AND DATE) |
| Document number or letter _____ | Source (Where did the document come from?) |
| Title of Document (if present) | |
| Date of Document | |
| Primary Source <input type="checkbox"/> | Author of Document |
| Secondary Source <input type="checkbox"/> | Possible Author Bias |

After you read over the document, fill in the columns below.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
| What important facts can I learn from this document? | What inferences can I make from this document? | How can I use this document in my essay? |
| Overall, what is the main idea of the document? | Analytical Category: | |

Appendix C. The National Archives of the United States Document Analysis Form

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. | <p>TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/> Newspaper</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Map</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Advertisement</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/> Letter</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Telegram</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Congressional Record</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/> Patent</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Press Release</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Census Report</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="radio"/> Memorandum</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Report</td> <td><input type="radio"/> Other</td> </tr> </table> | <input type="radio"/> Newspaper | <input type="radio"/> Map | <input type="radio"/> Advertisement | <input type="radio"/> Letter | <input type="radio"/> Telegram | <input type="radio"/> Congressional Record | <input type="radio"/> Patent | <input type="radio"/> Press Release | <input type="radio"/> Census Report | <input type="radio"/> Memorandum | <input type="radio"/> Report | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| <input type="radio"/> Newspaper | <input type="radio"/> Map | <input type="radio"/> Advertisement | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Letter | <input type="radio"/> Telegram | <input type="radio"/> Congressional Record | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Patent | <input type="radio"/> Press Release | <input type="radio"/> Census Report | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="radio"/> Memorandum | <input type="radio"/> Report | <input type="radio"/> Other | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | <p>UNIQUE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Interesting Letterhead</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Notations</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Typed</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Seals</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting Letterhead | <input type="checkbox"/> Notations | <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten | <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp | <input type="checkbox"/> Typed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Seals | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting Letterhead | <input type="checkbox"/> Notations | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten | <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Typed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seals | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | <p>DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT:</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | <p>AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT:</p> <p>POSITION (TITLE):</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | <p>FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | <p>DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.) Limit response for each question to 3 lines of text</p> <p>A. List three things the author said that you think are important:</p> <p>B. Why do you think this document was written?</p> <p>C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.</p> <p>D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written.</p> <p>E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix D. Combination reference for each of the 62 documents used in the study

| TYPE OF DOCUMENT | SOURCE CODE | VOLUME NO. | REFERENCE NO. | NO. OF TIMES SAMPLED |
|------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|----------------------|
| SENTENCES | CJ | 784 | 34 | 1 |
| | CJ | 785 | 30 | 1 |
| | CJ | 785 | 36 | 1 |
| | CJ | 792 | 24 | 4 |
| | CJ | 792 | 27 | 1 |
| | | | | 8 |
| TESTAMENTS | CJ | 2604 | 11 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2604 | 32 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2607 | 5 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2607 | 15 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2607 | 20 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2607 | 22 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2607 | 45 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2608 | 8 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2608 | 9 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2608 | 33 | 1 |
| | CJ | 2608 | 43 | 1 |

| | | | |
|-------|-------|----|---|
| CJ | 2608 | 46 | 1 |
| CJ | 2608 | 47 | 1 |
| CJ | 2609 | 1 | 1 |
| CJ | 2609 | 3 | 1 |
| CJ | 2609 | 31 | 1 |
| CJ | 2609 | 32 | 1 |
| CJ | 2609 | 51 | 1 |
| CJ | 2610 | 40 | 1 |
| CJ | 2610 | 43 | 1 |
| CJ | 2610 | 45 | 1 |
| CJ | 2617 | 6 | 1 |
| CJ | 2617 | 7 | 1 |
| CJ | 2617 | 9 | 1 |
| CJ | 2620 | 52 | 1 |
| CJ | 2620 | 71 | 1 |
| CJ | 2658 | 22 | 1 |
| CJ | 2658 | 38 | 1 |
| MOOC | 7/1/3 | 92 | 1 |
| 1_STB | 18/25 | 28 | 1 |
| 1_STB | 18/27 | 28 | 1 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|----|------|-----|-----------|
| MEMORIALS RECEIVED | CO | 3880 | 611 | 1 |
| | CO | 3886 | 21 | 1 |
| | CO | 3886 | 30 | 1 |
| | CO | 3936 | 32 | 1 |
| | CO | 3941 | 36 | 1 |
| | CO | 3961 | 35 | 1 |
| | CO | 3984 | 18 | 1 |
| | CO | 3996 | 5 | 1 |
| | CO | 3996 | 6 | 1 |
| | BO | 115 | 150 | 1 |
| | BO | 114 | 132 | 1 |
| | | | | 11 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|------|-----|----------|
| NOTARIAL PROTOCOLS | NCD | 1/10 | 283 | 1 |
| | NCD | 1/11 | 492 | 1 |
| | NCD | 1/18 | 223 | 1 |
| | NCD | 1/39 | 243 | 1 |
| | NCD | 2/16 | 31 | 1 |
| | | | | 5 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------|------------------------|-----------|
| PAPERS DISPATCH | GH | 23/1 | 20 | 1 |
| | GH | 23/6 | 29B | 1 |
| | | | | 2 |
| DEATH NOTICE | MOOC | 6/9/8 | 1475 | 1 |
| INSOLVENT LIQUIDATION | MOIB | 2/346 | 97 | 1 |
| AND DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNTS | MOIC | 2/39 | 325 | 1 |
| | MOIC | 2/110 | 897 | 1 |
| | | | | 3 |
| RECORD OF PROCEEDING | CSC | 1/1/1/8 | 5 | 1 |
| | | | GRAND TOTAL | 62 |