

**Unpacking coloniality in Zulu Cultural collections at the
Wits Art Museum (WAM)**

By

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Declaration

I declare that this dissertation titled *Unpacking coloniality in Zulu Cultural collections at the Wits Art Museum (WAM)* is my unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts by Research and Coursework at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination by any other University.



Roy Muroyi

Signed on the 17th of April 2020

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all members of the community who are in positions of power who give under privileged black children a chance in life. You give us hope and the courage to face life head-on.

Abstract

This research looks into the state of museums episteme in South Africa through an analysis of Zulu collections at the Wits Art Museum. It compares the museum's interpretation of these collections to the ones of Zulu informants who reside at the Kwa-Mazibuko hostel in Katlehong. In this research report I make use of people experiences to interpret my findings/data. Using Archival research and interviews, the researcher finds that there is a significant difference in the difference and naming of some of the objects under analysis. The data included electronic data collected from the WAM electronic database as well as written records that show the different interpretations subscribed to the collections by the museum. This research is aimed at understanding the nature of colonial interpretations of collections housed at the WAM museum. This was done by way of a comparative analysis of WAM's interpretation of the collections vis-à-vis interpretations submitted by the contemporary Zulu society residing at Kwa- Mazibuko Hostel in Katlehong, Gauteng. The research concludes with a call to decolonize the museum space in South Africa. This research presents an argument that the collections presented and interpreted at WAM reproduce colonial-era narratives and depictions of Zulu people. Furthermore, the results of the study indicate the need for an appropriate and effective system of interpretation for the specific community context which encourages people— both local and foreign — to be aware of the community's importance. As a result of their awareness, the museum would increasingly cherish their community and work for the sustainable development of the community in collaboration with the local peoples. The discussions focused primarily on personal interpretation.

Glossary of terms

In this dissertation I make use of the following terms:

Local community: The predecessors of the community that made the cultural objects in question (Kwa-Mazibuko community).

Cultural heritage: Monuments, groups of buildings and sites (Shalaginova, 2012, p.5).

Colonial Discourse: Create the colonized on the basis of racial origin as a community of degenerate forms, in order to justify conquest and develop systems of administration and instruction (Bhabha, 1994:70).

Coloniality: Coloniality is what colonialism continues to suffer (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015). Therefore, coloniality attempts to clarify the persistence of power relations between those who are privileged and disadvantaged by the historical mechanisms of dispossession, enslavement, appropriation and extraction that are fundamental to the emergence of the modern world (Bhabha et al. 2018).

Decolonisation: It refers to the academic, political, economic and social work of restoring land and life after the end of the historical colonial era (Ashcroft 2006).

Heritage Interpretation: Is generally regarded as a method of communication or education aimed at revealing meanings and linking people to places and artifacts of natural and cultural heritage, such as parks, museums, zoos and other sites (Beck & Cable, 2011; Tilden, 1977). Heritage interpretation is any communication mechanism intended to expose the significance and relationships of cultural and natural heritage to the public through the intervention of an object, an artifact, a landscape or a location.

Intersectionality Theory: Intersectionality allows one to think through the different axis of oppression and privilege and how these influence different identities. Intersectionality acknowledges that race, class and gender among other, do not operate as unitary elements, but rather, reciprocate and co-construct one another (Collins, 2015).

Critical Diversity Literacy: CDL is a theoretical tool which was formulated by Melissa Steyn (2015) and it speaks to how we can read how power operates in society (Steyn, 2015).

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Chapter One: Introduction

The project examined the representations of Zulu cultural collections at the Wits Art Museum (WAM). In addition to the WAM, some of the other museums housing such collections include the KwaZulu Cultural Museum is situated in Ondini, near Ulundi, in the amakhosi Valley, the Valley of the Zulu Kings – in the KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa. In the same province, there is the Vukani Zulu Cultural Museum, Mthonjaneni Zulu historical museum and the Empangeni Art and Cultural Museum showcasing an impressive array of objects representing the Nguni-speaking peoples of South-East Africa¹. Away from the province, there are other museums such as Iziko Museum, Ditsong Museum and even the Wits Art Museum that also showcases Zulu cultural objects. In the entire African continent, there is also a large number of museums showcasing Zulu Cultural objects. Some of these collections are also found in Western Museums². For example, nearly a hundred Zulu objects were collected by the Australian Museum throughout the epic Anglo-Zulu War of 1870 in which the Zulu bravely defended their independence from British colonial forces, these objects were found (see Whitelaw 1998; Barta & Silverman, 1997)

Historical monuments have built most of the local history museum in KwaZulu-Natal, making them what Meltzer called an ' ideotechnical ' artifact (Meltzer 1989, p.114). Because of their historical proximity, they have been distorted to become political spaces in which concepts of personality, representation, and community are claimed, and therefore become sites of conflict where the hegemonic ' ideology ' is still prevailing (Dlamuka 2003, p.1). These museums disseminate selected information and explain further how museums play a major role in the building of information. The form of information that is generated isn't neutral (Dlamuka 2003 p.1).

Zulu cultural collections have shown the importance of arts and crafts within traditional Zulu communities, or something to that effect. The Zulu women are best known for their beadwork

¹ Battlefield route (2020). Mthonjaneni Zulu Historical Museum. Retrieved from <https://www.battlefieldsroute.co.za/place/mthonjaneni-zulu-historical-museum/>

² Umlalazi Tourism Association (2016). Visit Zulu Land. Retrieved from <https://www.visitzululand.co.za/index.php/activities/museums-activities>

and basket making, while men are known for their wood carvings and the animal skin items they make. In the realm of oral traditions, beadwork technology is a type of intercultural visual language that textualizes geometric patterns into ideas that are transmitted and shared in a vivid and meaningful manner. For the Zulu people, this oral, naturalistic system of visual representations embodies a mode of transmission of knowledge, an embodiment of thinking and belief system derived from the experiences of ancestors over many centuries (Chahine and Kinuthia 2013 p.14-15). According to Barta and Silverman (1997), it would seem there is some mathematical practice and analysis are holistically embedded in the beading process.

Narratives associated with different bead ornamentations and designs may vary from daily activities such as making embroidered and beaded covers for dishes to keep the flies away, to more nuanced problems dealing with fertility (e.g. fertility dolls), human identity, and the struggle to live (Chahine and Kinuthia 2013). There are varied and interesting narrative and bead pattern associations which flourish in South Africa. Zulu bead geometric bricolage imitates personal messages and narratives in different ways and captures metaphors that transcend time in a visuoperceptual form and embody knowledge. As such, the Zulu bead patterns serve as a concretized information system with inherent algorithmic and geometric processes that generate and distribute information pieces in a more detailed and highly contextualized manner (Chahine and Kinuthia 2013 p.16).

For a long time, Zulu women residing in rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa prepared clay and hand made ceramic pots using a coiling process. Poetry was a significant art form among the Zulu for a long time. Archeological evidence found in rock shelters indicates, according to Gavin Whitelaw, that the oldest pottery in KwaZulu-Natal dates from 150BC to 300AD and was made by hunter-gatherers. Historically, the expertise required to make ceramics has been passed from mother to daughter or mother-in-law to daughter-in-law and has been preserved as a skill regulated by specialist families. Some ceramists today have learned their art from school or tertiary educational institutions and it is also an area that is no longer solely dominated by women (Buss 2018 p.6).

Ceramic vessels were designed and made for use in *utshwala* (sorghum beer) and *amasi* (sour milk) beverages, transports, and brews. The separate beer manufacturing and drinking vessels are; *imbiza*, *uphiso*, *iphangela*, *ukhamba*, and *amancishane*. In the *imbiza*, beer is typically

brewed, big (often up to a meter high), unblackened, broad mouthed pots that can accommodate up to fifty liters of liquid. While not blackened, they are frequently smeared on the exterior walls with cattle dung (Buss 2018 p.8). Buss's work demonstrates that Zulu ceramics is not only a practical matter of domestic duties but can also function in communion with the sacred, with buyers and in a museum. Buss proposes a biography of these vessels. This suggests that Zulu ceramics have a history or background that makes sense as they have been in KwaZulu-Natal since 150 BC. She also notes that Zulu ceramics are only subject to the influences of their makers and maintainers.

Critical Diversity Studies have called attention to the theoretical concept of intersectionality to consider multiple intersecting identities and to study them as complex and mutually reinforcing or contradicting processes (Holvino, 2010). Similarly, there are deep intersectional historical problems with the way artifacts and other cultural objects are interpreted in African museums. Voices of the local communities that made the cultural objects that are in the care of the museums are not allowed to interpret these objects. Arinze, (1999) points out to poverty among African societies and the largely poor African economies provide an uncomfortable setting within which archaeology is practiced in Africa, thereby hindering any chances of the local community playing a role in the interpretation of collections.

These factors all mean that Western countries have a strong archaeological voice and presence in the interpretation of African archaeological materials. South Africa's strong historical background has also been the major hindrance to African communities' voices being represented in the museum. Arinze further notes that museums were run and served the rich and the affluent, resulting in the uneducated and the less fortunate to visit the museum becoming uninspiring. Museums, therefore, became a "rich people's club" and were not accessible to the poor. Museums were seen by the general public as a place where discarded artifacts or materials were kept; this negative understanding of what museums are has unfortunately continued to hinder their creation in most countries (Arinze, 1991). This was largely because the voices of the poor were not heard in the museums. It also did not bring any economic benefit to the poor. As centers for the production of knowledge, museums have become very critical and need to redefine their goals, aims, roles and strategies to reflect the demands of the new postcolonial, multicultural and changing world (Arinze 1999; Boast 2011).

The history of colonialism cannot be forgotten as it is the cause of the current conditions. According to Damousi (2002), history is revised and is dynamic, it determines how we situate ourselves in the present and also highlights what we choose to forget and what we disavow. Damousi explains that history is not neutral, it is not a place of refuge or simple nostalgia - it is complex and our present conditions affect how we understand history because “we remake our past by remembering and forgetting” (Damousi 2002, p.100). The colonial burden is still being carried by African communities across the continent, and especially in South Africa where white minority rule was only officially dismantled in 1994.

The post-colonial, South Africa has had the option to avoid racial fire and build up the components of a majority rule request respected by numerous individuals on the planet. The foundation of these efforts should, however, be rooted in the understanding and need to correct the inequalities that were brought about by this history. As Damousi argues,

History is fundamental to understanding, shaping, and making meaning of contemporary life... it is the very way in which we make sense of ourselves and the world and our culture in the present moment (Damousi 2002, p.100).

With the successful implementation of a compulsory equal rights scheme in 1994, as South Africa moves actively towards a combination of progressive government and social justice, the inheritance of the apartheid will need a combined effort from all sectors of life to overcome. Such integration of efforts to fight the inheritance of apartheid would need to touch on areas of the South African culture and specifically heritage. It is worth noting that from many points of view, the topic of heritage as a feature of the larger national question is not a matter restricted to the community of South Africa alone. It is, without a doubt, an important question for all of Africa's post-colonial governments. Faced with a historical past of colonialism, a political period of separation, the African continent is in dire need of strong political messages to decolonize social spaces. There is a need for African museums to also further the African agenda through their displays and interpretations today.

1. The Research problem

Many intangible elements of African heritage such as the Zulu collections have been lost due to the marginalization of the local communities in the (re)construction of African narratives in most South African heritage spaces. These intangible elements include myths and (dis)beliefs of local communities, which are often side-lined as illegitimate epistemologies. On the other hand, tangible elements such as artifacts and in situ sites are kept in westernized institutions such as museums, art galleries or commercialized heritage sites. Evidence of this trend can be found in Frey and Meier's (2006) assertion that museum services are influenced by the concept of demand and supply. In his seminar presentation, *Aspects of 'Representation' and the Making of Historical Discourse in Local History Museums* (2003), Mxolosi Dlamuka notes that museums have stories to tell, they represent the culture they do live in. Museums do so with their strong expositions and narrative shows. They help to represent the past and present. Museums also include the economic, financial, and political business of negotiating and assessing interest and have economic, financial, and political consequences at all times.

Dlamuka further narrows down the issue from being a universal issue to specific museums in Kwa-Zulu- Natal and their operation. He notes that historical monuments have built most of the local history museum in KwaZulu-Natal, making them what Meltzer called an 'ideotechnical' artifact. Because of their historical association, they have been distorted to become political platforms in which concepts of identity, representation and community are claimed, and thereby become sites of conflict where the hegemonic 'ideology' is still prevailing. They help to disseminate selected information play a major role in the building of information. He further explains that the form of information that is generated isn't neutral, information that museums create cannot be reduced to the realm of mere sense since museums work in a setting situated historically and politically. The problem of whose voices are favored and oppressed in the process of information building in museums and the essence of the power structures involved in the process will often arise when analyzing the exhibition Dlamuka (2003p.1)

There are certain privileges associated with whiteness in our society and these privileges cannot be extended to black people. Such privilege includes the right to interpret collections in a museum institution like the Wits Art Museum for example. It is therefore the objective of this research that it interrogates the possibility of any differences in interpretation between the Zulu

collections object interpretation in the WAM database and the interpretations that are given by the Kwa-Mazibuko community.. The purpose of this research is to explore power dynamics that exists in the interpretation of collections in the museum institution.

Through centering the history of black people on evolution, for example, mainstream heritage accounts imply that black people are still in the process of evolving toward civilisation, thus justifying the processes of colonialism, exploitation ,and plunder (see Mzite, 2018). Westerners regarded colonizing Africa as their moral duty hence in the writings of Rudyard Kipling, it was the white man's burden, "to dominate Africans until a time they could be sufficiently and ably civilized to take their place in the world." Because of this problem, there is a need to bring the marginalised communities from the periphery to the centre of African heritage interpretation through what Alcoff et al (2006) and Smith (2013) term 'researching with the people'. This will also work in safeguarding the intangible aspects of heritage, Deacon et al (2004) suggests that communities should be allowed and encouraged to practice their traditions as a way bringing them to the centre of heritage interpretation and preservation.

They further note that heritage preserves its meaning by success or use only. Consequently, governments need to transfer greater responsibility for heritage protection to the groups who use, practice or own this heritage. It also underscores the need for heritage experts to collaborate with communities (Deacon et al 2004 p.2-3)

1.2 Research questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

- What are the ascribed uses, functions and makeup of the objects in the WAM database vis-à-vis the uses, functions, and makeup of the same objects as given by the Kwa-Mazibuko community?
- What are the different power relations that exist in the interpretation of collections at WAM??

Such an undertaking enables the researcher to be able to locate the disparities, similarities, and gaps that emerge as a result of the accommodation of Zulu collections in a museum that is not curated by actual Zulu people. The hope is that such an undertaking will help think through what

the distancing between Zulu collections and urban Zulu communities might mean for the people. Overall, the research considers alternative praxis for museums after interacting with respondents.

1.3 Structure of the research report

The first Chapter has introduced the research and the background to the current study. Chapter Two offers an outline of the theoretical framework that the researcher drew from. Chapter Three which holds the literature review helps play out ideas against each other to identify research gaps and also amplify existing research. Chapter Four works on the methodology of the research. In Chapter Five, I present the data and discuss findings followed by a concluding section in Chapter Six.

Chapter Two: Theoretical framework

This section lays out the theoretical perspectives that are employed throughout the study. According to Pikirayi (2015), theoretical discussions in Africa have since the early 1990s focused on what archeological theory's role is in communities. According to Pikirayi, the problem is whether the theory could apply to Africa's archeology and, if so, what path it would take? He further asks that while common sense alone is not sufficient to understand the archaeological practice, theory helps us to describe it, but whose theory we use? (Pikirayi 2015 p.533). These are important questions because to theorise about a discipline, science or social practice is to assume a privileged position that other local communities cannot afford to take in response to the same discipline. In evaluating current theoretical and practical approaches to archeology in Africa and in trying to predict the future course of the discipline, Pikirayi notes that it is important to consider the various interpretative frameworks used by archeologists to understand the continent's archeological record and, by extension, the specific disciplinary identities adopted and developed by archeology. (Pikirai 2015, p.531). In doing this, it is also important to bring in the alternative, 'non-archeological' theories into the fold.

"One of the critiques of modern archaeology is that it is seeking to universalize. In contemporary archeology, new approaches challenge this universalism by finding comparative generalizations that examine the complexity of local contexts" (Pikirai 2015, p.532). This,

therefore cannot be specific to the African context. This section first states the de-colonial theory, followed by Critical Diversity Literacy and last, intersectionality theory. The section does not view each theory in isolation but acknowledges the overlap of all three theories.

2.1 De-colonial Theory

According to Fontein (2016), historical and archaeological discourses are Eurocentric because they are based on imported conceptualisations of the past and time which were used to colonise others. Archaeology has colonial origins, and it is this colonial burden that this research grapples with. These colonial origins still manifest themselves in African museums today through Eurocentric interpretations of archaeological collections “Critics of archeological practice have set new agendas in recent years that are politically conscious of, sensitive to and by the interests of declining communities” (Pikirai 2015, p. 535). However, this is not enough because according to Wintle (2013) the display of African material cultures by Europeans, or in general, the cultures of others, have long been associated with the formation of empires.

That said, this research adopts de-colonial theory as a framework through which to conceptualize colonial power relations that exist in South Africa museums’ knowledge systems. In this research the decolonial theory will be used to understand the role of the local community (Kwa-Mazibuko Community) in the interpretation of Zulu collections at WAM. It seeks to understand if they have been given a voice to interpret some of these collections through the different meanings they give to the collections presented to them vis-à-vis the interpretations in the museum. This is all in a context where museums and art galleries coincided with the emergence of colonialism and imperialism (Smith 2005). Maldonado-Torres (2011, p. 2) posits that the de-colonial turn does not refer to a single theoretical school. “It rather points to a family of diverse positions sharing a view of coloniality as a fundamental problem in modern (as well as postmodern and information) age, and of decolonization or de-coloniality as a critical task that remains unfinished. Seeing that the production of knowledge in Latin America and Africa has long been subject to colonial and imperial designs, to geopolitics that universalize European thought as scientific truths and subordinate and invisibilize other epistemes” (Walsh 2007, p. 224) this theoretical position exposes the need to inquire into the colonial state of modern-day institutions such as museums.

Thus, the present research approaches the state of museums in South Africa as sites in urgent need of decolonisation. Through close reference to literature on the relationship between colonialism and museums, the theory of de-coloniality helps one flesh out the complexities of race, class, and gender enmeshed in museum representations. Acknowledging these intersections is important because for scholars like Clover and Sanford (2016) public museums in Canada and the United Kingdom serve as a great example of spaces that have harboured elitism, colonialism and patriarchy through stories and artefacts acquired through 'authorised and unauthorised means by men of wealth and power' (Malt 2006, p. 122). Such an approach can help build on museum epistemologies that expose and, eventually liberate museum spaces from male, middle-class, western centred ideas. The exercise of 'liberation of epistemologies' is vital and central to the project of decolonisation (Maldonado-Torres 2011). This is also because gender, social, cultural and epistemological power were, historically, closely tied in their pedagogic processes (Clover and Sanford, 2016) of othering.

Most of these othering processes were not isolated, but mutually exclusive. Hence identifying the representation of all three nexuses of race, class, and gender in WAM's Zulu collections is critical to the exercise of a de-colonial project. This is because all these three (and other) axis of oppression were crucial to colonialism and are still crucial to coloniality. The distinction between the two is important because colonialism was the actual, active process of invading and ruling over colonies, while coloniality constitutes systems and structure which remained after colonialism was officially ended (Fanon, 1961). Mapping coloniality is important because it helps unearth the myth of 'post-colonialism'.

This is because for others, the word "post-colonial was the new catchall to confuse the intellectual eye" (Jacoby 1995, p. 30). It is clear that "political freedom did not automatically mean complete emancipation of the colonized from colonial ideals, for in many cases these continued after freedom along with political, economic and cultural structures" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1998, p. 64). In its political context the postcolonial project was interpreted as a kind of active resistance to the new forms of colonialism, commonly conceived as neo-colonialism, a term first coined in 1965 by Ghanaian independence leader Kwame Nkrumah. To some, a postcolonial critique has been central to the notion of 'colonial discourse' (Loomba 1998, p. 38; Young 2001, p. 383–394). The concept of colonial discourse is directly connected to the

notion of discourse by Foucault. Edward Said a professor of literature at the University of Colombia in *Orientalising the Orient* (1978) uses Orientalism as a framework used to describe relations between the West and the East. The framework shows how orientalism came about as an imperial tool to create stereotypes and tensions between the West and the East. Said's work fits well into the current post-colonial discourses. It also shows how power dynamics between the West and the East shapes the production of knowledge. Said proposes the use of Michel Foucault's notion of dialogue in *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1969) and in *Discipline and Punish* (1975) to identify Orientalism (Said 1978, p. 3).

Moro-Abadía (2006) a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Toronto Archaeology department notes that discourse is an object of knowledge set up by a structure of truth and governed by power-force relations. It imposes basic information, creates definitions and defines the position of the subject. He further notes Sexuality, for example, is the 'discourse' that since the 18th century has been organizing the sexual lives of Western societies. It is a 'true area' about sex, identifying subjects through structures of awareness and belief (the 'pervert,' the 'homosexual,' etc.) and creating ideas and experiences. With Foucault's idea in mind, Said further defines orientalism as a colonial discourse;

Is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but is produced and existed in an uneven exchange with different kinds of power, shaped to some extent by exchange with political power (as with a colonial or imperial establishment), intellectual power (as with prevailing science such as comparative linguistics or anatomy, or any of modern political science) (1978, p. 12).

According to Said, colonial discourse can be described as an apparatus of Western power under colonial control which produces knowledge about non-Western cultures. The colonial discourse seeks to justify Western dominance of colonized populations by influencing what is understood and the way it is understood. Within this sense, the relation between power and knowledge is the key to understanding the theory of colonial discourse (Moro-Abidia 2006 p.6)

Through much of the twentieth century, the history of archaeology was an eloquent example of "colonial debate." In focusing on a common picture of archaeologist and archeological practice, archeological historians have helped legitimize Western colonial domination and interactions with the rest. Archeology became a scientific discipline in the late 19th century (Moro-Abidia 2006 p.7)

The development of archeological science was related to scientific expeditions sponsored by Western governments and commercial organizations, the opening of museums such as the Louvre or the British Museum and the formation of Western institutions whose main aim was to rule conquered countries. Some examples demonstrate the links between colonialism, imperialism, and archaeology. Archeological discourse in North America served to validate racial stereotypes that argued that indigenous Americans were unable to evolve significantly in culture. Arguing that native American cultures had remained stagnant since ancient times (and, therefore, that Indians could not adapt to a European way of life), eighteenth-century archaeologists justified European colonization (Moro-Abadía 2006: 11)

As Clover and Sanford (2016, p.128) state in great detail, "Most museum knowledge and narratives have historically served to provide a sense of comfort and enhance the lives of those already initiated and educated, and many would argue that this elitist and exclusionary vision of museums persists today." De-coloniality, therefore, comes into play by understanding these systems, not as past, but as current and active. Steyn 2015) in her CDL acknowledges racism as a problem of the present, not the past. This criterion of CDL opposes neo-liberalisation's tendency to romanticize democracy while plastering past injustices such as genocide, epistemicides and apartheid.

De-colonial theory rejects westernised and mainstream accounts of heritage through its realisation of the state of affairs as laden with coloniality. A theory of de-coloniality can be used to redress what Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2010) calls "epistemicide" which is the extermination of knowing and knowledge. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni:

De-coloniality is not only a long-standing political and epistemological movement aimed at the liberation of (ex-) colonized peoples from global coloniality but also a way of thinking, knowing, and doing. It is part of

marginalized but persistent movements that have merged from the struggles against slave trade, imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, neo-colonialism and underdevelopment as constituent negative elements of Euro-North American-centric modernity (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015, p. 1).

De-coloniality also questions the legitimacy of knowledge produced by a few people (Western Europe) for the whole world (see Grosfoguel, 2013). ‘How did they monopolize the authority of world knowledge?’ (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 74) is among the other researchers have previously asked. Overall, de-colonial theory addresses the ‘epistemicide’ of traditional and local Zulu knowledge which occurred through the mediation of artefacts and collections housed in museums such as WAM.

2.2 Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL)

Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) is also used as a theoretical leaning for this research. The rationale behind the adoption of CDL is Clover and Sanford’s (2016) perception of museums as *authoritative* in their representations of culture and history. They are also preeminent sites of hegemony (Kosasa, 2004). There is therefore a need to put them in a position of theoretical critique, in order to unmask their hegemonic position and complicity in the establishment of societal norms and relations. The theoretical lenses of CDL is used to unmask the power relations embodied in the politics of WAM’s representation of Zulu culture.

CDL is a theoretical tool which was formulated by Melissa Steyn (2015) and it speaks to how we can read how power operates in society (Steyn, 2015). CDL is a reading practice (Steyn, 2015). Using CDL one can be able to read power dynamics at play in institutions and texts (Steyn, 2015). Using the tool, we can read power relations like one reads a text (2015). From the ten of the CDL criteria to be used for this research are four. These are: Understanding the role of power in constructing differences that make a difference; an understanding of unequal symbolic and material value that comes with racial privileges; a definition of oppressive systems such as racism as current social problems and not simply legacies of the past and the ability to read and interpret coded hegemonic practices (Steyn, 2015).

In the first criterion adopted for this research, power is conceptualized as something present at the centre of how certain differences are constructed and made to make a difference. Unlike

other framings of diversity and difference that divorce people from the power relations in society (Steyn, 2015) CDL acknowledges the role that structural and material factors plays in the everyday politics of group representation. What is considered natural is actually not, but a construction of those who have authority to speak? For example, people in charge of museums have the power to determine how particular histories are constructed and imagined. Clover and Sanford (2016, p. 127) argue that in museums, “only certain stories are told and others omitted – some artworks, knowledge and practices are emphasised while others are ignored or misrepresented.’ Hence the first criterion of CDL allows one to critique WAM’s construction of Zulu heritage. It helps one to determine why and how particular histories come to be at the fore, the background, the right, centre or the left, while others are completely omitted.

Power constructs binaries and one is valorised above the other (Steyn, 2015). Hence, CDL binaries that are created by white narratives of Zulu history can be exposed. Through an understanding of the unequal symbolic and material value that comes with racial privileges (Steyn, 2015), CDL correlates to de-coloniality. This is because CDL encourages reading how historically formed positions such as whiteness influence which knowledge is considered legitimate at the expense of another. This is in essence the politics of memory and memorialisation. According to Steyn (2015, p. 384) ‘Struggles of memory and forgetting are about present social arrangements, as groups jostle for relative advantage’ (Steyn: 2015, p. 384). Hence, this view enables one to see how memory is central to power and advantage in society. This criterion of CDL enmeshed with de-coloniality also allows one to problematize the role of racial privilege in determining who has the power to speak, on history and memory. Following Steyn (2015, p. 385), this research also shows that “Misrepresentations of African creativity were integral to the construction of the idea of a ‘dark’ continent, a discursive strain that endures in representations of Africa as ‘hopeless’. This research seeks to establish whether these legacies are still sustained through museums.

The research also uses reads coded hegemonic practices (Steyn 2015). In this criterion Steyn (2015) argues that power never names itself as such. Rather discourses of power deflect from how power is being used to exploit the other (Steyn 2015). Here, the conventionalisation of mainstream heritage can be read as a deflection, complicit in the relegation of alternative historical accounts such as oral accounts by indigenous people. This inquiry follows Clover and

Sanford's position that 'By both tactical and unconscious inclusions and omissions, museums legitimise a prevailing order of social, cultural and political power, and represent and propagate sexist, racist and other problematic understandings of the world' (2016, p.127). Museums were historically used to discipline and control the natives, so this reading allows one to read through how museum language and signs obfuscate the ways through which social control is being exercised (Steyn, 2015). This control is not limited to race but also to its intersections with gender, class and science.

2.3 Intersectionality Theory

In 1989 Kimberle Crenshaw coined the term intersectionality. Intersectionality allows one to think through the different axis of oppression and privilege and how these influence different identities. Intersectionality acknowledges that race, class and gender among other, do not operate as unitary elements, but rather, reciprocate and co-construct one another (Collins, 2015). This reciprocation in turn shapes complex social inequalities (Collins, 2015). This research uses intersectionality to flesh out the different elements besides race that come out in the representations of Zulu collections at WAM. An intersectional consciousness also allows the reader to be cognizant of the omnipresence of different struggles in one. This means that race cannot be the only focus of decoloniality, but also, other axis of oppression or privilege such as gender, class, age and body. This speaks to critical decolonial theories such as the colonial power matrix (Grosfoguel, 2007; Mignolo, 2008) which speaks to how authority, gender, race and class are all intertwined in the establishment of modernity and coloniality. According to Mignolo (2008) the colonial matrix of power operates through control of the economy, control of authority, control of gender and sexuality and control of knowledge and subjectivity (Mignolo, 2008). By not focusing on race as a single, simple phenomenon, but as co-constitutive of class and gender, this researcher can anticipate other emerging themes from interviews besides race. Such an analysis helps one guide against essentialising race, especially in post-apartheid South Africa, where the history of apartheid signals multiple oppressions. For example, one will find that while both black men and women seem to have a commonality in their "blackness", they may be differently gendered or classed. This study, therefore, makes use of intersectionality as a theory through which these "differences in similarities" can be located.

According to Yuval-Davis (2006) any attempts to essentialise identity categories “Often it reflects hegemonic discourses of identity politics that make invisible experiences of the more marginal members of that particular social category, and builds a homogenized 'right' way for membership.” (195). Thus there is a potential pitfall for one to simply think about race as the sole identity at the fore of coloniality and its impact on representations of Zulu people in WAM collections. Such a monotonous understanding of coloniality negates Mignolo's (2008) colonial matrix of power in which he argues that coloniality does not operate in isolation but operates through control of the economy, control of authority, control of gender and sexuality and control of knowledge and subjectivity. This means that there is an intersection between the control of the economy by a particular group of people, authority, the control of gender and sexuality and the control of knowledge. Theory intersectionality therefore helps flesh all these dynamics out.

Chapter Three: A literature review

This section outlines existing literature in the topic. It looks at the neo-liberalisation of museums and heritages sites and also reviews literature that connects the history museum institution in South Africa to race and power. Politics plays an immense role in knowledge building and how it is presented (Prah, 1999). Political views have had an important impact on archaeological development. Several growing understandings of the impact that politics has on archaeology are now available. But one issue that has not been adequately addressed within the South African discipline is that of transformation. South African archaeology remains dominantly white.

3.1 Neoliberalism influences on the post-colonial interpretations and representations of museum collections.

This section examines how the decolonial theory can be used to discuss how neoliberalism influences the post-colonial interpretations and representations of museum collections. It does so through an outline of how statutes such as the Declaration of Universal Museums which universalized local histories and artefacts impact the museum space. Meskell (2010) asks what the mantle of "universal human rights" brings to heritage. The Declaration of "Universal Museums" (2002) states that museum collections cannot be solely valued, viewed or associated with one ethnic group, locality or country but heritage collections are a universal property with somewhat a universal value to everyone worldwide. This statute provides a neo-liberal account of

both history and heritage because it constructs peoples' heritage as a "product" open for all to acquire (Marskell and Weiss, 2006, p. 94). This is a model common in neo-liberalism's free-market ideology. In their challenge to the insularity of historical myths and historiographical practices originating from Europe, postcolonial and decolonial arguments were the most influential.. Bhabra (2014. P115) . This research is therefore an additional decolonial meditation on the issue of representation in in post-colonial African museums.

Sandell (2007) suggest that this universalization of historical artefacts ignores the physical and epistemological historical oppression of African communities by white imperialists. In that regard, the idea of the “Universal Museum” as embodied in this statute is also problematic, in that it opens room for an "open interpretation" of local African collections. Also universalising archaeology, imposed barriers on the practice of archaeology in Africa, with researchers readily adopting approaches and epistemologies from European and American academic institutions, at the expense of those based in Africa (Pikirai 2015, p. 533). By denying one ethnic group full rights to association with an object, personal interpretation to objects, the declaration opens up room for different interpretations that can be manipulated in favour of more vocal groups. This further distances marginalized or minority communities from their cultural objects. This does not only apply to African ethnic groups but also to settler societies such as the United States of America and Australia, in which indigenous peoples have been denied a right to govern their archaeological heritage. While, in the African and Asian context, this was also the case during the colonial period (Ndoro, 1997, p. 132) there is a gap in literature that addresses how the neo-liberalization of museums impacts South African museums' content post-colonially.

According to Meskell, et al (2015, p 423) ‘In 1965, the idea of the World Heritage Trust was first proposed during in the White House Conference in the US and the term ‘world heritage’ was coined”. This was followed by the adoption of the Convention Concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO 1972) (Meskell et al, 2015). This convention set up international and collective protection of heritage with prominent universal value (Labadi, 2013).This Convention currently has 191 signatories whose obligation is to protect the past for future generations , for a shared sense of belonging and solidarity (Choay, 2001). The International Council on Monument and Sites (ICOMOS) is among other advisory bodies which have experts to monitor and evaluate the state of heritage sites (Meskell et al, 2015). ICOMOS

has been criticized by State Parties for factual errors and Eurocentric bias (Meskell et al, 2015). Also because ICOMOS relies heavily on UNESCO's contributions it faces a funding crisis. Their lack of funding is a major problem, making State parties that are signatories to the Convention the most powerful decision-makers in World Heritage (Askew, 2010). Through the Convention local and indigenous community involvement is curtailed by powerful nation-states (Meskell et al, 2015). "Regardless of the academic debate on global heritage regimes, the statistical incentive to engage in the field of World Heritage continues to expand and it is therefore important to investigate the structural political structures and capillary power networks underlying its processes on the ground" (Meskell et al, 2015, p. 427). This is why questions surrounding the implications of the World heritage listing on the Aboriginal Australians, for example, has been the subject of a three year study (See Soderland and Lilley, 2015).

Such studies have not considered South Africa. Legally, Witz (2011) asserts that most of the legislation that is used by African museums were adopted from the ones formulated by their former colonizers yet they don't always concur with the systems and beliefs of the locals. "Alongside ethics, law has become customary and integral in archaeological field practice and scholarship as well as in cultural heritage management" (Soderland and Lilley, 2015, p 7). Soderland and Lilley (2015) further assert that almost each country has a law governing archaeological activity and cultural heritage management, and in the process ownership rights over the past. To cite Soderland and Lilley at length:

A growing list of countries is facing ongoing disputes over the legitimate ownership of archeological resources and cultural property that were once but no longer in their possession or jurisdiction or are claimed as part of their heritage by indigenous peoples (p. 7).

Intertwined with these laws, white supremacist epistemologies remain the major stumbling block towards the interpretation of African Heritage since certain truth behind black heroic stories in African civilizations remain masked as new interpretations were formulated to hail white hegemony (Witz, 2005) while demonizing blacks. This was meant to promote white dominance which was fully consolidated in the 1950s through the establishment of a formalized and institutionalized apartheid system in South Africa (Minkley and Westerway, 2005). These developments intersected with the systematic exclusion and marginalization of the majority of

black South Africans in terms of access to both political and economic power. It is within this system that most of the museums were located, with black South Africans having little to no power and access to interpretation and management of South African heritage under the auspices of the South African museums governing board (Nhlapho, 2003).

The liberalization of archaeological artefacts led to the universalization of histories which erases their contextualized framing. Hence artefacts need to be held in their places of origin, with the people who can tell a story behind them, such that a “true” history of humankind will be molded out of them (Simons, 1987). Because truth in itself is an ideal, this research will seek to expose various influences that peoples' positionalities have on history. In that vein, declarations such as the Declaration on the Importance and Value of Universal Museums (DIVUM) overlook the concerns of owners of particular historical narratives and how it should be up to them to shape discourses around their origins. This is because DIVUM states that there should be no argument whatsoever to reclaim and reverse ownership of artefacts acquired under violent colonial times (Rassool, 2000). The declaration was only signed in December 2002 by only 18 major museums in the world as a document meant to support the use of power and white rule in the manipulation of heritage issues across the globe (Silverman, 2013). This declaration shows the colonial nature of current museums. These dynamics promote the legitimization of western knowledge and interpretations at the expense of local ones.

It is noteworthy that the African continent is grossly underrepresented on the list of UNESCO world heritage sites. Out of 1,031 sites listed internationally, there are only 89 located in Africa. This conspicuous under-representation of Africa speaks volumes on the Influence of European and Western power towards heritage issues in Africa. Munjeri (2005) argues that this representation reflects grand narratives, of European notions of aesthetics and national identity. Lowenthal (1998) has suggested that this is a sure reflection of the notion that, Europeans rate themselves and their heritage as superior hence it ought to be global. That said, little research has been carried to interrogate this space.

3.2 Zuluness in the context of (post)colonial artifactual interpretations and representations.

Mhiripiri (2009) suggests that Zuluness is a real idea which takes form in an 'imagined' community where community members believe in it and it affects their behaviour and attitudes.

The defeat of apartheid and the emerging democracy provided opportunities for scholars to venture into these fields of inquiry. This, Carton et al (2008) believes, would free the culture of South Africa from its past limitations and biases. Scholars like Mhiripiri (2009) still maintain that there is no single homogeneous Zulu identity, especially one that is either the monarchy or the political formation established and administered from above. Zulu identity per se is not universal, but there are Zulu identities that are relevant to the experiences lived by both individuals and communities. There is need to interrogate what it is that are called Zulu cultural collections and how do we define or distinguish them.

Artefactual interpretations in the post-colonial South Africa has sought to document the narrative of a dominant indigenous cultural group at the expense of other indigenous ethnic groups in South African cultural institutions. The documentation of ethnographic material culture has paved a way for interpretations that have favored the narrative of a specific indigenous culture (Zulu culture). This construction of a single narrated interpretation and representation of a single dominant ethnic group has brought about the need to engage into decolonization of material culture in the interpretation and representation of artifacts in the museums . The construction of Zuluness in the post-colonial artefactual interpretation and representation has been championed through dominating a single narrative of a powerful ethnic group at the expense of other ethnic groups that also shapes the South African society. The advantage has been utilized in the period when South Africa was undergoing a period of transitional justice and in this turbulent time identity was used to separate the black populace³. This necessitated the Zulu to grab the opportunity within the complex external socio_ economic and political contexts to impose themselves as the dominant group in South Africa.

Whilst museums and other cultural heritage institutions have features of being zones of contact where geographically separated people and historical disjuncture meet, there has been a deep difference in whose collections are given a louder voice in the museum. The Zulus in particular

³ A transitional justice period refers to a time after massive human rights abuses have taken place, such as during the apartheid regime (Sciarone 2016, p1).

have utilized these museums as contact zones to accumulate and acknowledge the vastly differentiated South African history and facilitate a better understanding between groups as well as strengthen identity formation within the country's different communities Sciarone (2016, p7)..

3.3 Connecting the history of museum institution in South Africa to race and power

According to Moro Abidia (2006), the history of archaeology in colonized places promoted an idealized image of archeological practice. Historians usually omitted the political implications of archaeology and justified in many instances the appropriation from colonized places of material culture Moro Abidia (2006 p 7), Kehow (1989) also argues that there is a very deep link between the colonialism and the history of archaeology. The history of archaeology has traditionally been limited to 'consensus whiggish histories' (Kehoe 1989, p.105), to a simple chronicle of spectacular discoveries "without taking much account of the ideas and institutions surrounding them" (Schnapp 2002, p. 134), or to the hagiographic veneration of precursors and daring heroes (Schlanger 2002, p. 128). The history of archeology written up until the last decades of the twentieth century can be described as a particular form of 'colonial discourse,' that is, as one of the discourses by which colonialist groups constitute the domain of the past by imposing unique knowledge, practices, and values on colonized communities. This argument has also helped to legitimize other colonialist practices(Moro Abidia 2006 p8). Moro Abidia (2006) notes that historians have examined some of the political uses of archaeology. They have analysed, for instance, how nationalism has determined archaeological research, how particular social classes have promoted archaeological agendas or what was the impact of science's sociological system upon archaeological data interpretation. In this sense, the relations between archeology and colonialism have become one of the main topics among hundreds of publications dedicated to' the past's socio-politics. (e.g. Meskell 1998; Kehoe 1989), Moro Abidia tresses the very the history of archaeology from the Trigger (1980, 1984) who produced the very first works in this subject to the scholars who studied how ancient history contributes to the colonialist phase (e.g. Sheppard 1990; Rowlands 1998; Jeffreys 2003). It is imperative to understand how archeology was used to encourage a certain image of the past in colonized places and how archeological discourse supported legitimate colonialist hegemony (Moro Abidia 2006 p.9)

Mxolisi Dlamuka the current Heritage Western Cape Chief Executive Officer in his Master's thesis; *Identities, memories, histories and representation* (2003) says museums played an instrumental role in spreading misconceptions about land ownership by whites. This was not a challenging task, as finding archival records by South African societies before Europeans arrived is not easy. These societies relied on the oral tradition of transmitting history and heritage to various generations. Histories paid attention to oral history, mainly in the 1980s, using it to tell the stories of the marginalised. Museums were an integral part of colonial and apartheid structures, and determined what was portrayed in museums by the government. Due to white supremacist influences that deterred other groups, museums were segregated; this also applied in Durban, as displays in their museums attempted to improve white seniority and heroism (Dlamuka, 2003). "Museums are historically by-products of colonialism, in which colonial and western knowledge has been generally valued" (Rall, 2018, p. 11). It is now part of the traditional understanding of the emergence of museums that they were products of earlier exhibition practices aimed at showing off wealth and strength. Two useful and complementary books that delve into great detail on this subject are *The Birth of the Museum: history, politics, theory* by Tony Bennett (1995) and *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* by Eileen Hooper-Greenhill (1992). African Museums which are products servicing our contemporary societies carry a European culture though implemented in an African context and for the African populace (Ouzmen et al, 2003). Pistorious (2009), asserts that most imperialist countries still have a say in the management of heritage issues in Most African countries, hence institutionalization, and monumentalization of Heritage issues in most African countries have a European feel.

In Africa, we have seen much precedent of European influence on heritage management (Shepherd, 1998). Dlamuka (2003) and Ngcobo (2018) both trace the history of museums in South Africa back to the nineteenth and eighteenth century when the South African Museum (SAM) was established in Cape Town. The power to document history at this period was within the very same colonial masters that had oppressed the African people. This was a period where colonialists had political control and marked their territories through segregation laws, and this resulted in politics playing a big role in shaping South Africa's identity. Due to the racial separation and political control of the colonialists, there was a lack of African representation in the formation of their history (Dlamuka, 2003; Ngcobo, 2018). Histories of past colonial events are manipulated and sewn into the present by most western white powerful nations to continue

their endeavours in most African countries through the use of museums and heritage sites (Pwiti, 2007).

Eurocentric ideologies recognised science as an acceptable way of carrying out research and making claims about racial categories in South Africa. This led to the creation of South African museums which were central to the sustenance of apartheid in cahoots with natural sciences. Due to the influence by a racial ideology of segregation and apartheid, museums in South Africa became centres of political discourse and mirrors of the white domination (Gore, 2004). When museums started to include historical artefacts, those in power had control over how heritage was represented. In turn, museum collections were simply exhibitions of the 'accomplishments' and lives of notable people in the past (see Ngcobo, 2018, Simpson, 2001). These museum collections also see that oppression as a thing of the past that everyone has moved past. Using CDL, the research will show how this view of current inequalities as simply a product of history is implicit in reaffirming the power of the dominant (Steyn, 2015). There exists a gap in research which unpacks these dynamics, particularly in South Africa.

Madiba (2003) notes that heritage issues can be hardly separated with colonial structural traces in Africa. Madiba further notes that policies that are hitherto used towards the management of heritage property are to some extent the same with those which were used during colonial times with some few amendments in some countries. Heritage issues in Africa are largely associated with political issues hence critics have emerged citing that, the administration of heritage management in most English speaking African countries is bi-dimensional, meaning it is either controlled by the governmental departments or by semi-autonomous institutions with parastatal status (Manetsi, 2007, p.46). This dynamic presents an intersection between governmental policies on heritage and their complicity in neo-colonialism.

Hall (1996) reiterates this point by stating that, Africa is up to date witnessing major colonial influences in heritage issues through the use of policies with Western and European influence behind them. They follow the very same notions once embodied in the apartheid city. These multinational and national policies, therefore, promote the European and white norms in heritage and museum management. This dynamic legitimizes western epistemologies, thus normalizing exploitative interactions between the West and African countries in multinational treaties and affiliations in UNESCO, ICOM, ICOMOS and ICCROM among others (Lavine and Karp,

1991). As Fowler (1999) argues parliaments, governments and communities are often roped in the management of heritage yet at the global level, UNESCO, through the World Heritage Committee is the bureaucratic board which selectively ascribes universality of standards.

The International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites which is popularly known as the Venice Charter was adopted through the 2nd International Conference of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments in 1964. This charter was applied to the management of various properties from vernacular to non-monumental structures in Africa. This charter also influenced a plethora of other international conventions such as the Bura Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Hall, 1996). These charters and conventions were formulated in Western and European countries hence they set norms standards which were considered legally binding for state parties.

Apart from this, the state also exerts a great amount of control on heritage narratives. Legitimised as "official Heritage", these narratives are hegemonic, which according to Gramsci is, "the way through which government and state institutions mutually work together to win public consent for their authority through multi-processes which mask their position of dominance" (Gramsci, 1996). Most Southern African countries have a state-centric ownership of heritage resources which leads to the political branding of heritage. This branding positions broader ideological understandings of history as common sense, neutral and natural (Steyn, 2015; Crawford, 1997).

3.4 The inclusion of communities in Heritage Interpretation

There is a growing need in the field of heritage management to include the communities in the management, preservation and interpretation of heritage collections. Hamilakis (2011,p.401) notes that the seeming asymmetry between archaeology and anthropology may have had positive effects because it has forced archaeology to think deeply about the potential and properties of its immediate object, i.e., material things, and on its genealogy, its historical and sociopolitical underpinnings, and its general role and purpose. There is therefore a need to dig deeper into the socio-political underpinnings of objects when collecting them. These underpinnings can only be found through the inclusion of anthropological work in the in finding meanings for the objects as suggested by Hamilakis (2011). The exclusion of the communities whose ancestors made the

from interpreting and conserving the objects can be problematic. A case in point is given in the interpretation and conservation process of natural resources given by Alexander and McGregor (2000). They give a clearer picture of events of the 1990s when the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) was being presented in Zimbabwe, it was met at times with rough resistance by communities who felt disappointed with the entire process. Though the campfire was a project aimed at throwing away the colonial policy that made it illegal for local communities to use wildlife in any way, the communities within the CAMPFIRE areas were not in support of the initiative, they did not understand what the Campfire was all about nor saw its benefits. This ultimately drove to clashes between the project managers who were greatly excited about the projects and the communities who on paper were the recipients of the proposed projects. This was because when the project was planned the local community was not a part of it. The project revolved around the wildlife that was on the community lands but the community was not involved in the planning stages of the proposed project. The same happened with communities in Tanzania and Mozambique where communities were not involved in the arrangements and planning on how to use and administer of common assets in their environment. This means there's extremely controlled sense of proprietorship of the projects by the communities who constitute the major group within the projects. In heritage management planning process, the collecting process of the objects should always involve the communities to which the projects belong to.

Deacon et al (2004) understands that exclusive possession of heritage by the group is both philosophically questionable and hard to prove (Handler in press). Ownership of an intangible heritage resource is not equivalent to owning an item or a location. Intangible history can be more readily shared, replicated and modified than an object or location and it has to change with time. Deacon et al (2004 p.42)

There is a fallacy Hamilakis (2011) that claims that archaeology deals with objects of the past used by dead people who can no longer answer or give interpretations to collections. This fallacy should be dismissed as it seeks to alienate African communities from their ancestral objects. The living community plays a major role in transmission of cultural practices. Deacon et al note that community involvement is the main mechanism in safeguarding heritage (Deacon et al 2004 p.42)

Deacon et al (2004) further note that the concept of exclusive community control of intangible assets is appealing, as it enables some established legal structures, such as copyright and patent laws, to be extended to protect community rights. However, these legal processes are not the only way to ensure that group ownership over their heritage is maintained and that profits are extracted from the commercial use of the heritage. Perhaps the most critical element of any approach to designing instruments to safeguard intangible heritage is including and preserving the practicing community. That was known in Australia (Deacon et al 2004 p 42-43).

3.5 The Effects of colonialism on African archeology

According to Pikirayi (2015), the history of Africa continues to be perceived in exotic terms, despite Anglo-American academic practices. Pikirayi notes that the syllabus of archaeology and the research agenda in Africa still follows the pattern set by British, North American and, to some degree, European universities in the mainland. In terms of decolonizing the discipline, the academic curriculum remains weak and is largely unable to question the prevailing theoretical and even philosophical positions that have existed since then. The rapid evolution of archeology as a discipline in African cultures and the relatively poor African economies in the 20th century creates an unpleasant atmosphere under which archeology is being studied in Africa (Pikirayi 2015 p. 531) That naturally raises questions as to how much financial priority the investigation of the past should be given. The extreme, and escalating, political and security challenges that afflict the continent are coupled with this. Such barriers must be broken down; a continent-wide approach is required to that end (Pikirayi 2015, p.531). Pikirayi further examines the practical consequences archaeological research has for the descendant groups it is focused on. For example, the portrayal of archaeology as a science effectively negates the rights of descendants to their own past experiences and understandings and its usage in the present. In partnership with local communities archeology needs to rely more on local awareness. Such an approach contradicts traditional archeological theories and practices, as it suggests that Western scientific approaches to archeological theory and procedure are not inherently the 'right' way to view the past. Who profits from the results of archeological research poses the issue of how to disseminate and exchange archeological knowledge between practitioners and those societies that constitute the subject of study. In refusing to share and convey these information, archeologists were in charge of others 'history and that is no longer appropriate Pikirai, (2015p.

535). Around the same time a new way of treating colonialism arose within the social sciences: postcolonial studies.

This field, which has a significant impact on several disciplines, is dedicated to discussions on the cultural, political, economic and social effects of the colonial process from the seventeenth to the present century (Ashcroff, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989, p. 2; Young 2001, p. 4). The postcolonial studies, a new field seeks to provide critical reflections about Western imperialism and colonialism. Both the term and the discipline are products of a broader tendency in literary studies from the 1980s and 1990s.

Chapter Four: Methodology

In this chapter I outline the methodology of the research. The research is a qualitative one. It takes a comparative approach, comparing the interpretation ascribed by the museum to the collections and the interpretations deduced from the Kwa-Mazibuko community through interviews. The research revolved around on-going discourses surrounding the global, local and transnational dynamics of heritage and their intersections with (neo) colonialism. Because, it set out to uncover whose interpretations of the museum are at the forefront, the location of power is central to this research. The research therefore takes a qualitative research approach because it is more concerned with content rather than statistics within the museum space.

I deduced that this topic is very practical and theoretical hence the need to speak to the actual people that are directly impacted by the investigation. Therefore I thought that conducting qualitative research would be essential, it was critical to talk to the Zulu people who had their ancestors that were using these objects every day, but usually they are the ones who are not consulted when museums ascribe interpretations to their collections. They also are not in a position to publish anything about this due to their disadvantaged background.

4.1 Positionality

My experiences as a young black heritage professional have informed the design of this project as well as my interpretation of the findings.

My background working in the heritage industry has also opened my eyes to the challenges that exist in the broader industry. From my own lived experiences, I have noticed that museum institutions tend to be white male dominated, therefore making it difficult for other heritage professionals to enter the industry. Also, through my engagement with material culture that is collected from different marginalised communities and displayed in the museum, I have become aware that the voices of the local communities are not always reflected in museum interpretations of these collections.

Therefore as a young black professional in the heritage interpretation and management field and a master's candidate, I was interested in exploring how my profession could aid in having the marginalised communities' voices heard through museum exhibitions.

4.2 Scope and Limitations to Study

The scope of the research focuses on Zulu collections housed at WAM, in interaction with a sample of Zulu informants from the Kwa-Mazibuko hostel in Johannesburg. I have chosen the Kwa – Mazibuko community because of it is largely occupied by Zulu identifying people. While not all members of this community directly come from Kwa-Zulu Natal, some have been assimilated over time to be part of the broader Zulu nation as they have adopted the culture and other identities associated with the Zulu people. Mhiripiri (2009) asserts that the definition of 'unitary' Zuluness demystifies the personality of Zulu. Zuluness is established in daily life as a place of creativity, cognition and language. He further contends that there are Zuluness manifestations over and above the fundamental essentialist biological or genetic classification parameters; this Zuluness manifestation is both a sensation and a knowledge of being Zulu, if not for a brief moment as one emulates those qualities associated with Zulu and then integrates these into one's own existential practices, even though one is not biologically possible. At the same time, the research does not seek to isolate or exceptionalise the Kwa- KwaMazibuko community. Rather, it seeks to look at the problem within the context of the African continent hence the literature looks at heritage issues all across the continent. While the research would have benefited from a wider range of interviewees, this was hindered by a wider set of limitations.

The scope of this research was influenced by things such as time factors and resources. A Masters in Critical Diversity Studies runs for a year for full time students such as myself, hence

there was so much to cover and so little time. Beyond these limitations, there were several other limitations to this research that I encountered during my research include language and time. Because I am a Shona speaking Zimbabwean man, I have a limited understanding of isiZulu. Although I can hold a conversation in isiZulu, I cannot fully relate to the Zulu identity. I had to ask my questions in English and I would get my responses in isiZulu and at times in English. The participants were allowed to respond in isiZulu. This information was then be interpreted, translated and transcribed for analysis. At times, I acknowledge that the translation of this material would alter the meaning. In this research I however carried the advantage that the Kwa-Mazibuko community is a community that I have worked with before while conduction Heritage Public Participation processes. This came in a great help as most of the people are very comfortable talking to me. The senior *indunas* also interviewed were at liberty to give me information.

Time was also a limitation. This is because this research was conducted in a space of six months. This limited the scope of my research as I was not be able to carry a larger project on these dynamics. The research interviews were mostly conducted during the festive season when everyone was busy and most people were in the festive mode. People were reluctant to take part in the research as they were busy with their families.

Accessing the research site also proved to a precarious task. For one to access material at WAM they have to book an appointment with the curator. The curator does not allow researchers to leave the museum with the material. This means I had to collect the museum data in the confines of WAM space. Space as we know it is political, and doing data collection in a space also has implications for one's frame of thought.

I was however able to negotiate through these limitations through personal reflexivity. This involved reflecting on my own positionality and interests in the research. Although this was not easy and no research can be fully neutral, I was able to encourage myself to critically engage with the material in question, without biase. Through taking photographs and notes in the museum and revisiting them later, I was able to transcend reading and interpreting the data from the confines of the museum.

4.3 Sampling

The research made use of snowballing to recruit research participants. Snowballing involves recruiting participants through referrals from interviewee's in the Kwa-Mazibuko hostel. "A sampling procedure may be defined as snowball sampling when the researcher accesses informants through contact information that is provided by other informants" (Noy, 2008, p. 330). Snowballing is among the most used sampling techniques in the social sciences (Noy, 2008). "It is sometimes used as the main vehicle through which informants are accessed, or as an auxiliary mean, which assists researchers in enriching sampling clusters, and accessing new participants and social groups when other contact avenues have dried up" (Noy, 2008. P. 330). Snowballing was helpful in a site I am not familiar with and where language was a barrier in terms of earning people's trust. Hence referrals helped the would-be informants to develop a sense of trust and familiarity with the researcher.

4.4 Research site

The research site is Kwa- Mazibuko Hostel in Katlehong. Hostels around South Africa have a significant historical background as they were deeply connected with migrant mine labour systems during apartheid (Ramphela, 1989). Although the hostel is occupied by a mixture of people namely the Shangaan, Zulu, Sotho and Pedi it is the Zulu people that dominate the hostels. The hostels are also run by Zulu indunas originating from KwaZulu Natal (KZN).

This research also focused on WAM which is a museum based at the University of the Witwatersrand. According to Freschi (2009, p. 63), 'The collection of the Wits Art Museum (WAM) at the University of the Witwatersrand – widely acknowledged as one of the most significant collections of African and South African art on the continent – originated in the 1950s with a small teaching collection accumulated by then professor of Fine Arts and History of Art, Heather Martienssen'.

4.5 Data collection

Data collection was carried out between 1 September 2019 and 10 January 2020. The researcher made use of the information that was provided in the WAM electronic database. I identified museum collections from WAM they were photographed and presented to the research

participants. Due to budget limitations, I was not able to take the participants to the museum and I therefore took photographs of selected objects from the WAM collection and presented these to participants in semi-structured interviews. The participants were asked to give descriptions and interpretations about them. The collections that were photographed include Zulu headrests, head bends, Clay pots, mate racks and waist belts. The photographs were used in-combination with a semi-structured in-depth interview schedule to gather participant reflections on the objects. I was interested in the answers they had to give me regarding the makeup of each collection, its traditional use, its significance in the Zulu culture, its traditional Zulu name, as well as their overall feeling aroused.

4.6 Archival research

According to Ventresca and Mohr (2017, p.1) 'In its most classic sense, archival methods are those that involve the study of historical documents; that is, documents created at some point in the relatively distant past, providing us access that we might not otherwise have to the organizations, individuals, and events of that earlier time.' WAM has an electronic data base that is used to archive information on all the collections that they are housing. The database comprises of information on collections that are on display and some that are in the collection rooms. The database provided the institutional material that was compared with the reflections of participants. The electronic data base at WAM can only be accessed by the museum curators and staff of the museum. To gain access into the data base I had to make an appointment with one of the curators who was kind enough to open up the data base for me. She then took me through all the Zulu collections that are housed at the museum. It is from these that I had to choose the ones I was going to use in the research. My choice of collections was influenced by fact that these are the Zulu collections that the museum had most information on.

4.7 Interviews

The purpose of research interviews was to obtain information from participants from the Kwa-Mazibuko community on what they make of Zulu collections at WAM. Information retrieved from these interviews was used to meet the research objectives which are describing, predicting or explaining of social phenomenon (Cohen and Manion, 2007). According to Wisker (2001), the use of interview is highly desirable for obtaining information based on emotions, feelings,

experiences, sensitive issues, and, insider experiences. Interviews are of immense significance in qualitative research studies because they provide a detailed and holistic description of an activity or situation. Therefore, qualitative interviews differ significantly from those used in quantitative research. In this research, interviews were primarily used to ensure the reliability of the answers. Another benefit of conducting interviews is that it gives one the ability to ask some questions while looking at the reactions of the participant (Mpungose, 2010:18). The interviews were organized and less organized, but as a means of checking, I prepared sub-questions, particularly for those respondents who only received questionnaires and were not going to be interviewed. To endorse the activity of sampling, Mazibuko (2008: 81) states that:

If they passionately feel that they want to know more about the topic in question, the interviewer will ask follow-up questions that arise during the interview.

The qualitative research interview seeks to appreciate the world from the respondents' perspective and to explore the significance of people's experiences (Kvale, 1996). I interviewed six (6) participants and two of these participants were senior Indunas. The (indunas) are the senior custodians of the Zulu culture in the hostels. This is because, the latter had more information on the historical trajectories of Zulu people since they are regarded as the custodians of the Zulu culture in the hostels.

The interviews questions were framed in such a ways that the, meaning of the collection, makeup of the collection, and the use of the collection would be reviewed. My role was to pay attention to discrepancies between the ascribed interpretation by the WAM museum and the interpretation the local Kwa-Mazibuko community would give. To gain access to the participants I decided to commute to the Katlehong since it is cheaper than driving. I had a meeting with the one of the senior *indunas*,⁴ explaining to him my intentions as well as what the research would include. I also explained to him the need to get a few people to from the hostel to take part in the research. The senior *induna* agreed and I further explained to him the demographics of people I was interested in working with. The senior *induna* then compiled a list of possible people that I could interview. It was unclear to me as to whether or not these informants had a track record of knowledge on Zulu cultural objects or not. I then had to do door , to door visitations to those

4

individuals explaining what it is that I wanted from them as well as why I had chosen them. Given below is a sketch of their demographics;

My interviewees were between the ages of 40 to 60 because they were assumed to be older and more knowledgeable to the history of Zulu cultural objects. They were all black, male and female and also identifying as heterosexual. This somehow speaks to how Zulu culture is not as assumed by some, singly held by men, but that women are also important figures in the transmission of Zulu culture. The interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes. The challenge was trying to get entry into the hostel space as a black foreigner. This is given the xenophobic and hostile environment that existed in the hostel space during the period of the interviews. Katlehong area is one of the mostly affected areas by the recent xenophobic attacks. A center for victims of xenophobia was even set up at the Katlehong community home as a way of trying to shield foreign nationals from the violence.

The female respondents occupy between 40 and 49 years of age. Their actual ages were 42, 59, 44, 48, 41 and 56 respectively. Three of the participants were male and three were female. They were coded as participant 1-6.

4.8 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were useful for having an understanding of who, where and where the various collections belonged to and attitudes towards presented collections. They were also used in this research to examine the degree to which cultural traditions are preserved. Initially, the questionnaires and the guidance obtained by the informants were based on the premise that questions should be answered neutrally and critically (Klein, 2003, p. 72). The informants, or respondents, as they are often named, are no longer considered to be members of a specific place and are allowed to answer the questionnaire on the basis of their own experience (Salomonsson, 2003, p. 92). Therefore, the purpose and content of the qualitative questionnaires have shifted from a positivistic collectivism to an interpretative individualism (Klein, 2003, p. 72). In this study, the questionnaires worked as supplementary to the interviews. There are some participants that could not be interviewed and these had to be catered for through the use of the questionnaires. The data collected from the questionnaires was then added to the data that was collected from the interviews. While the questionnaires could not provide all the information the

participants may have wanted to give, they gave an indication of the general feeling the community had about the collections.

4.9 Ethics

‘Ethics can be understood as the need for intellectual reflection on good practice in a particular research context’ (Laurier and Parr, 1999: 98). An integral aspect of the exploration of new information is qualitative analysis. It is a very helpful addition to quantitative analysis and there are several studies that now include all quantitative studies. Ethical issues such as privacy and confidentiality, informed consent, harm and politics and power and over involvements were seriously considered. In seeking informed consent, I made sure I had prepared informed consent forms that were signed by the participants, I also utilized a model of continuous or process consent, where the researcher reaffirms consent throughout the research process. The participants were assured that no harm was going to come to them as a result of this research. The researcher was also aware of certain political issues that the research involved and these had to be avoided. The privacy and confidentiality of the participants was guaranteed and the names of the participants were hidden throughout the research, instead the participants were assigned numerical figures as representations. The research was cleared through the Ethics Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand. (Ethics clearance protocol number DIV 200 221).

4.10 Coding

Thematic coding was used to organise data into themes. According to Gibbs (2012: 2) “Coding is how you define what the data you are analyzing are about. It involves identifying and recording one or more passages of text or other data items such as the parts of pictures that, in some sense, exemplify the same theoretical or descriptive idea”. The data were arranged into themes and homogenous color was used to tag corresponding data in a common theme. “When using paper, coding is done by jotting the code name in the margin or by marking text with colour” (Gibbs, 2012: 7).

Chapter Five: Findings and Discussion

Data collected through interviews were transcribed for analysis. I critically compared the interpretations given to the collections by the WAM museum and the interpretation given to the Kwa-Mazibuko community. Krawczyk (2013) subscribes to the notion that the history of science shows that the practice of comparison has been and continues to be an indispensable resource to respond to problems of natural and social knowledge. This research compared the information that is ascribed on each of the selected collections in the WAM electronic data base against the information that was provided by the Kwa- Mazibuko community during the interviews. In this section I analyse data that was collected from the Wits Art Museum (WAM). The data included electronic data collected from the WAM electronic data base as well as written records that show the different interpretations subscribed to the collections by the museum. This research is aimed at understanding the different existing interpretations of museum collections; particularly Zulu Cultural collections at the Wits Art Museum (WAM). This was done by way of a comparative analysis of WAM's interpretation of the collections vis-à-vis interpretations submitted by the contemporary Zulu society residing at Kwa- Mazibuko Hostel in Katlehong, Gauteng. The main argument presented in this section is that indigenous knowledge systems such as those of the Zulu society residing at Kwa- Mazibuko Hostel in Katlehong are neither prioritized nor mainstreamed in the management, interpretation and preservation of heritage in South Africa. This is informed by the historical context of apartheid South Africa. Ahmad (2014), notes that museum exhibitions are mediums for public communication, having in them the capability to expand or alter visitors' awareness. Because awareness involves knowledge transmission, it cannot be separated from epistemologies and power. Of the six (6) participants that took part in this research, the majority of the participants were not aware of the challenges that comes with not having the local voices represented in the museum. Only two participants referred to here as fourth (4) participant and fifth (5) participant showed knowledge of the different dynamics that exist in the museum institution. Given below are photographs of the collections and their descriptions that were taken from the WAM museum and presented to the research participants at Kwa-Mazibuko.



Figure 1: A Zulu headband worn by women as described by the museum.



Figure 2: A Zulu belt worn by women as described by the museum.



Figure 3: A Zulu clay pot used for brewing beer, serving beer and water as described by the museum.



Figure 4: A Zulu head rest used by married couples as described by the museum.



Figure 5: A Zulu mate rack usually found in wealthy homes as described by the museum.



Figure 6: A Zulu wrist band made by girls as a token of love to their preferred suitor as described by the museum.

5.1 The Zulu Head- band



Figure 8: The Zulu head bend Umhlekezo(Participants description) / umnqwazi (Museum description)

The participants noted the use of the Zulu head band as very important. The collection is used on a day to day basis especially in Kwa Zulu Natal (KZN) and the traditional / cultural significance of this collection is seen during traditional ceremonies. There are deep cultural meanings that are embedded in the item. Some of these meanings are historical and some of them are spiritual. Apart from these deep meanings, the collection is also used as a symbol of marriage, virginity, royalty as well as belonging to a certain clan. This means that some of the objects were used to determine insiders and outsiders. In general beads are used as symbolism for certain messages in the society. Morris and Preston Whyte (1994, p.16), notes that some types of beaded ornaments differentiate male from female dress as well as young from old, married from unmarried, royal commoners and servant lords. Historically beads were rare and also exquisite in such a way that a lot of people regarded them highly. Literature indicates beads have been shipped from other countries as well. Carey (1986, p.1) believes that certain Zulu kings have traded beads for ivory

because they appreciated beadwork from long distance trade. When time went on though, beads were deeply integrated into the social life of Zulu.

5.2 The 'disruption of norms through beads 'versus the 'art for art's sake ' interpretation for Beads

Beads have got a special cultural meaning in ceremonies as well, especially during the *ukulusa* ceremony where young girls are tested for virginity. Literature reveals that many museums have collections of old Zulu beadwork dating back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Beadwork contributes a great deal to museums of history because it is here that one gets different types of beadwork made in the past as well as modern. The museum is also a place that one can familiarize themselves with the different traditional ceremonies that were being conducted by the Zulu people through reading the beads. One learns how imaginative our forefathers were through the beadwork found in the museums. The beads may represent royalty, pureness, love etc. Beads were a way for various people to communicate messages. Girls were able to convey such messages to their lovers and husbands. This research has also indicated below that girls that were ready for marriage also showed agency through selecting a potential suitor for marriage. They would make beads that would then be given to the potential suitor, with a message embedded in the style and colours of the beads. The second participant shows contradictions within the Zulu culture in terms of the sharing of power as well as the dominance of men in society. It is interesting to note that while the museum and other literature data paints a picture of a heteropatriarchal Zulu society where men are dominant in all spheres of life, the fourth (4) participant shows that there are certain areas of social life where women expressed their agency. Participant one stated that "The beads were a good way for girls to communicate and express their love to a person of their choice." Using this quotation, I argue that while it is easy for non-Zulu people to think of Zulu women as docile and totally subjugated by patriarchy. This is due to the dominant discourse which sees Zuluness as a state of barbarity:

The visitor to the museum is never in a relationship of direct, unmediated contact with the reality of the artefact, and thus with the real stuff of the past. Indeed this illusion, this past fetishism, is an effect of discourse itself. For the apparent concreteness of the museum artefact stems from its verisimilitude; that is, from the familiarity arising from its being put in

an interpretative sense that conforms with a tradition and is thus made to align with representations of the past that enjoy a broader social circulation (Bennett, 2004,p.147)

These beads suggest information that is contrary to Scholars such as John's (2006, p. 17) position that;

A Zulu Man is the head of the household. He is at all times the authoritative figure; everything belongs to him in the *umuzi* or household, and decisions are tendered illegitimately without his permission. A woman is seldom consulted and only defers to her husband

The patriarchal tendencies noted by John (2006) are visible when it comes to the issue of respect *isiHlonipho*. As indicated by participants, Zulu women are required to be respectful to their husbands. This sentiment was also manifested in the interviews as none of them wanted to speak ill of their husbands's traditional values and culture. Though in many texts in the museum it's made clear that respect is a particular learned pattern of conduct, however, it is very significant in managing power relations in the Zulu nation. As a social custom, *ukuhlonipha* (to respect) among isiZulu-speakers involves centered on particular social factors, an entire value system. It is clear that the Zulu women that their man with respect and there are serious patriarchal patterns at play. There was a general feeling from the women of wanting to defend the system of *isiHlonipho*

An open defense of *isiHlonipho* was the need to defend the system against 'western' identity that demotes previous patriarchal laws. The use of the change has been claimed to disempower women, among other things. The importance of language use and language choices inherent in power relations between males and females is critical in addressing these power relations in the Zulu nation. However beads were a medium of agency, and allowed women to communicate who they wanted to get married to.

It is important to acknowledge such an object and its role in order to counter essentialist accounts of the beastly patriarchal nature of Zulu cultures. Using intersectionality to think through this object, I argue that a westocentric interpretation of "Zuluness," fails to account for

the, precolonial, pre-existing Zulu culture which had certain aspects of agency for women. Here, coloniality intersects with gender, because the demonization of Zulu men as oppressing women, constructs an image of uncivilised black Zulu men, while evidence from some of the objects suggests a certain level of agency by women. Participant 3, a 59 year old Zulu woman illuminates by stating that “As Zulu women we can control our men we have a choice and at times even polygamy is a choice.” While there are multiply conflicting views on this opinion, I argue that through an analysis of these objects one can begin to imagine what various forms of African feminisms can be, and how they can be imagined in an African context.

Participant four describes the use of beads as follows,

Unmarried young women wore the most intricate beadwork. But not only did girls make for themselves beaded adornments, they also used beadwork as love symbols to show their interest in a suitable young man. There was no written language, but girls and women created beadwork based on colorful patterns that expressed their feelings for a potential boyfriend, lover, and husband with coded meanings. It often started with a donation of a single strand of white beads. So this tradition gave Zulu women to actually choose a husband for themselves unlike these days where it has become a taboo for a woman to propose to a man. It was interesting to see how a woman had power in such a male dominated culture. That also goes to show you how much one's virginity was important because you would have to be a virgin as well for you to get a husband of choice this also promoted good health (Participant four)

This also speaks to the agency that women assumed through cultural objects. Objects therefore become a critical technology for love. While it is simple to view artwork as simply artwork, without symbolic social, political or economic connotations, the beadwork allows respondents to think differently.

Hence, there was a disruption of norms through beads. While Participant Four shows that bead work was also used as a way of maintaining healthy social relations, there seems to be a certain dialectics of harmony and disruption through beadwork. By choosing a potential husband for

herself, the girl would be avoiding fights amongst boys in the village who were interested in her. Zulu- Afrocentric scholar Biyela (2013) agree to this notion. He therefore argues that the Zulu culture is based on life survival by maintaining healthy social relations (This harmony and lubrication of Zulu social relation through beads also constitutes a disruption of norms. These norms include the assumptions that it is the man who has to “shela” (ask a woman out) the woman.

Unlike mainstream museums which flatly mention the use and meaning of objects, interactions with the interviewees allowed me to unpack the deeper meaning of objects and how they can serve as data for critical research. For example, I found through interpretations from both WAM and Zulu informants that beadwork played a major role in revealing one’s identity. Through beadwork, one could distinguish an individual from each clan through it. Individuals from every clan in every region have their own way of making beadwork and this makes beadwork exclusive to each clan. However, at times, the museum experience of displays and labeling of the beads produces what is termed the “art for art’s sake” interpretation. This is an interpretation that only appreciates beads as art work with no spiritual or historical meanings. In the absence of actual Zulu voices over collections, there cultural objects become art. This is in contradiction to what the research participants had to say about the beads. The research participants noted the deep meanings and messages that are relayed to by bead working. For example, Participant 6 said “A lot of people now use this cultural designs as art, for heritage day in the country. I sometimes laugh when I see a white person wearing a Zulu bead without fully understanding what they are communicating”. Using a decolonial framework, I argue that this example demonstrates an epistemicide; an erasure of the meaning of objects through hijacking by cultural institutions for fashion and trends.

A closer look at the importance of bead working actually shows the importance of Zulu women in their society. Following’ *ukuhlonipha kolwimi* ’ (respect for the language), traditionalist women bead workers translate messages into the non-verbal art of bead working. In this they express themselves, through regional color and motif conventions, which refer to the formerly oral isiZulu language of the praise-poets, with its metaphor, alliteration and innuendo. Layout and sense of these pieces combine to represent the bead worker .Women therefore become responsible for teaching bead working to different generations of the community. These beads

were used before written words as language for communication for generations and generations to come. This means that Zulu women had the power to create a communication mode that was to be used by everyone in the society. This becomes interesting as it shows a pattern of Zulu women expressing agency. It also shows how the women had the power to influence generations and generation within a society through bead working. In as much as men had spheres they dominated in the daily living of the Zulu society, women also had certain aspects of the society they had influence over.

This difference in the significance of these artefacts shows the difference between the mainstream and lived interpretation of the artwork. There is a need for the museum institution to take a step towards decolonizing bead work interpretations. The museum needs to start giving interpretations that show the deep cultural meanings produced through bead working. They need to start giving people the significance of bead working and how it played a major role in creating a communication mode for the people before written words were introduced in Southern Africa.

5.3 Artworks as story tellers versus Artworks as Fashion

The museum interpretation indicates that bead work was done for fashion use while the participants noted that beadwork and pottery making was done as symbolism of the historical past as well as symbolism for communicating different messages. The museum's interpretation of beads draws upon American bead work researcher Lois Sherr Dubin's interpretations. In her 1987 publication, Dubin notes that:

“Often extendable to other types of African aesthetic enterprises is the aesthetic influence of African beads as well as their acceptance in the West. This can also apply the same to African music and dances that also have a commercial value in the West. Here Africans seem to get warm reception because of their widespread mysticism because to the rest of the world, African beadwork is supposed to be considered as fashion”
Dubin (1987, p. 147)

In contrast, participant five describes the reasons behind bead work as historically functioning as a form of story-telling which has taken on different meanings in the contemporary period:

The making of beads was an effort to depict the people's historical past through story telling. The beadwork produced today takes advantage of the skills handed down, but it is of a contemporary nature and looks to a more commercial use than traditional Zulu. There's some revival among Zulu girl with one traditional item the apron of virginity. This is an apron in the fringe style made of brightly colored beads hanging down and covering the pubic area. One possible reason for its new pop. Participant four (4) describes the use of beads as language

Although beads or combinations of beads can refer to stock courtship words, it would be wrong to assume that 'love letters' or pendants of '*isigcina sentliziyo*' (keeper of the heart) have a language that can be universally 'read'. 'Beads' 'language' is much complex. The means assigned to specific beads have changed over time, and even among neighbouring communities may vary significantly. Subtle differences in bead shade or colour intensity may affect their significance. For the means assigned to colours or designs, there is no standardized code, and such elements vary widely across regions and with the times fashions.

The beads were used as recreations for certain social subjects that were affecting society or things that were taking place in the society. Looking at a bead it's hard not to think about who owned it previously, and how far it has travelled to reach its new destination through time and distance. The beadwork combinations could only be read by people from the same region and at times only by the marker such as in the case of love letters

The museum interpretations on the reasons for bead working seem reproduce Eurocentric scholarly or thought that African religious systems are mythical and bead working could not have represented anything more than just fashion. Beads that oral traditions associate with messages of love and social communications are regarded as nothing more than fashion. This clearly shows how much Eurocentric scholarship did not appreciate the spiritual and religious beliefs of the Africans. This points to another epistemicide (Santos, 2010) through ignoring the actual meanings in objects. As Steyn's CDL argues, oppressive systems such as racism as current social problems and not simply legacies of the past and the ability to read and interpret coded

hegemonic practices (Steyn, 2015). It further shows how much Eurocentric scholarship resented the idea that Africans were capable of thinking beyond what the eyes could see. Using an intersectional approach, I argue that this epistemicide leads to a lot of gender and racial based stereotyping of black bodies and this stereotyping makes the alienation of black people through coloniality and modernity functional. The museum needs to start investigating the importance of beads in fulfilling or telling the spiritual stories of the Zulu people. There was a deep spiritual link between the beads one wears and their religion. One could not wear certain beads that were designed for people with a certain calling or for specific traditional ceremonies. In some cases, certain traditional ceremonies could be carried out without certain beads. This should not be taken lightly as it forms part of the indigenous traditional / spiritual systems.

5.4 The bead making process and color combinations

Though we know the true uses of beads, very little has been said about their meanings, color combinations and their processing. References to the beaded “love letter” or other bead messages are not to be found in museums to date. It is known that beads worked to record meanings in times before written words. It was symbolism developed by Zulu women, with color combinations and patterns encoding certain messages. A girl would send beaded letter to her favored boy who will in turn come to ask the meaning of her letter (message on the beads). “The boy at times would not understand the color combinations and would have to ask the meaning from his sisters or mother” (Participant Five). In some cases the boys’ sisters or mother might fail to interpret the combinations and would require the bead smith to interpret. The combinations had the power to drive certain messages as well as create bonds amongst couples by producing a message that only the boy and the girl would understand, with the later explaining to the former what she was meaning through the combinations Kennedy (1978). Various interpretations were given by the participants in regards to the Zulu beadworks. Generally all the participants agree with the museum interpretation that beads were highly produced and manufactured by bead-smiths who were believed to have magical powers as well as young women ripe for marriage. Earolee Kennedy further notes that all beads are combined in particular ways.

While these interpretations are important, there is something to be said about how they are used to reinforce compulsory heterosexuality. This is because these interpretations make

heterosexuality the “obvious” and “natural” way of courting. CDL warns against naturalizing identities (Steyn, 2015) as this works in holding dominant positionalities such as heterosexuality in place.

In the case of men’s ceremonial dresses beads are combined with feathers and animal skins and often with large Bronze and copper arms rings indicating power and achievement. In the case of warriors, strings of metal beads were often a reward of feasts of valor. *Umgingo* was a beaded ornament worn around the neck head arms waist and across the chest around the nineteenth or early twenty century. The *umgingo* “single string” is made by wrapping a string of beads tightly around a soft core usually of coiled cotton cloth two and four centimeters or more in diameter. Several of these beads were frequently stitched together for a broad belt. A Zulu woman who is married wears *isicholo*- she can wear headbands (*umnqwazi*) at the base of the *isicholo* (*ijombolo*) and a necklace (*mqingqo*).

The reality is that material and aesthetic innovations are linked to historical and economic changes made by individual artists / creators. Campbell (2010) notes that a little-known fact is that beadwork varies in color and pattern from region to region among the Zulu, and is further subject to change over time, as the wearers’ life is influenced by acculturation and modernization—one could recognize the geographical region of a person by the type of beads and patterns they wore. Beads also could show marital status or a calling to be a healer and some other calling. The meaning attached to a specific was often related to name given to the beadwork because of its special characteristics. This message woven into each article was a very personal and could only be fully understood by a few close friends of the maker. In the 1950-1970s people started incorporating letters into their beads. After the wedding a young bride wears a beaded band around her head under the *isicholo/ inkehli* or top knot out of respect for the father in law Kennedy (1978). Participant four (4) presents the meanings of the beads colors

Yellow and green beads were used in Qebe region to celebrate fertility, but yellow in Zululand may mean prosperity and green sickness. In addition, the dominance and color order will change the local perception entirely. By incorporating subtle variations in the limbs, female figures may suggest these divergences in 'love letters' or *isigcina sentliziyo* ('

heartkeeper' pendants). Different colors represented different means, negative as well as a positive connotation: red beads can stand for passion and desire but also for anger and pain, green beads can stand for grass and therefore abundance but also for illness and discord; yellow can symbolize pumpkins and therefore riches and prosperity but can also reflect hunger and wither away. The only colour which is always good in white, symbolizing purity.

The technique used to string beads into increasingly sophisticated patterns employed with making of beadwork garments and were passed from one generation to the other. This technique according to participant five (5) differed according to regions:

Just like the meanings of the beadwork, the process of making the beads also differed from region to region.

5.5 The excellence of Zulu women

The theme of excellence of Zulu women is constantly brought up by the participants. Excellence was not only measured through good deeds but also through one's capability to have self-control in keeping their virginity for marriage. The *umhlekezo* is said to have been worn during *ukulusa* ceremony where young girls were initiated into women. Their virginity is tested and they are initiated into woman hood. The different beads on the *umhlekezo* are symbolism of different things (purenness, royalty etc.). The museum interpretation of Zulu women excellence is only assigned to their ability to use their nimble fingers and sensitive hands to shape the many items necessary for daily living.

Eurocentric scholarship fights nail and tooth to discredit Zulu women for originating bead work. Bryant (1905) Notes that the origins of beadwork are uncertain but it is craft which the Zulu women excel. While Bryant has no problem showering Zulu women with praises for their good work, but does not want to accept they had the mental capacity to originate the craft. Bryant also showers praises to Zulu men whom he describes as accomplished carvers of wood as evidenced by the antiques they made (Bryant 1905.p 8).According to Klopper 1989, today the fashion is to use cotton from the nearest trader's store for trading beadwork but traditionally ox gut was used,

gut is still regarded as the best material but not all families of fine bead work included gut. Tiny grass beads are put on a needle and combined together to create certain combinations

5.6 The Zulu Clay pot



Figure 7: The Zulu clay pot Ukhamba (Museum description) /udiyo (Participants description)

In the most general terms, Zulu ceramics do not just serve as items for domestic duties, but can also function in communion with the sacred. Such vessels are biographically identified. Examining the social life of ceramics in her Master's defines the biography of ceramics as follows; "By biography I think they have a history or experience that makes sense as they have been in KwaZulu-Natal since 150 BC. One can describe these vessels as having their own voice. Ceramic vessels are active participants in people's social life and have been given a "purpose," whether symbolic or functional, to those communicating with them. Within their specific social context vessels allow for the continuation of social norms for their human being, and in this case Zulu, users and function as dynamic agents in a conversation with the living ancestors" (Buss 2018 p.14) But it has however taken time for Zulu society scholars and researchers and their ceramic vessels, however, to see pots as having cultural meanings associated with a social function and a participatory role in ritual acts that maintain social dynamics and belief systems. These cultural meanings stem from their traditional use during the ceremonies especially the brewing and drinking of beer which in turn is relevant to ritual communication with the ancestral-spirits (*amaDlozi*). Here the CDL is thrown into the research to flesh out the need to

bring marginalised communities in this case the Zulu community interpretations of historic objects from the periphery to the margins. The Zulu play pot functions as an object that one can deduce deep meanings about the Zulu people's religious and socio-economic way of life from.

The participants view the pots as poetic, connective thread to their lineage, as well as a conduit for spiritual meditation. The ceramic vessel is certainly an active participant in its creator and user's social life, but interestingly it also has its own unique and lively social life (Buss 2018, p.15).

5.7 Manufacturing of pottery as a way of showing regional boundaries

The museum interpretation relied upon the variation in decorated pottery vessels to delimit material cultural boundaries and to infer group identity and chronological relationships. Flower (2015) and Huffman (2007) state that pottery style continues to be important for defining pre-colonial groups, or 'cultural units', and for inferring social group relatedness, interactions, and chronological relationships. They add that the relationship between pottery and group identity is of perennial interest in archaeology and one to which archaeologists in Southern Africa have devoted much energy. The museum interpretation brings out the need to employ the intersectionality theory in the sense that it groups different cultural groups according to style. It fails to appreciate that within the different groups that it merges together according to pottery styles there are other separating factors, for example the way that the pottery is made, the process of acquiring the raw materials would also differ. The museum's main argument is the final product, whereas it does not show how the final product with the same out-look was made differently under different environments.

According to the research participants, this interpretation portrays the Zulu people as static. It fails to recognize that the Zulu people have evolved over a long period of time and changed in the style of pottery making. The interviews noted that historically, not all Zulu people in the region decorated pottery in the pre-colonial era. Until the early twentieth century Nguni-speaking people rarely decorated pottery. Consequently, conventional stylistic analyses are of little help for identifying pre-colonial Nguni social groups and inferring social interactions. A potential solution to this problem is again provided by the fourth (4) research participant who

demonstrates that the manufacture of pottery, as opposed to its final appearance, provides a sensitive indicator of social identities. It is therefore argued that it is the making process of the pottery that distinguishes groups and not the decoration. Participant four (4) gives a narration of how decoration styles are adopted.

Pottery decorations did not really have anything to do with one's region or where they came from. Remember these was migration and intermarriages, so pottery styles would sometimes be the same because of these reasons. A woman from the east married in the south would take the same decorations they were making in the east to the site. So if you see pottery styles that look the same in these two regions can you then be able to distinguish regions? It was process of making the pottery that was different, this was mainly caused by environmental factors and the availability of natural resources to the disposal of the smiths in different regions.

The museum interpretations of Zulu pottery infer the importance of ceramic decorations as in identifying cultural boundaries as a way of separating the Zulu nation. The museum adopts an interpretation that sees changes in the shape or style of ceramics as usually due not to competition or social change and development within one group but to one group being affected by European groups moving into the Zulu space.

However, as participant four discusses, the decorations on the pottery are not necessarily accurate indicators due to the movement of local people through processes of migration. At the same time, it is important to bear in mind that geographical boundaries in Africa were brought to the African continent through colonization. This was part of the divide and rule tactic using by colonialists different chieftainships. Some of these chieftainships were regarded as superior to the others in a bid to cause friction amongst them.

P.W Laidler, a medical officer and amateur researcher based in East London, wrote an article in 1932 entitled "The Bantu Potting Industry and Its Impacts on the Other Native Potting Industries in South Africa." Laidler begins by attributing "the Hottentot" to the introduction of pottery in South Africa. In order to enhance the material culture of stagnant, undeveloped, more "primitive"

local populations, Laidler uses archeological evidence almost immediately to describe the idea of a creation hierarchy and the dominance of Bantu communities from elsewhere. Laidler writes that ; "The Bushmen, wherever he invented the art of working clay, did so with emulation, and only where there was long or near interaction with the superior race ... The Bushman was inadequate in the knowledge of potting technique." Lastly, Laidler concludes: "Originally both Hottentot and Bush (his word for Bushman) potting industries are attributed to the impacts of the beginning of Bantu culture, as far as the latter are concerned (Laidler 1932: 778). Again in slashing out racial undertones that are embedded in the writings of Laidler it is critical to bring in the CDL in order to understand how the writing create a "superior race "that is credited with civilization.

The geographical boundaries indicated in museum descriptions largely reflect in Eurocentric scholarship about Africa. It is critical to understand that geographical boundaries emerged from European, rather than Zulu, imaginaries. Therefore the museum needs to foster greater interpretations that relay a message of unity amongst the pre-colonial people of Africa.

5.8 Discrepancies in the naming of pottery

Data showed that there exists discrepancies in the naming of objects, where the naming of the above shown clay pot seems to vary from that of the museum. The researcher presented the photograph of the clay pot to research informants and asked them the name of the pot. During the interviews, participant one (1), two (2), three (3) noted the existence of the first discrepancy, in the form of the names of the collections or objects. Naming is a very important tool used among various African cultures to convey certain messages, either to an individual, family members or a community. Naming of various objects is linked with the socio-political factors of communities where the objects in question are found (Machaba, 2004).

The three participants identified the clay pot as *udiyo* and not *ukhamba* as the pot is labeled in the museum. This discrepancy is caused by the fact that the clay pots are named differently depending on which part of Kwa-Zulu-Natal one comes from.

Participant one (1)

From these objects the ones that I can identify is the *udiyo* and *umcekezo*. *Umcekezo* was used by young women during ceremonies and then *udiyo* was used for carrying milk. These objects also have other names in different regions of KZN. The *umcekezo* was made using wire and beads, these are cultural objects.

Participant two (2)

From these things, there is *umcele* or *umcekezo* , this is for women , they wear it on the head. The second one *udiyo* used for carrying and brewing beer as well as carrying water. Those two I can explain to you how they work.

Participant three (3)

From these objects the ones that I can identify is the *udiyo* and *umcekezo*. There is a lot of things you can use them I will explain as we go.

Flower (2015) agrees to the notion that the naming of vessels made in each community vary across communities. In this instance, the majority of the people residing in the Kwa-Mazibuko hostel are from the northern part of Kwa-Zulu-Natal. At the hostel, the clay pots for brewing beer, serving it as well as serving water is called *udiyo*. While there is a generalization of the use of the term *ukhamba* to refer to every Zulu clay pot (for brewing and serving beer), in the museum institution, the local community actually noted that there are geographical discrepancies that lead to the same clay pot being called by different Zulu names.

The WAM electronic data base gives a series of Zulu pottery compiled by Flower (2006). This series consists of the following Zulu ceramic repertoire. *Izimbiza* for beer brewing (1. *imbiza ugaga*; 2. *imbiza impofana*). *Ukhamba* for serving and storing water/beer and preparing medicines (3. *iphangela*; 4. *ukhamba udabulibheshu*; 5. *ukhamba ninepence*; 6. *umancishana*, 7. *ukhamba lwentelezi*; 8, 9. *izinkamba*; 10. *ukhamba lwamasi*; 11. *umcengezi*; 12. *umgodi wenyoka*). 13 & 14. *uphiso* for transporting water or beer. *Ingcazi* for serving, storage and transport of beer or water (15. *ingcazi*; 16. *ingcazi elinemilomo emine*, ‘*ingcazi* with four mouths’). *Isikhamba* for cooking or serving vegetables and other dishes (17.

isikhangezo/umgenqele/ umcengezi/isiyoco; 18. *umcakulo/isoco*). Ikhanzi for cooking meat (19. *ikhanzi*).

Flower's series of pottery does not therefore constitute all the Zulu names, indicating one of the major discrepancies that exist in the interpretation of the Zulu collections by the local community and the museum. From the interviews, participant 2 (two) notes that the discrepancies in interpretation of the collections is as a result of the way the collections were taken away from the Zulu people during the colonial era. Participant one notes that the collections were taken forcefully as a result some interpretations were omitted so as to erase certain memories and also create a certain image about the Zulu people.

An interesting dichotomy has been observed to exist between the demands of the museum and the local community. Participant four (4) makes mention of the fact that the local community is interested in collecting clay pots that shows meaningful patterns while the museum curators are "only interested in whether the pot is flawless (i.e. not cracked) and well-shaped. All the clay pots that are exhibited by the museum are flawless and not cracked. This again shows the failure by the museum to realize the historical value depicted on the pottery. To the museum, what is really important is the aesthetic value of the collection while to the local community values the historical and the spiritual values of the collections.

The museum interpretation seeks to give credit to Zulu women as renowned as potters who use prepare clay on a stone slab to make different clay pots. The museum interpretation promotes this capitalistic narrative that promotes the making of clay pots for commercial value forgetting the historical and cultural values that are associated with a Zulu woman's virginity. In this regard virginity is not valued because it does not bring any monetary values that are considered to be valuable in the western world. Apart from the importance of virginity, the interviews revealed that there are a number of other very important Zulu rituals that are fundamental to the everyday living of the Zulu person that cannot be held without the two collections in question.

These rituals and their importance are not explained in the museum exhibitions. These rituals also form part of the African heritage management systems yet their significance is not really explained. Clay pots used for beer drinking is an integral part of any gathering or festival and here women offers beer in customary fashion. Sacrifice too is very much part of the traditional

way of life and is done to please the ancestral spirits. The importance of sacrifice is not given in the museum interpretation though it is an integral part of the Zulu religious practices. Sacrifice was a way of appeasing the ancestors and asking for rains. It was also a way of asking for forgiveness for the sins that would have been committed in the land. This was very critical in connecting the ancestors to the living being. Only the aesthetic values are concretely given in the museum, where the use is given, it is short of the significance of the ceremonies that the collection was intended for.

5.9 The othering of the Zulu community

The making of the Zulu clay pots is also problematized in by Eurocentric scholars. In his Zulu English dictionary Dr AT Bryant says of the Zulu pottery “the African pottery of today is often in shape and patterns strongly similar to vessels made in the West and the simple earthly pots nowadays common in every Zulu kraal are almost identical with those in Egypt at around 6000 years ago (1905.p 8). A.T. Bryant was the most influential amateur social evolutionist and ethnographer of early twentieth-century Zulu tribal culture. A missionary priest who was stationed at Mariannhill in KwaZulu-Natal, Bryant arrived in South Africa in 1883, researching and writing extensively about the Zulu people over a sixty-year period. Bryant's book *The Zulu People* in 1949 notes that;

The Ancient Egyptians, who left us the earliest African historical records and also the earliest, still existing, earthenware pots, lived in the northernmost end of the African continent. And the earliest Egyptian pots, as shown in the British Museum and made 9,000 years ago in presynaptic times, are almost identical in form and technique with those created in Zululand in the present days (Shuter and Shooter, 1949, p. 395)

Bryant does not give an immediate account of how this similarity of pots is possible between two distinctly different cultural and geographical groups. However, he is reluctant to concede that the level of skill required to make Zulu pots might have emanated from the makers themselves. Instead he ascribes their level of skill as being somehow related to the Egyptians, a "higher" cultural group. Bryant is repeating what has become known as the "Hamitic theory or Hamitic

myth," in which scholars classified the "Hamitic race" as a subgroup of the Caucasian race which included the Egyptians amongst others. According to Buss (2018), the Hamites were believed to be related to Noah's son, Ham, and became a term in ethnology and linguistics for a division of the Caucasian race and the group of related languages theoretically spoken by those populations.

Although the Hamitic theory has significantly modified since its origins in the seventeenth century and has been employed to justify, among other things, the slave trade, what is important about this omnipresent "myth" is that it has usually been used as a way of explaining how anything technologically or culturally sophisticated or "civilized" could not be created by Black Africans. For example, one of its best-known advocates, G.C. Seligman, affirmed that "the Negro race was essentially static and agricultural, and that the Hamitic wandering' pastoral Caucasians' had introduced most of the advanced features found in Central African cultures, including metalwork, irrigation, and complex social structures." (Shuter and Shooter, 1949, p. 5).

Bryant's writing epitomized his time's thinking: that the "other," in this case the Zulu, could not have accomplished technically and esthetically skilled work without external influence from a superior race. Bryant further writes that ;"But whenever he (the Zulu) comes within the reach of the Caucasian man's inspiring example and energetic leadership ... be it European or Asian, he is able to follow with a heartfelt and effective response."(Bryant 1949, p.373). Bryant fails to appreciate how Zulu and other South African ceramists, long before the white man came, were able to connect with an indigenous "energizing leadership" (to use his own term). He describes being on a dig on Natal's north coast where he found pottery with a "rolled" rim or a concave neck, unusual for him since.

The participants noted that the designed makeup of the Zulu clay pots were as a result of environmental factors coupled with the available raw materials that were within the people's disposal. No foreign intervention is given credit in the making of pottery or ceramics by the participants. Participant four gives a description of how the clay pots are made;

The base of the clay pot was usually fashioned and placed in circle of grass on *inkata* to steady the construction as the sides are pain staking built up and around the completed pot is then patterned and with shaped piece of dry gourd and polished with a smooth stone. Patterns are

sometimes engraved which the clay is still soft with strong plastic hair comb. The Pot is fired in strong hot flames fueled by the resinous leaves of the aloe. It emerges brown or red and is then enclosed in a heap of dry gourd and polished on a smooth stone. Patterns are sometimes engraved while the clay is still soft with strong plastic hair comb. The pot is fired in strong hot flames of the aloe. It emerges brown or red and enclosed in a heap of dry grass and blackened in a fast burning smoking fire.

Bryant fails to appreciate how Zulu and other South African ceramists, long before the white man came, were able to connect with an indigenous "energizing leadership" (to use his own term). He describes being on a dig on Natal's north coast where he found pottery with a "rolled" rim or a concave neck, unusual for him since according to him "no Bantu tribe that has ever lived in that region, or indeed anywhere else in South East Africa, makes earthen pots of such types." While Bryant does not connect directly with Bantu-like pottery from Eastern Bantu groups migrating to South Africa, his writing does not offer an explanation of where it came from. He goes on to state that similar items exhumed in Zimbabwe existed in the Cape Town Museum.

5.10 Interpretation of ethnic evolution of humans in South Africa through ceramics

Buss (2018) notes that ceramic vessels' inability to "speak for themselves" has meant that they have been exposed to the scrutiny of others who undoubtedly have their own political and social agendas. The interpretation of ceramics has passed through different phases, as different disciplines—most notably anthropology, ethnology and archaeology—interpreted them according to the prevailing theoretical paradigms of a particular time. Originally, ceramic vessels were used to implicitly explain successive principles of the ethnic evolution of human types linked to the creation of academic disciplines in modern South Africa. The museum still holds some of these interpretations to date. Participant three 2 notes that;

When these things were taken people were fighting. They were taken because they looked down upon us. These things were used back then before the war so they were taken as a sign of victory by the white people.

In the early twentieth century, the study of South African societies was strongly influenced by British models of prehistoric studies and ethnography. Martin Hall reflects that: "These archeological culture-societies were seen as unchanging units in line with the functionalist ideas then prevalent in British anthropology, replaced by similar units through the cycle of migration and invasion."(Hall 1983, p.51). These new academic disciplines actively identified racial groupings in the early twentieth century, and sought to document the evolutionary stages or "progress" of these groups. At the same time, Eurocentric researchers aimed to set a timeline for different groups to occupy South Africa, sometimes in order to justify the colonial occupation and land appropriation. Research findings were frequently, and mostly unintentionally, used to rationalize the importance of separate development for different races and racial segregation that led to the establishment of an apartheid state in 1948. It was only towards the end of apartheid, and after apartheid, that South African scholars began exploring indigenous information structures with greater sensitivity during the 1980s and 1990s and its hegemonic institutions. Just before the turn of this century, ceramic vessels were studied not as ethnic markers but as diverse actors in social and spiritual interrelationships.

5.11 Assignment of hierarchical ranking of groups within South Africa through ceramics

Ceramics/ pottery was used to assign hierarchical ranking of groups with South Africa within Eurocentric scholarship. Eurocentric scholarship propounded theories that were shaped by assumptions about the superiority of different groups and attempts to plot from traditional and speculative scraps, they proposed sequences and directionality of the migrations and wars that led to black society's contemporary distribution and cultural expressiveness. The use of language by Bryant in defining ceramic vessels clearly assigns racial inferiority to Africans and defines the hierarchical ranking of groups within South Africa in a similar way. Hall states, doctors, clergy and natural scientists including A.T. Bryant, P.W.Laidler, who wrote about indigenous South African life, emphasized what they saw as the primitive way of life.

Almost always their rankings placed the Bushmen as the first but most primitive inhabitants, followed in turn by the culturally slightly higher Hottentots, and then the more advanced "higher" Bantu who migrated from the North. In an attempt to rationalize white rule, it was imperative to create a timeline of when different ethnic groups were present in South Africa. The

scholars called this approach the "settler paradigm or school of settlers". By creating a myth that colonizers' intrusion was "the natural order of things" the "settler paradigm" provided justification for colonial expansion and territorial appropriation. Not only were the colonizers entering an empty land nearly extinct with the Bushmen, but, as Dubow clarifies, "housing and conquest serves to reinforce the idea that white supremacy is the natural result of a logical process in which the survival of the fittest is clearly seen to prevail. Similarly, the categorization of levels of sophistication or "civilization" between groups supported the racial segregation political program from 1910 onwards and then the apartheid institution in 1948. It made perfect sense that if blacks were a "lower" race, segregation would be permissible on the grounds that "they (blacks) should be helped to develop along the lines most suited to their nature".

Changes in the form or style of ceramics were typically attributed not to interaction or socioeconomic change and development within one group but to one group being influenced by another coming into their space. In 1932, P.W. Laidler, a medical officer and amateur researcher in East London, wrote an article entitled "the Hottentot." He goes on to speculate that there is evidence to suggest that the "western Hottentot pottery (Type 1) has certain affinities with that of the Bantu, and that the degenerated and imitative potters in the east have been greatly influenced by north and west Bantu practices.". In order to enhance the material culture of stagnant, undeveloped, more "primitive" local populations, Laidler uses archeological evidence almost immediately to describe the idea of a creation hierarchy and the dominance of Bantu communities from elsewhere. "The Bushmen did so imitatively everywhere he learned the art of working clay, and only where there was long or near contact with close contact with the superior race ... The Bushman was inadequate in potting technique. Laidler finally concludes: "In origin both Hottentot and Bush (his term for Bushman) potting industries are due, as far as the latter are concerned, to the impacts of Bantu civilization beginning during that period of Bantu culture known as the Stone Building or 'Zimbabwe' period." Some of these sequences are still present in the museum today and are also part of the academic curriculum in South Africa. It is imperative that the museum institution takes a de-colonial stance in resisting such sequences of settlement in South Africa (Buss 2018, p. 22).

Chapter Six : Conclusion

The findings revealed that there are two major types of interpretations that can be deduced from the collections: interpretations for those who are members of the Zulu community (i.e., indigenous curators, local visitors and local people) and interpretations for those who are not Zulu identifying (i.e., museum interpretations and academic interpretations that are mostly Eurocentric interpretations that seek to portray Europeans as a superior race.) Such interpretations are put by the museum for people of European descent. The study noted that community based interpretations of Zulu cultural artefacts have remained largely obscured within museum representations designed for European visitors.

The study also noted various issues of importance that relates to issues of power and Zuluness. Patriarchal social relations between Zulu men and women cannot be divorced from the meanings associated with particular objects considered within this research project. The study noted that hegemonic Zulu masculinity is authoritative, and requires Zulu women to submit or defer to men. The role of patriarchy in interpretation was signalled in the research by the fact that the female participants did not want to speak against the traditions and cultural values of the head of the *uMuzi/Household*. Also important to note is the use of colonial redress to defend the authoritative status of Zulu men. While the study found that museum interpretations of Zulu cultural artefacts often overlooked community interpretations, the research found that the museum interpretations do provide an indication of the dominance of the Zulu men in the household.

This study recommends that the WAM implement an appropriate and effective system of interpretation for the specific community context which encourages people— both ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ — to have a more complex understanding of Zulu communities throughout history. This system will involve engaging the local communities such as the Kwa-Mazibuko community to also have a role in the interpretation the collections. Through such processes, the museum would increasingly engage with communities and contribute to sustainable heritage development and management.

The study further recommends that the WAM does some more rigorous work to redress past inequalities in the museum through making sure that their interpretations speak truth to power and encourage redress. Even if some of the current curators in the museum did not have a direct hand in creating this issue, failure to deal with it effectively would make us all guilty of perpetuating racism within the discipline.

There is an immediate need for a move away from verbal assurances and decisive action through presenting knowledge that reflects community cultural practices and understandings in the museum.. It is high time we saw the implementation of an inclusive transformation plan, which had to be developed with the input of all relevant stakeholders, particularly those affected by the lack of transformation (Ndlovu 2009, p. 91). While African communities have always played a significant role in the discipline of archaeology, their presence has often not been recognized (Shepherd 2002). This has created a situation in which, in my opinion, local communities rightly see the museum as an institution that is mainly run by and concerned with white people and interests.

Instead of having only African laborers in the museum, we need to encourage the training of professional museologists and curators who can become heritage professionals. A general perception seems to exist that Africans are not interested in the heritage that archaeologists seek to study and protect.

The WAM could also educate local communities to help protect their heritage and the need to play a part in interpreting it. Programs such as the 'Zebra on Wheels' mobile exhibition implemented by the Botswana National Museum provides one model of action that could be implemented by WAM to increase heritage awareness in historically marginalized communities. The Zebra on Wheels mobile exhibition was an initiative by the Botswana National Museum meant to take museum collections out of the museum to black communities around Gaborone so as to increase the museum's visibility and also allow formerly marginalized groups to identify with the museum.

In museum interpretation, the creation of binary notions of 'them 'and 'us 'needs to be avoided and the museum should play a leading role in avoiding these in their galleries. Broadly speaking, African people care deeply about heritage, though our agendas may differ. Archaeologists must

communicate with members of the local community among whom they work and at a level that genuinely makes the communities feel included and appreciated (Ndlovu 2009, p. 91). African cultures have complex migration and settlement histories, interlaced with memory, culture, and landscape. Documentation, provenance and analysis of 'orality cultures' requires strategies that are unique to the continent. Across African contexts African culture is viewed differently, and this should affect how we perform our research and write about the past.

Memory is part of the history of Africa, part of African historical experience and climate, and is the making of African history. The written word is inseparable from that which is spoken. Although both sources are valid, oral texts are a medium appreciated by those who preserve them. Museums have given written texts a privileged position at the expense of the oral, and this has influenced history-writing and the development of certain historical past (Pikirai 2015, p. 36-537). How we deal with inherent biases in the creation of narratives on African histories is something that should be pursued in non-Western contexts (Schmidt and Patterson 1995, p.96).

To this end, various ways of involvement can contribute to the preservation of museum artefacts or collections as well as the use of local knowledge or interpretation. All community members interested in the museum can contribute by choosing the subjects to be explored, engaging in oral history or design workshops, interviewing or interviewing, gathering items, taking photographs or contributing to a painting, learn more about themselves and at the same time learn about the culture they/we create a common understanding of their existence and its past. Being a subject similarly implies imagination, and the museum promotes collaborative development as it allows people the opportunity to engage in processes and tell their stories in their own way. Instead of embracing provided approaches, it can become possible to create new ways of solving issues, and the community museum is a platform for promoting new ideas and community projects (Freire 1975, p. 28-45).

African history-making in the South African sense is also about how African indigenous information structures such as oral traditions and role playing influence and changes ways of knowing the past. It is about recognizing that knowledge is a common resource due to its varied and varied forms which need to be preserved. Nonetheless, one must be aware that western knowledge, while useful, has 'cost of opportunity', whereas local knowledge systems are

complex. By 'cost of opportunity', I mean that Western knowledge has been and is still being used to define, and often undermine, other knowledge systems. Thus, there should be no single, monolithic and dominant narrative of and about the past or of a place. Rather, the issue is the survival of local communities and indigenous African knowledge systems that have been deemed irrelevant by western colonial scholarship. The genealogy of museology cannot be detached from a reflection on the political centers of knowledge, across the different parts of the world where it has been adopted as a "science" or university discipline.

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