

# **More than Staples and Glue: conservation, heritage and the making of a curriculum**

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## **Declaration**

I declare that this thesis submitted in partial requirements for PhD Museum and Heritage Studies was composed by myself, that the work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

## **Ethics statement**

I declare that I obtained all the applicable research ethics approval and have observed the ethical standards required in terms of the University of Pretoria's Code of Ethics for researchers and the policy guidelines for responsible research.

*McGinn*

## Abbreviations

<b>ACTAG</b>	Arts and Culture Task Group
<b>AIC</b>	American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works
<b>ASAPA</b>	Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists
<b>BMA</b>	British Museums Association
<b>CHDA</b>	Centre for Heritage Development in Africa
<b>DAC</b>	National Department of Arts and Culture
<b>DSIR</b>	Department of Scientific and Industrial Research
<b>ECCO</b>	European Confederation of Conservator-Restorer's Organisations
<b>ELM</b>	Experiential Learning Model
<b>ENCORE</b>	European Network for Conservation-Restoration Education
<b>EPA</b>	École du Patrimoine Africain
<b>GLAM</b>	Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums
<b>ICCROM</b>	Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
<b>ICIC</b>	International Committee for Intellectual Co-operation
<b>ICOM</b>	International Council of Museums
<b>ICOM-CC</b>	International Council of Museums Conservation Committee
<b>ICOMOS</b>	International Council on Monuments and Sites
<b>ICON</b>	Institute of Conservation
<b>ICTOP</b>	International Committee for Training of Personnel
<b>IIC</b>	International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works
<b>IMO</b>	International Museum Office
<b>INCAA</b>	International Network for the Conservation of Contemporary Art
<b>ISANG</b>	Iziko South African National Gallery
<b>LoN</b>	League of Nations
<b>NHTI</b>	National Heritage Training Institute
<b>NPS</b>	National Park Service
<b>PREMA</b>	Prevention and Conservation in Museums in Africa
<b>PSTI</b>	Professional Standards and Transformation Indicators (p119)

<b>RDP</b>	Reconstruction and Development Programme
<b>RITP</b>	Robben Island Training Programme
<b>SAMA</b>	South African Museums Association
<b>SAMAB</b>	South African Museum Association's Bulletin
<b>SAInst</b>	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation
<b>SANG</b>	South African National Gallery
<b>SANParks</b>	South African National Parks
<b>SAQA</b>	South African Qualifications Authority
<b>SIDA</b>	Swedish International Development Agency
<b>UCT</b>	University of Cape Town
<b>UKIC</b>	United Kingdom Institute for Conservation
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNISA</b>	University of South Africa
<b>UP</b>	University of Pretoria
<b>WAMP</b>	West African Museum Programme
<b>WWI</b>	World War One
<b>WWII</b>	World War Two



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*It always seems impossible until it is done.*

Nelson Mandela

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*Speed doesn't matter,  
forward is forward*



## Abstract

*Heritage collections in South Africa are deteriorating as evidenced by surveys in heritage institutions, interviews and site visits. This can partly be ascribed to a decline in heritage preservation and conservation capacity, this in turn can be attributed to poor succession planning and a lack of local heritage conservation training opportunities. This thesis identifies local conservation needs and challenges by reviewing available local training and consultation processes to engage with various stakeholders. Data collection addressed a description, historical interpretation and analysis of the current state of conservation of collections, as the levels and type of staff training involved in collections care. The research also entails a critical review and analysis of current curriculum development theories to conceptualise formal academic conservation teaching and training to meet local needs and requirements. A curriculum was developed in response to research findings, guided by a review of curriculum development theory in line with criteria for a transformed curriculum. The research contributes to conservation generally, but more specifically, it contributes to archival knowledge on conservation as a profession in South Africa, where publication in the sector is scant. Additionally, although there are many programmes in heritage conservation internationally, few have been the subject of analysis and self-reflection regarding their conception, curriculum development or adaptation, and how they are taught. The thesis addresses this knowledge gap and contributes an original body of knowledge on conservation education in South Africa and abroad in historical, descriptive and analytical terms.*

### **Keywords:**

Conservation, tangible heritage conservation, heritage, heritage preservation, museum conservation training, teaching heritage conservation, conservation training, education, learning, knowledge, transfer, pedagogy, critical pedagogy, curriculum planning, curriculum development, curriculum transformation.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

*Our cultural objects are part of our lifeways, which we pass on from generation to generation. Times change. These cultural objects give an idea of what it was like in a previous time. They tell us who we are.*

*(Tullie, In Ogden, 2004:23)*

This thesis presents a description of an archive representing the shaping of the Tangible Heritage Conservation Master's programme at the University of Pretoria. In 2015 the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation convened a meeting of South African universities and stakeholders in the heritage sector to discuss the possibility of developing a formal, university-based qualification in the field of art and heritage conservation. The workshop consisted of presentations from overseas experts and discussions on whether there would be a need for teaching and training in heritage conservation, what format such training should take, what competencies it could foster, and whether there was an institution or group of institutions that could develop and implement such training. The University of Pretoria was selected as the programme leader, and the development of this curriculum commenced in 2016 together with a range of stakeholders, both locally and regionally. The programme was officially launched in September 2018, and the University admitted its first cohort of three students into the new Tangible Heritage Conservation Master's coursework programme in 2019 (see conclusion<sup>1</sup>). The negotiations with stakeholders and the Foundation and the development of a curriculum for the new programme came when the country was experiencing a rather extended, extensive and disruptive period of student protests referred to as #FeesMustFall. Although focused on the issue of fees and the obstacles of access to higher education for students from impoverished backgrounds, these protests were also heavily focused on a call for the decolonisation of universities and the curriculum. Calls for curriculum transformation are based on the notion that many curricula require, amongst other issues, 'transformation' from a dominant Eurocentric perspective and paradigm to one that is essentially more inclusive, locally focussed and

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<sup>1</sup> See conclusion, page 228

relevant. Notions of transformation and decolonisation are particularly relevant in the field of heritage in general, but specifically, when it comes to heritage preservation, as generally, what is preserved is what is valued, that which is seen as having significance. Who selects what is significant and according to whose criteria allows some voices and narratives to dominate whilst others are silenced. Thus, heritage conservation is not neutral, highlighting the importance of a culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate and decolonised conservation curriculum. In addition, the increased calls for transformation and decolonisation in the heritage sector have bolstered calls for repatriation of cultural material to their originator communities. A strong argument presented against repatriation has been the fear that the heritage material, once returned, will be lost if returned to countries where heritage conservation is still an emerging concept and receiving institutions do not have the skills, knowledge and facilities to care for and preserve that heritage (Young, 2008:99). Calls for restitution and repatriation of objects and artefacts thus provide a specific impetus for developing training in conservation or strengthening it where it is already existing. In addition, heritage is increasingly at risk due to urbanisation, industrialisation, vandalism and looting, general neglect, inappropriate handling, storage and display conditions, and accidental damage. The survival of cultural heritage depends on having adequately educated and trained curators, collection managers, and heritage and site managers who understand and value the preservation of cultural heritage.

These varying concepts surrounding heritage conservation are stitched together and explained further in the following chapters, which document the development of conservation as an academic discipline at the University of Pretoria.

### **1.1. Clarifying terminology**

An engagement with conservation history (Elsorady, 2011), including related theory, concepts and definition, should proceed with a general clarification of what 'conservation' and 'heritage' mean. In the remit of this thesis, 'conservation' refers to heritage conservation. Heritage conservation in this context is thus understood as the preservation and conservation of collections in galleries, libraries, archives and museums (known collectively as the GLAM industry) and is guided by various conservation codes of ethics. Natural history collections that preserve natural history specimens fall within the ambit of heritage conservation in museums



and will be considered within this field, as opposed to the broader field of nature conservation. This is an important distinction to make early on, particularly in South Africa, where nature conservation is well-recognised and entrenched in public and popular thought (Beinart, 2008; Reardon, 2012; Richardson, 2016; Carruthers, 2017). Nature conservation, like heritage conservation, encompasses several different ethical and philosophical approaches focussing on ensuring our continued relationships with and within nature (Sandbrook, 2015:565). Heritage conservation (Chung, 2011) is lesser known in South Africa, and a brief survey of the term 'conservation' is likely to lead to nature conservation references rather than references concerning cultural heritage conservation. This study will initially explore meanings associated with the term 'conservation' in the context of western art and heritage, its etymology and a brief overview of its development in Europe (and Southern contexts) before turning to examine how it appears in South Africa both in practice and in the local scholarly literature.

ICOM-CC<sup>2</sup> (Definition of profession 1984 - ICOM-CC, 2020) defines conservation as the activity of the conservator-restorer, indicating that

[p]reservation is action taken to retard or prevent deterioration of or damage to cultural properties by control of their environment and/or treatment of their structure in order to maintain them as nearly as possible in an unchanging state. Restoration is action taken to make a deteriorated or damaged artefact understandable, with minimal sacrifice of aesthetic and historic integrity.

'Conservation' is defined by the South African Museums Association (SAMA) as "keeping from harm, decay or loss, and embraces preservation, restoration, protection as well as preventative conservation, and remedial conservation" (South African Museums Association, 2004). The present research focuses on Europe when looking at the development of conservation. The reason for this is two-fold: firstly, the roots of formal academic conservation practices originated during the European Enlightenment period as outlined in this introduction and Chapter 2<sup>3</sup>; secondly, available literature focused on the history and development of conservation programmes and conservation as a discipline has been written by European<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> ICOM-CC is the International Council of Museum's (ICOM) International Committee for Conservation established in 1967. The committee now has 21 working groups representing different professionals working on a variety of materials.

<sup>3</sup> See chapter 2, page 21

<sup>4</sup> Pye (UK); Chris Caple (UK); Stan Lester (UK); Pierre Leveau (French); Winsor (UK), Christina von Buchholtz (Germany), Julia Becker (Germany), Rene Hoppenbrouwers (The Netherlands)

(Lambert 2010; Leveau, 2014; Pye, 2001), Canadian<sup>5</sup> (Clavir, 2002) and American<sup>6</sup> scholars (Hill Stoner, 2017; Matero, 2006). The care and maintenance of structures and objects upheld in conservation ethics is a practice as old as creating functional and ritual objects and is well documented. This can be said specifically for the sub-disciplines developed in the west, including ceramics (Garachon, 2010), paintings (Groen, 2011; Marijnissen, 2015), books (Etherington, 2007) and archaeological objects (Plenderleith, 1971). Additionally, there is a growing body of theoretical and practical knowledge of conservation which regionally-based scholars in Africa are developing (Chirikure et al., 2015; Joffroy, 2005; Herholdt, 2014; Tiley-Nel & Botha, 2013; Sidi, 2012), Asia (Chung, 2005; Wijesuriya & Lee, 2017; Lee, 2011; Alam & Kumari, 2017) and other geographic locations (Aslan, 2016; Wijesuriya, 2007) – all of which provide another narrative to how Southern perspectives speak to and engages Western models.

## **1.2. Staples and Glue, a note on the title**

The title of this thesis, *More than Staples and Glue: conservation, heritage and the making of a curriculum*, is deliberately multi-layered and warrants explanation. The title foregrounds the development of conservation practice (Jones & Yarrow, 2013) and its early methods of repair and later restoration. 'Staples' and 'glue' refer to metal rivets used to piece together drilled ceramics, and animal-based glues made from hide, hoof and scales preceded modern synthetic adhesives. Simultaneously, the title encapsulates the evolution of conservation as it is practised today, which involves more than a utilitarian fix and simply reconstructing or mending damaged artworks and artefacts. Over time, conservation has evolved from repair to restoration into the discipline today where conservation protocols dictate that intervention be mindful of the object's integrity. The introduction of new materials such as plastics, mixed-media artworks and time-based media have all contributed to challenging the applications of modern conservation. Although several volumes have reviewed the historiography and development of conservation in recent years, it is recapped briefly in the following chapter to contextualise the research.

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<sup>5</sup> Miriam Clavir (Canada)

<sup>6</sup> Joyce Hill Stoner (USA), Frank Matero (USA)

Today, object conservation involves depth of thought, analysis, consultation, and critical decision-making when devising proposals before treatment interventions (Conti & Glanville, 2007). The phrase *More than Staples and Glue* symbolically refers to piecing parts together and constructing a curriculum as a pedagogic and, by extension, a knowledge project. Like a reconstructed vessel, it can become an object of inquiry, scrutinised, analysed, and interpreted. The notion of joining fragments metaphorically represents the hopes of connecting people and growing the network of institutions, academics, practitioners and graduates to consolidate and stabilise the field of conservation in South Africa.

### **1.3. Aims and rationale for the research**

The purpose of the initial research project was to explore the field of heritage conservation in South Africa to determine the necessity for locally based formal academic training as a primary research question for a potential planning grant application. The initial research project thus reviewed currently available heritage conservation training in South Africa and its focus to decide if the available programmes are responsive to identified needs and determine the necessity for additional training. The needs analysis also aimed to demonstrate that a university-based postgraduate academic programme in tangible heritage conservation would be best suited to meet the needs of institutional collections and museums in South Africa. This initial research on the South African conservation landscape, prompted further sub-questions which form the core of the present research and are addressed within the context of each chapter of this thesis (I shall expand on this later in this section). Namely, what would the architecture and content of a postgraduate Masters' curriculum in Tangible Heritage Conservation contribute to a knowledge project.

Beyond the initial needs analysis, the emphasis of the research is located in the pedagogic. The research into the construction of the master's degree in Tangible Heritage Conservation is not simply about curriculum matters and exploring how a postgraduate training programme in conservation can be conceptualised responsively. The research is about a broad interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary knowledge domain (namely conservation studies) that brings into dialogue the dual worlds of art and science (Leona, 2009; Yang, 2015). The thesis contributes to constructing a body of knowledge on curriculum development while documenting and critically analysing the particular case study of the University of Pretoria's master's degree in Tangible Heritage Conservation.

The research also provides some perspective on the development or re-development of new curricula in South Africa, spurred to an extent by calls for the transformation of higher education (Luckett, 2016; Badat, 2010; Cloete, 2004). Lastly, creating the curriculum and training of graduates will provide essential research contributions towards the knowledge project both in academia and practice within the broader field of heritage conservation.

Despite the existence of quality conservation-training programmes available worldwide and specifically in Northern contexts, access is restricted due to the small intake in each programme and the excessive costs involved, which are prohibitive for local bursaries. A local, and by extension, Southern programme would offer a financially more manageable alternative and be more appropriate to the collections, materials, and issues of damage, deterioration, and decay inherent in an African context, which differ substantially from those in the global north. In addition, as discussions intensify over the repatriation of African artefacts to their originator communities on the continent, there is an increased need for the training of museum personnel, including conservators, to care for this returning material, in addition to extant local collections.

Beyond the pedagogic, the thesis afforded me the opportunity to thoroughly research the development of conservation-restoration on a global scale since its inception, how the notions of preservation and conservation have developed over time in various contexts, and transported to different cultural contexts. The research on conservation in South Africa is significant in the context of the development of the country's first academic programme, as an understanding of how the field was shaped in the past allows for a better understanding of the present landscape, its challenges and how a formal academic training programme may respond to the current situation, but also give its graduates a better understanding of the professional field they are entering and how to navigate practice in the local context.

In summary, the research addresses the development, past and current heritage and heritage conservation landscape both locally and globally, curriculum development processes and curriculum decision-making.

The following section provides a brief overview of this study's research methods and design and relevant paradigms of research that draw on insights from the social sciences and humanities.

#### **1.4. Research design and methodology**

The research design draws on both ontological and epistemological insights to validate the use of a qualitative research design involving a case study focused on developing the master's degree in Tangible Heritage Conservation.

According to Taylor (1996), “[q]ualitative research is linked to people and describes the multiplicity of truths constructed from within the ever-changing circumstances in which people find themselves” instead of quantitative research that seeks to communicate a single truth. Qualitative research attempts to understand rich and complex situations, acknowledging that understanding can only ever be partial and coloured by the researcher's particular lens. This study is primarily documentary, explicatory and descriptive and uses mixed methods of purposive sampling, questionnaires, focus group interviews, discussions and other forms of data collection. Qualitative research privileges narrative and descriptive studies, and as this research focusses on the description and recounting of a particular case study involving the construction of a new curriculum at the University of Pretoria, qualitative research is the most appropriate approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Freebody, 2003; Merriam, 2002).

##### **1.4.1. Research paradigm**

My research paradigm (conservation, heritage, curriculum-making) features in relevant chapters. Conservation and heritage featured in this introduction are broadly discussed and will re-feature throughout this thesis, while curriculum as a concept and topic is more fully engaged in chapters 4 and 5. The overarching research question revolves around the conceptualisation and design of postgraduate training in heritage conservation, what this training would entail, and how it could contribute meaningfully to the knowledge project and focus in chapter 5.

##### **1.4.2. Research method**

Ritchie and Lewis (2003:3) define qualitative research as an approach that is “directed at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world, by learning about people's social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories.”

Stinson (2008:10) describes qualitative research as “linked to people and describes the multiplicity of truths constructed from within the ever-changing circumstances in which people find themselves, as opposed to quantitative research, which seeks to communicate a single

truth. Qualitative research attempts to provide depth of understanding of rich and complex situations with the acknowledgement that understanding can only ever be partial and coloured by the researcher's particular lens". According to Creswell (2003), qualitative research relies on participants' views, asks broad and general questions and collects narrative or descriptive data. The primary data for the current research is collected through questionnaires, focus group interviews, one-on-one interviews and discussions (see Appendix 1), aligning with Creswell's (2003) definition of qualitative research.

Qualitative research privileges narrative and descriptive studies, and as this research focusses on the description and recounting of a particular case study involving the construction of a new curriculum at the University of Pretoria, qualitative research is the most appropriate approach to describe, analyse and represent the process of the development of Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria. It is important to bear in mind the potential disadvantage of qualitative research. Creswell (2003) states that qualitative data, once collected, is described and analysed for themes and the inquiry is generally conducted in a subjective and biased manner. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind the positionality and approach of the researcher and potential biases.

### **1.4.3. Research strategy**

Yin (2003:5) explains five different research strategies in social science: experiments, surveys, archival analyses, histories, and case studies. The selection of an appropriate research strategy is dependent on the research question and can be guided by the basic series of questioning of "who", "what", "where", "when", "how", and "why". The present research is based on an initial research project aiming to answer a simple question: Is there a need for conservation training in South Africa? The most appropriate research strategy for this question was a survey.

In the present research, the overarching research question posed is, what would the architecture and content of a postgraduate Masters' curriculum in Tangible Heritage Conservation contribute to a knowledge project? And subsequent questions would address, at what level should this training be presented? Who would take the lead in presenting it?

As Yin (2003:5) describes, if the research question focusses mainly on answering "what" questions, the research can be seen as 'exploratory', and any of the five research strategies can

be employed in combination such as an exploratory survey, archival strategies, or an exploratory case study. On the other hand, ‘Who’ and ‘where’ questions, such as those dealing with the location and presentation of new training, are likely to favour survey strategies and the analysis of archival records (Yin, 2003:6). The ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are more explanatory and likely to lead to case studies as the preferred strategy.

This thesis focuses on the particular example of new conservation training at the University of Pretoria, and therefore a case study strategy is the aptest, as the research attempts to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions and understanding real-life contexts (Yin, 2003:1). Yin (2003:1) refers to this type of research as ‘explanatory’ case studies, which can be complemented by ‘exploratory’ and ‘descriptive’ case studies. Yin (2003:1-2) further explains how case studies can be used in a variety of situations to understand better and “contribute to our knowledge of the individual, group, organisational, social, political, and related [complex social] phenomena.”

My research strategy engages a case study strategy. As Merriam (1998:27) explains, case studies can sometimes be confusing as a research approach, as a ‘case study’ can refer to the process of inquiry, the case or unit of analysis, and the product of that inquiry, i.e. the report. A case study strategy is most appropriate for the present research as a case study does not seek to tell the whole story. A case study “attempts to tell the story of the unity of the case, seeking to understand and communicate the complexity of the ‘bounded system’” (Stake, 1995:2).

Case studies thus have definite boundaries; in the present research, the case under review is of the development of conservation as a postgraduate field of study at the University of Pretoria.

This case study is descriptive in nature. A descriptive case study presents a detailed account of the unit being researched and is often used in education. Although Merriam (1998:34) acknowledges that these types of studies may be theoretical, they are useful in that they

present basic information in areas of education where little research has been conducted. Innovative practices and programmes are often the focus of descriptive case studies in education. Such studies often form a database for future comparison and theory building. [...] Case studies are thus important in advancing a field’s knowledge base.

The strategy employed for the present study is primarily documentary, explicatory and descriptive of a case study, namely the development of Tangible Heritage Conservation as a new field of study at the University of Pretoria. It informs curriculum design and, in particular, the construction of a Master's Degree curriculum in Tangible Heritage Conservation.

#### **1.4.4. Data collection methods**

Research methods are the techniques and procedures used to collect, sort, analyse and interpret the data collected during research. In essence, they are the 'tools of the trade' of the researcher (Walliman, 2011:7). Mixed methods of purposive sampling, questionnaires, focus group interviews, discussions, and other data collection forms were used as the primary data for the present research.

The research was carried out in phases, explained in more detail in chapter 5. A preliminary research phase was carried out at the behest of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation<sup>7</sup>, with an initial electronic questionnaire and survey, followed by a needs analysis and workshop in 2015. Following the workshop, a development grant was awarded to the University of Pretoria by the Mellon Foundation, which allowed further engagement. The approach to the research was qualitative and participatory with mixed methods of data collection, including questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and site visits throughout South Africa and neighbouring countries to identify conservation needs, conservation specialists, professionals and academics who could become involved with designing the curriculum and its presentation. In addition a 'snowball' technique was used, otherwise known as chain-referral sampling, where the identified participants as primary data sources nominate other potential primary data sources to be used in the research. In other words the sampling method relies on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects.

Once the overarching goals and framework of the curriculum were set out, it was then populated and content applied via electronic consultations and communication with area

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<sup>7</sup> The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, is a US-based non-profit corporation, which believes that "humankind has developed means of chronicling, recording, analysing, and transmitting its understanding of human agency, dignity, history, and society" (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation website, 2017) and has achieved this through the arts and the humanities. They define their mission as a need to strengthen, promote and nurture cultural heritage programmes at leading cultural institutions and institutions of higher learning to ensure a 'shared global future' (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 2017: [https:// mellon.org/about/mission/](https://mellon.org/about/mission/)).



specialists to add in locally relevant content and reference. This draft curriculum was then submitted for local and international peer review. The document was adjusted before submission for approval through the University structures.

The final phase of research includes developing this thesis with its accompanying literature review to better understand the field of conservation, its origins in Europe, its philosophies and development over time in both approach and practice and its manifestation (if applicable) in South Africa. Although conservators were involved in the first phases of the research, discussions focused on how teaching and training should be structured at the University of Pretoria, including format and content. Despite this large body of information, the conversations were forward-looking and were insufficient to understand past conservation practice and changes in South Africa, *where we have come from*. As it is vital to understand where we have come from to understand where we are going (and potentially avoid pitfalls), many conservators and practitioners involved in the care of collections were (re)interviewed to gain a better understanding of our local context, its development, and provide a descriptive account of conservation's evolution locally as outlined in chapter 3.

#### **1.4.5. Data analysis**

Data collection is only the initial step in research, and after that, the data needs to be organised and interpreted (O'Connor and Gibson, 2003:65). Data analysis is the process where data is reduced to a story and its interpretation. Data analysis includes the transcription of audio interview material and actively reading transcripts to organise, categorise and summarise data to identify recurring themes and ideas, and link them to each other (Connelly, 2003).

#### **1.4.6. Reliability and validity of data**

As the data gathering process was done voluntarily, there are a few recognised limitations regarding representability. Institutions and professionals were identified selectively based on public dissemination of their conservation expertise or projects. As a result, there is a strong bias towards national institutions (museums, libraries and archives), which historically have more significant resources to fund conservation spaces and initiatives. Common sense would dictate that national institutions would be well supported and most likely have the resources to

maintain their collections. At the same time, smaller institutions would be less likely to have the same degree of collections care and conservation.

As a result of writing a thesis on a subject where I am a participant and a critical commentator, bias elements do creep in. These elements were formulated in constructing the argument and motivating a set of perspectives. Bias and ideology is always evident in interpretations, whether Eurocentric, Western centric or southern focussed, these approaches are all carry ideological freight and are not neutral. The history and development of conservation is heavily western-focussed as this is where the field originated and has developed greatly, leading to much research emanating from the West. As such I have purposefully sought to broaden my selection of references, and this is partly the value of the present research to add southern-focused and African-centred knowledge and history to add to the growing body of literature.

#### **1.4.7. Research ethical issues**

As a member of the curriculum development team, my involvement defines me as both the researcher and one of the participants. My role was thus both to document and collate the decisions taken and interpret them, and therefore I made contributions to both the documents and the process of development of the curriculum.

At the start of this project, I was employed as museum objects conservator of the University of Pretoria Museums. My initial interest in this research was thus directed at the opportunity to learn more about the field within which I practised and better understand the reasons why conservation appears to face so many challenges, including a shortage of expertise, little institutional support, limited training opportunities, isolated practitioners and poor quality treatments carried out by ‘cowboys’.

Additionally, participation in the research provided the opportunity to assist, where possible, in shaping the envisaged conservation training and be involved in professionalising the sector (see Carbonell, 2012; Kaplan, 1994; Thomas, 2016). This materialised with an initial art conservation scoping survey carried out by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. As indicated earlier, a subsequent planning grant was awarded to the University of Pretoria, focusing on connecting people and institutions through a series of consultations and site visits. This process enabled open conservation discussions to explore the heritage and conservation landscape on a national level and identified needs, scope, relevance, expertise and competencies to deliver a

master's programme in tangible heritage conservation. This is the practical, pedagogic exercise at the core of the research.

The notion of using this data as the base for wider academic research into the field of heritage and conservation in South Africa and the development of a curriculum emerged during the data collection phase of the project. Thus the research for the present thesis is based on an existing project and its initial data. An introductory email was drafted introducing the project, desire for collaboration and meetings to gather data for the project and to notify participants that the data generated would potentially be used for further research (see Appendix 2). Once the suggestion was accepted that the data generated could make for doctoral research, this was also communicated to participants, both in writing and verbally, during the introductions of the participants and the researcher. Wherever data collection involved interviews, questionnaires, site visits and focus group discussions, this was done voluntarily on the part of the contributors. Participation was not forced, and participants were not coerced or led to answer in a particular manner. Not all stakeholders identified and contacted electronically responded to the call and contributed to the conversations and data collection of the study.

Although the names of individual participants and participating institutions have been recorded, these have generally been left out of the initial reports to ensure confidentiality. Anonymity was, however, not possible as the data collection process involved face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions. Participants have been quoted throughout this research. Their permission was obtained, and a draft of the chapter where they are named was supplied for an initial read-through.

## **1.5. Chapter outline**

The thesis provides a comprehensive description and argument of developing the master's degree in Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria's as a case study. The current chapter introduces the thesis in broad brushstrokes by motivating an argument and a brief rationale for the study.

In the preceding introduction, I outlined some of the terminology associated with conservation and its interpretation in the research. I also briefly considered the historical development of conservation and how this is currently changing to align with the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in a globally connected world. In subsequent chapters (specifically chapter 5), I provide a detailed

narrative of the development of the University of Pretoria's Master's in Tangible Heritage Conservation as a case study. The thesis argument is mapped in terms of the following chapters.

After the brief historical overview of conservation development in chapter 1, chapter 2 describes the conservation ecosystem, where conservation technicians, conservation scientists, conservators and restorers navigate between theory and practice, art and science. The chapter explores the competencies required of conservators to enter the profession and lays the basis for more detailed discussions on conservation programmes in chapter 4.

Chapter 3 focuses on broadly mapping the field of conservation studies and turns to local versus global initiatives in museum conservation. This chapter reviews and analyses local attempts to address museum conservation needs and challenges through various training programmes in South Africa, what these initiatives consisted of, where they were based, and *where* they stand today. Additionally, Chapter 3 also explores the intentions of the University of Pretoria in developing conservation as a field of study and provides a rationale for this intention. Based on the conceptual clarification examined in Chapter 2, the chapter also addresses the competencies (theoretical and practical) central to this programme developed at the University.

Chapter 4 zeroes in on the critical concept of curriculum, *why* curriculum matters, and centralises curriculum as a core pedagogic concept in constructing a degree. This chapter reviews the notion of the curriculum and the processes of curriculum construction within the arts and humanities, with a specific focus on views related to conservation.

Chapter 5 describes the development, design and content of the postgraduate curriculum framework and at what level of training Tangible Heritage Conservation will be presented. This chapter also critically assesses how the construction of such a curriculum aligns with the desire for curriculum transformation at the University of Pretoria (drawing also on recent debates in decolonisation studies) from a humanities and arts perspective.

The concluding chapter offers some tentative deductions from the study, flowing from the central research question and providing additional reflections on the study and possibilities for future research in continuing the conservation dialogue.

## CHAPTER 2

### *The idea and problem of conservation and shared cultures on conservation*

*Like the lives of their creators, all objects are transitory. [...] Things are admired for their beauty not because they last forever, but because they fade away so quickly. Stability and permanence are to be found not in substance, but in form. Ise Jingū's shikinen sengū celebrates this idea of perpetual renewal which ensures continuity through reproduction rather than conservation.*

(Florian Coulmas, 1994)

This chapter begins with a historical overview of the development of conservation from initial functional repair to a recognised trade to contextualise a further exploration of the idea and problem of conservation, followed by shared cultures on conservation. The chapter focuses on defining heritage conservation as a practice and profession. The term ‘conservator’ is discussed as being at the nexus of practice and profession, straddling the intersecting worlds of art and science, theory and practice. Drawing on scholarship in the field, this chapter reviews the accepted standards and core competencies for conservators and *how* conservators differ from conservation technicians and restorers. This chapter lays the basis for a critical review of the field as motivated in Chapter 4.

#### **2.1. From repair to restoration**

The development of conservation can be divided into two main periods, namely before and after the establishment of museums; however, the notion that things decay and this natural deterioration can be slowed or halted is as old as time. Pye (2001) suggests that by observing the natural world, it would have been evident to ancient humans that environmental conditions affected the deterioration of materials, in particular, those of organic origin “...materials which were dry or cold survived better than if they were damp or warm (Pye, 2001:37). These observations profoundly affected past peoples and their way of life in several ways: allowing for the preservation of food supplies; treatment and preservation of animal products (skin, leather, and hide) for the manufacture of utilitarian objects; and lastly, slowing down the rate of decay of human remains. Pye argues that notions of preventive conservation; by the

manipulation of the environment to slow the rate of decay, has their roots in antiquity with the emergence of drying and salting foods, the creation of dry and pest-proof food storage, and the mummification of the dead (Pye, 2001:37–38).

Pye also notes that in ancient times obtaining raw materials for the manufacture of cultural materials as well as the manufacturing process itself, was both labour intensive and time consuming, and thus objects were repaired, remade and eventually recycled to maximise their useable life (Pye, 2001:38). Most early repairs on functional objects were likely carried out by the users themselves, with whatever materials were at hand and would serve the purpose of prolonging the use of the object. Early repairs and the replacement of lost materials to the original item are generally easily discernible such as patches and darning in archaeological textiles from Egypt (Pye, 2001:39). Where the same material could not be used for repairs, such as with fired ceramics from Tell Sabi Abyad in Northern Syria dating to the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, rough plaster was used to fill a large chip in the side of a ceramic goblet (Niewenhuyse & Dooijes, 2008:163), but resin, bitumen or pitch were also used as adhesives in antiquity and such repairs on ceramics are found in many museums worldwide (Williams, 1988; Buys and Oakley, 1996; Dooijes, 2007; Dooijes & Niewenhuyse, 2009; Garachon, 2010). Although adhesives remain the preferred method of reassembling stone, ceramic and glass objects to this day, an alternate method of joining ceramic fragments in antiquity was to drill both fragments along the break line and insert metal rivets dowels or plates to join them. This type of repair has been found on the so-called Affecter Amphora of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland (USA), as described by Snow (1986:4). This vessel's modern cleaning and disassembly uncovered 19<sup>th</sup>-century repairs with ceramic sherds and glazes and overpaint<sup>8</sup> and plaster fills used to cover small losses. The ancient repairs observed at this time were described as “two holes were drilled on opposite sides of a break. A channel was worked between the holes on the outside surface, into which a staple of copper or lead (called rivets) was fitted.” The antiquity of the repair was evidence by burial sand caught between the 19<sup>th</sup>-century plaster fills and the metal rivets. In contrast, regarding the repair of Neolithic ceramics of the Near East, Niewenhuyse (2007) suggests that only high-quality serving vessels were meticulously repaired, repairing as discreetly as possible with intentional concerns for the aesthetics of the vessel (Niewenhuyse & Dooijes, 2008:20).

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<sup>8</sup> When layers of paint are applied onto the surface of an object or artwork cover areas of loss or restoration.

It seems evident that if the ancients recognised that objects were vulnerable to damage, then maintenance and care to prevent damage followed. Regular cleaning of surfaces to keep them clean and free of contaminants that might stain or cause decay were performed (Ceasay, 1986:49–50). The use of aromatic oils, waxes, varnishes and paints in preserving and protecting wood (Herodotus as referenced in Maia & Moore, 2011) and the polishing and sealing of metals for their protection is well documented throughout time. The makers of objects were also called upon to repair them. These highly skilled and knowledgeable artisans applied their vast knowledge of the materials and their properties to repairing and maintaining objects. According to Pye (2001:40), “paintings were restored by painters or sign-writers, furniture by joiners or cabinet makers and buildings by masons”. Repairs were carried out with the same materials used initially. The emphasis was not only on maintaining the appearance or function of the piece but also on improving it in the process. An excellent example of this is the repainting of religious polychrome sculpture during the European Middle Ages, emphasising “maintaining the sacred image in an unblemished state” (Pye, 2001:41).

## **2.2. From restoration to controlled practice through the establishment of museums and the development of a scientific approach**

The collections of princes, emperors and kings became the Foundation of extensive public museum collections. Once in the public trust, the history, aesthetics, and longevity of the objects in the collections became much more critical (Cloonan, 2007:746). With this in mind, repairs to objects in collections were sublimated to restorations. A repair to an object is primarily functional, intending to return functionality to an object. In contrast, restoration is usually associated with notions of value, authenticity and exclusivity of an object. In other words, restoration sought to regain the aesthetic qualities of the complete, undamaged object through a quasi-invisible repair that appeared to reverse the damage and return an object to a previous known state or condition (Delafonse, 1998; Rodrigues, 1998; Clavir, 2002; Dooijes and Niewenhuyse, 2008). Early restorers often worked unchecked and with artistic license, cleaning surfaces, removing obscuring varnishes, and retouching damaged areas and enhancing the appearance of a painting by applying paint to undamaged areas. Surface cleaning and the removal of varnish layers often resulted in the removal of previous repairs, which would, in turn, require reintegration of the surface for a uniform appearance, such as was done to Leonardo da Vinci’s *Last Supper* (Kind, 2012). Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the visual appeal of an art object played an important role and the tastes of the time, particularly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>

century, dictated the display of antiquities in a complete state, with replacement parts manufactured to ensure this appearance (Garachon, 2010). It is important to note that in the beginning, not all objects were seen as equal in deserving treatment, and the history of fine art is better recorded and understood than that for the decorative arts, as Banks (1981:191) state

the often great value attached to individual works of art and their public visibility (in both literal and metaphorical senses) led to professionalisation of art conservation earlier than has happened in the conservation of library and archival materials.

In the case of paintings, notions of value, authenticity and exclusivity were often left to the discretion of the painter-restorer.

Although the first concepts of modern conservation principles start to emerge between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, by the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century, conservators at the royal courts of France, Spain and Britain made inventories of royal fine art and decorative art collections. Conservators also compiled condition reports, documented treatments applied to objects and investigated causes of environmental deterioration (Forni, 1866:106, Veliz, 1998; Broers, 2004).

Pietro Edwards,<sup>9</sup> one of the earliest conservator-restorers to publish extensively on restoration, was commissioned by the Venetian authorities to supervise the refurbishing of Venetian artworks. Pietro Edwards' ideas of respect for the historic work of art, and his careful approach to materials and methods employed described in his text *Capitolato* (1777), remain central tenets of modern conservation. Edwards was concerned with exercising a more controlled practice and preventing the excesses committed by the restorers of Venetian paintings. He mandated the removal of old in-painting<sup>10</sup>, the use of 'non-corrosive' products and stated that no new in-painting should extend beyond the area it was intended to cover, highlighting respect for artistic intent. Edwards also brought attention to issues regarding the use of unstable materials with inherent flaws that lead to deterioration. Finally, he sought to

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<sup>9</sup> Pietro Edwards (1744–1821) served as chief administrator, director of restoration, restorer, theorist, commentator and advocate for responsible restoration in Venice during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He stands out in conservation history because of his extensive writings integrating theory and practice of art restoration, and attempts to lift restoration from trade and craft to a recognised and respected professional status (Darrow, 2000:1–2).

<sup>10</sup> In-painting refers to the aesthetic integration of the decorative layer of an object or artwork to give the illusion of surface unity for legibility and full appreciation of the image.



mitigate deterioration with proper preventive care and maintenance when required. Although these ideas are evident and ingrained in current conservation practice, they were a novelty in 1777 when the *Capitolato* was written (Muñoz Viñas, 2017:2).

Historically, various kinds of objects were valued differently in western eyes and as Muñoz Viñas (2017:2) observes, conservation was born of the realisation that not all objects are equal, and neither should they be treated in the same manner: “The views, approaches and skills required to treat a painting were different from those required to treat the walls of a common peasant house; or [...] cleaning a Neolithic axe required a different attitude and knowledge from that needed to clean a household lamp”. These early historical interpretations of the value of objects led to a differentiation between everyday objects and objects seen as high art, the latter being accorded much higher status.

Changes in societal norms from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> to mid-19<sup>th</sup> centuries may have influenced the shift from restoration to conservation as we know it today, including the development of archaeology, public museums, changes in art and its appreciation, and the development of science and chemistry in the service of the arts. All this was underpinned by rapid advances in scientific knowledge brought on by the industrial revolution.

Firstly, the opening of private collections to the general public from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century required that these collections be looked after to ensure longevity. In some cases, the collector would attend to the maintenance of his specimens, as was the case with Sir Hans Sloane and Charles Wilson Peale. In most cases, the owners of collections would send objects to external craftsmen for maintenance and repair (Pye, 2001:43). As more expansive encyclopaedic museums and galleries opened to the public, both curators and restorers were employed to ensure the continued wellbeing of collections, and the public started taking a vested interest in the wellbeing of their national treasures on display. As Pye notes (2001:43), members of the public began to criticise the activities taking place in museums, such as *l’Affaire Marin* in France in 1797<sup>11</sup> and the National Gallery of London’s cleaning scandal, which led to a committee of enquiry in 1853<sup>12</sup>. Both became highly publicised open debates concerning the

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<sup>11</sup> *L’Affaire Marin* (the Marin Affair) was a scandal that broke out in Paris in 1797, when a Council Deputy by the name of Anthelme Marin levelled criticism against the Louvre Museum administration, stating in print that the collections of painting were neglected, poorly stored thus precipitating damage, over cleaned and restored by overzealous artist-restorers who altered the artworks (Étienne, 2011:10)

<sup>12</sup> Twenty years after the founding of the National Gallery, its new Keeper Charles Eastlake R.A., a painter and scholar of materials and techniques, initiated a new annual cleaning policy for the paintings on exhibition.

over-zealous work of restorers and resulted in authorities taking a closer look at the practices of restorers, including the materials and methods employed. The development of conservation is thus interwoven with the development of the museum as a public institution.

Secondly, art and aesthetics gained a special status in European society with the publication of Winckleman's seminal text on art history and the development of Baumgarten's philosophical field of aesthetics, which meant that art and its products gained a special status in society (Muñoz Viñas, 2017). Additionally, with the rise of industrialisation, many new fortunes were made, collection and artistic display were among the foremost marks of opulence (Clavir, 1997).

With advances in science and chemistry, the identification of component parts gained prominence, and science entered the world of art, looking at the technical analysis of artists' materials and the chemical composition of pigments in particular (NAS, 2005:41). Museums applied chemistry to gain an understanding of how objects in collections were manufactured. The mechanisms of decay were brought to light through materials analysis, involving identifying and categorising component parts. Materials testing was also deployed to look at the characteristics and behaviours of materials under various conditions to determine their suitability for use. These investigations became increasingly important with the growth of the public museum, managed by a board of trustees mandated to preserve the collections held in the public trust (Clavir, 1997:70).

The results of material testing by scientists such as Faraday, Davy and Chaptal emphasised the significant role of the environment and its changes to the deterioration of cultural material (Clavir, 1997; Lambert, 2014; Russell & Abney, 1888) and highlighted the importance of preventive care of collections. Michael Faraday, an eminent chemist in 19<sup>th</sup> century England, was selected to investigate "the dirty and obscure state" of paintings in the National Gallery of London (Lubar, 2017:131). In 1850, he analysed the thick layer of grime causing the paintings to deteriorate and concluded that the heavy visitor traffic, dust, smoke and other airborne pollutants were the primary cause of decay. He recommended that the paintings be protected

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Cleaning included the removal of old browned and yellowed varnish, and replacement with a new varnish layer. This was carried out over the annual six week summer closure of the museum, and upon its re-opening patrons were confronted with the freshly cleaned artworks that they found unrecognisable and severely criticised the museum and its administration for sanctioning this 'damage' (Keck, 1984:75).

and their longevity increased by encapsulating them sandwiched between glass and foil in what he called 'shadow boxes' (Lambert, 2014:6).

Science once again came to the fore in London during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The call was for extended visiting hours using artificial light to allow museums to remain open at night. Opinions were divided on the matter, with both the British Museum and the National Gallery opposed to this as extended visiting hours would translate into increased visitor numbers, and consequently increased risks to the paintings being exposed to pollutants from the exterior in addition to hazardous levels of artificial lighting. The faded collections of watercolours at the South Kensington Museum were motivated as an example. A very lengthy and public debate ensued, bringing preventive conservation into the public domain. Two scientists, Dr W.J. Russell and Capt. W. de W. Abney, were commissioned to carry out the first study of watercolour light sensitivity under varying lighting conditions (Russel & Abbney, 1888). These studies highlighted the importance of preventive action to mitigate damage and prevent deterioration, ideas raised a century earlier by Pietro Edwards in Italy.

Although museums increasingly called in scientists, it was only towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that museums started to employ full-time chemists and make provision for in house laboratories. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was characterised by intense collection, with systematic identification and classification of natural phenomena (Clavir, 1997:70; Pye, 2001:45). This new spirit of enquiry was a part of the larger intellectual European Enlightenment, which prompted scholars to question the religious notions of the past as a lost 'golden age'. The exact process of collection and classification was applied to the human past to gain a better understanding of antiquity. The Enlightenment sought to look beyond the romantic notions of antiquarianism, and in this time, the science and academic pursuit of archaeology was initiated (Renfrew & Bahn, 1996:49–50).

The rise of archaeology as a discipline is characterised by large scale excavations and the retrieval of thousands of objects. This pushed museums to open up dedicated workshops for conservation and scientific laboratories to deal with the often unstable problematic artefacts. Artefacts buried for thousands of years acclimatised to reach equilibrium with the burial environment (Cronyn, 1990:29). Excavation of these artefacts rapidly destabilises this equilibrium, which could precipitate damage and decay at either the time of excavation or during transport and post-processing at the museum. Damage included corrosion in metals, and

the removal of these corrosion layers resulted in renewed and accelerated corrosion; whilst the accelerated drying of waterlogged specimens caused cracks or crumbling. The pursuit of archaeological knowledge and the push to provide a narrative in museums underpinned by fragile objects developed museum laboratories and collections care. As Pye (2001:47) notes, “the development of archaeological conservation represented a shift from restoration (focussed on maintaining the visible character of an object) towards an acknowledgement of the importance of conserving the evidence of past culture, not all of which is immediately apparent when viewing an object”. Apart from fragile surfaces and fragmented ceramics and statuary, archaeological objects presented particular deterioration problems, notably in textiles and metal artefacts. This deterioration was rapid, unstoppable and seemingly irreversible by traditional repair methods used by the restorers of the time. In desperation, museums turned to scientists to find an explanation for the changes, as well as potential solutions to save the collections from destruction.

At the same time, with an increased interest in the past, the antiquities trade grew, leading to many deceptive restorations to disguise the fragmentary nature of the artefacts, as from the buyer’s point of view, “the more complete an object was, the more desirable it was” (Snow, 1986:4). As a result, the need soon arose to detect forgeries from original artefacts (Riederger, 1987; Munro, 1905). Duped by forgeries, there was a renewed emphasis on authenticity, which prompted a change in attitude and a desire to see antiquities not complete and in an unaltered state, but as they were. This new attitude minimised the need for unnecessary aesthetic additions and emphasised the importance of scientists and the need for materials analysis to support provenance and claims of authenticity (Pollard & Heron, 1996:3).

The analysis of excavated metals advanced rapidly in the early half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, particularly with bronze artefacts (Caldararo, 1987:85). Increasingly scientists were called upon to identify forgeries (Hofstede de Groot, 1925; Scallen, 2004). Although it is generally accepted that the turning point for the influence of scientists in museums came in 1930 with the first international conference for the study of Scientific Methods for the Examination and Preservation of Works of Art (Rome 13–17 October), in reality, things were slow to change (Groen, 2011:3). The 1930 conference was sponsored by the League of Nations<sup>13</sup> (1920–1946),

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<sup>13</sup> The League of Nations (LoN), was the first worldwide intergovernmental organisation whose principal mission was to maintain world peace.

a precursor to the United Nations<sup>14</sup> (1945–present), which was established to provide a forum for international dispute resolution and actively promoted international scientific exchange, research and collaboration. The 1930 conference had a profound impact on the founding of international committees and institutes focusing on heritage and its preservation, as well as many training programmes, ethics, standards of practice, documentation, preventive conservation and the establishment of The United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization<sup>15</sup> (UNESCO) from 1946 to the present, and The International Council of Museums<sup>16</sup> (ICOM) in 1946.

As these developments profoundly affected conservation's academic and professional development, they will be addressed in greater depth in chapter 4.

### **2.3. Bombs, basements and the influence of war on conservation**

It is only in response to the material and physical disaster (WWI, from 28 July 1914 to 11 November 1918) that museum laboratories truly came into their own. With aerial bombings in Europe, museums scrambled to move artworks and artefacts out of harm's way. Collections were moved to cellars and basements (Lambert, 2014:22). When bombing intensified over London, the British Museum<sup>17</sup> relocated some of its collections to abandoned underground railway tunnels. After two years in storage, many of these objects were found to have suffered extensive damage due to the humid environment. Mould, metal corrosion and salt efflorescence were widespread problems in the collections. The trustees of the British Museum approached the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) for assistance, and in 1920 Dr

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<sup>14</sup> United Nations (UN), intergovernmental organisation responsible for maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, achieving international cooperation, and being a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), was founded in 1946. UNESCO is a specialized agency of the UN, mandated to promote international collaboration in education, sciences, and culture in order to increase universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights along with fundamental freedom proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

<sup>16</sup> International Council of Museums (ICOM), non-governmental organisation with thirty international committees who conduct advanced research in their respective fields of ethics, documentation, conservation etc., for the benefit of the international museum community. Their mandate includes fighting illicit traffic in cultural goods and promoting risk management and emergency preparedness to protect world cultural heritage in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

<sup>17</sup> The British Museum in London is not only one of the largest encyclopaedic museums in the world, it is also the third oldest in Britain, established in 1753 after the Ashmolean in Oxford (established 1683) and the Tower of London (established 1660), and houses approximately 8 million objects in its permanent collection.

Alexander Scott, a retired chemist, was hired part-time to start the British Museum Research Laboratory. “Dr Scott’s method was to study the causes and symptoms of instability and work out methods of treatment” (Lambert, 2014:27). There was so much material requiring analysis and treatment that two years later, a second chemist and archaeologist, Dr Harold J. Plenderleith, was employed full-time. Building on the work carried out by Scott, Plenderleith (1956) stressed the importance of ongoing collections care and maintenance. He developed new preventive conservation guidelines for storage, temperature, humidity, light, dust, biological infestations, plus damage and deterioration caused by people (Plenderleith, 1956). Additionally, Plenderleith stressed that successful preventive care or long-range conservation could be enacted on entire collections, reducing the need for complex and costly restorative treatments applied on single objects.

Indeed, it was only after the war, in the twenties and thirties, that the great museums began to appreciate the fact that, irrespective of the nature of their collections, scientific studies had something to offer to scholarship. A museum laboratory interested, even incidentally, in preventing the deterioration of objects was the logical complement of an atelier devoted to their restoration (Plenderleith & Philippot, 1960:278).

In the 1930s, on the eve of World War II (WWII), museums in Europe and in particular France, Belgium, Sweden, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Great Britain prepared and decentralised collections from their museums (Lavachery & Noblecourt, 1956; Lambert, 2010). Many country homes and basements were prepared and specially retrofitted tunnels to accommodate collections (Lambert, 2014:27). Some of the British Museum’s collections were relocated to the abandoned Westwood limestone quarry in preparation for the imminent war. Although the temperature was stable, the humidity had to be adjusted by waterproofing the walls, and an air conditioning system was installed. The collections were moved in February 1942, along with collections from the Victoria and Albert Museum, the National Portrait Gallery, works from private collections and another 30 other institutions were moved into the refurbished quarry (Lambert, 2014). The space was monitored, cleaned, inspected, and the wall coating renewed as needed, and when the war ended, all objects were returned without damage. This influenced the practice of conservation not only in the British Museum but in other museums as well, including the National Gallery, whose artworks were also housed at another retrofitted quarry. Six brick structures were built inside that quarry to allow for greater climate control housed 1800 paintings. Like the Westwood Limestone quarry conditions, the temperature was kept at 15.5° C and 60% relative humidity (Lambert, 2014:47). Regular monitoring revealed that the

restorer's intervention was required less and less as the paintings acclimatised. However, when they were returned to display in heated galleries in mid-winter, the sudden temperature and humidity change precipitated extensive deterioration in the form of flaking paint and distorting supports. A few years later, air conditioning was installed in the National Gallery to recreate a stable and controlled environment (Lambert, 2014:48). With their experiences during WWI and WWII, the National Gallery<sup>18</sup>, the British Museum and others saw the value of preventive conservation. Emphasis was placed on scientific research to identify, predict and monitor sources of damage and deterioration and establish standards for optimal preservation in museums.

The impact of the war was also felt in the United States, particularly after the attack on Pearl Harbour (7 December 1941). After the attack, the American Association of Museums started identifying possible repositories, reviewing emergency preparedness measures, and focusing on staff training in handling, packaging, transport, evacuation, and artwork storage (Lambert, 2014). Even though there was no imminent threat of bombardment, American museums coordinated their efforts and planned for disaster. George L. Stout, who had returned from studies in Europe in the late 1920s and entered the Fogg Museum (part of the Harvard Art Museums), was one of the leading advocates for conservation. He published extensively and led workshops to improve conservation knowledge and training of museums staff, promoting what he termed 'long range conservation' as a means of preventing damage and slowing down decay (Lambert, 2014:55).

The war forced museums to organise, coordinate efforts and collaborate both locally and internationally. The formation of the American Commission for the Protection and Salvage of Artistic and Historic Monuments in War Areas, whose Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) section, better known as the Monuments Men,<sup>19</sup> were mandated to retrieve art looted by the Nazis. This is an example of large-scale international coordination, which included assisting the military in avoiding unnecessary damage to cultural heritage sites, assessing

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<sup>18</sup> The National Gallery was established at Trafalgar Square in 1838 and its collection of approximately 2300 paintings cover works by 750 European artists ranging from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. [https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/about-us/history/collection-history/collection-history\\_](https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/about-us/history/collection-history/collection-history_)

<sup>19</sup> Edsel RM. 2009. The Art Army, Harvard's Monuments Men at War. Available online: <https://harvardmagazine.com/2010/01/monuments-men-rescuing-art-stolen-by-nazis>, an excerpt from Edsel, R. (2009). *The Monuments Men: Allied Heroes, Nazi Thieves, and the Greatest Treasure Hunt in History*. Arrow, London.



damage to cultural heritage in general, and retrieving looted art. The mandate of the Monuments Men required cooperation and transdisciplinary research (working across disciplines, fields and methods to resolve problems) in both the areas of provenance and authentication. Analytical techniques were used to validate artwork's authenticity, trace the original owners and allow the artwork's return (Leona, 2009). After the war, Stout, as one of the Monuments Men, continued in this vein of international collaboration. Along with colleagues from the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Belgium began to work collaboratively on launching conservation on an international platform.

WWII brought about the immense loss of life and its immense destruction of the built environment, including historic villages and entire towns, ancient monuments, historical buildings, places of worship, and the many artworks they contained. This large-scale destruction of places and objects familiar and treasured by their communities raised awareness of their significance and values, place or culture, heritage, and art as part of their individual and national identities. Jokhileto (2011:1) writes how this single event “resulted in new norms and legislation, as well as renewed efforts at the international level to respond to emerging needs, to share acquired knowledge through conference and training programmes, to agree on universally valid principles for safeguarding, and to designate special funds for restoration and reconstruction of monuments and heritage sites.”

The efforts of men such as Stout and his counterparts in Europe would later become the International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works<sup>20</sup> (IIC: 1950–present), which was later followed by the International Committee for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments<sup>21</sup> (ICCROM: 1956–present), and the ICOM established in 1946 (Lambert, 2014:59).

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<sup>20</sup> The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC), established in 1950, is a global organisation for conservation and restoration professionals with over two thousand members in over fifty countries. IIC seeks to promote the knowledge, methods and working standards needed to protect and preserve historic and artistic works throughout the world (IIC, 2021).

<sup>21</sup> The International Committee for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments (ICCROM) was founded in 1957 as an intergovernmental organisation dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage through training, information, research, cooperation and advocacy programmes (ICCROM, 2021).



#### 2.4. A theoretical framework for conservation

As described in the above paragraphs, the application of science to problems in art has shaped the development of training and practice in heritage conservation and its theoretical development. Although the first concepts of modern conservation can be found in the writings of Pietro Edwards (1777–1785), the first attempt at a theoretical framework for conservation came from the field of architecture. This framework was developed by the British Arts and Crafts movement and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings in 1877 by William Morris (1834–1896) and Phillip Webb (1831 to 1915). The Society’s manifesto declared that regular care and maintenance could slow deterioration. Efforts to stabilise or repair with new materials should be clearly discernible from the original material. Intervention should be limited only to those treatments, which would sufficiently prolong the structure’s longevity (Morris, 1877). These ideas were echoed three years later by another anti-restorationist, John Ruskin (1819 to 1900). In his 1880 *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, he advocated for the conservation rather than the restoration of old buildings, which in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was limited to antique and medieval buildings. As practised by his French counterpart Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814–1879), Ruskin felt that restoration destroyed the very thing it aimed to preserve.

Viollet-le-Duc, a practising French architect of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, stated that restoring a building was not to maintain it, repair it, or remake it: it was to re-establish it in a complete state that may never have existed in a complete state in the past (Kalčić, 2014). He advocated sustainable treatment to structure, substituting modern materials if they imparted strength and structural stability. The structure could also be adapted to conform to more modern or rational uses and practices, which meant alterations to the original plan. The restoration should preserve older modifications made as part of its historical fabric if these were not compromising the building’s stability or its conservation or violated the value of its historical presence. His contemporaries heavily criticised Viollet-le-Duc for his frequently embellished restorations. However, his position was clear: “the best of all ways of preserving a building is to find a use for it, and then to satisfy so well the needs dictated by that use that there will never be any further need to make any further changes in the building” (Yazdani, 2019). These burgeoning ideas that to be sustainable, buildings had to be useful to their communities gained much importance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, although slightly modified from how Viollet-le-Duc approached them. These opposing viewpoints of restoration vs conservation promulgated by Viollet-le-Duc and Ruskin were clarified in 1903 by Alois Riegl (1858–1905), an Austrian art historian who ascribed the theoretical conflict between the restoration and anti-restoration movements to different value

systems. On the one hand, commemorative values include age-value, historical-value and intentional-commemorative-value; and on the other hand, present-day values include use-value and art-value (newness-value, relative art-value). For Riegl (as explained in Plevoets & Van Cleempoel, 2013:14), Viollet-le-Duc and the supporters of the restoration movement strived for a combination of “newness-value (unity of style) and historic value (originality of style), they aimed to remove all traces of natural decay and to restore every fragment of the work to create a historic entity”. By contrast, Riegl suggested that supporters of the anti-restoration movement appreciated monuments exclusively for their age value. Therefore under this theory, the incompleteness of a structure (or artefact by extension) should be preserved in line with the movement’s tenet that a monument was not created recently but at some point in the past. This debate continued until Camillo Boito (1836–1914), the Italian architect, engineer, art historian and critic, developed practical guidelines for restoring historic buildings. He criticised both the restoration and anti-restoration movements, claiming that the former resulted in the loss of material authenticity of the building and the latter in the impracticality of advocating decay. In his *First Dialogue*, Camillo Boito (as referenced in Yazdhani Mehr, 2019:925) proposed instead that different buildings have different requirements and should be treated on a case-by-case basis, with eight points to be considered for treatment, notably that:

the style of the new and the old should be clearly discernible; as should be the difference between construction materials; profiles or decorations should be suppressed; that any material removed from the building should be retained and displayed in or near the structure; that the date of restoration (or other conventional sign) should be inscribed in each restored piece; using a descriptive epigraph carved on the monument; describing and photographing the different phases of the work and placing the documentation within the building or nearby; underlining notoriety.

Orbaşlı (2017:158) makes the following observation: “Over the course of the nineteenth-century romantic classicism gave way to national romanticism and ideas on antiquarianism and the picturesque movement”. As discussed above, these late 19<sup>th</sup> century attitudes to history shaped the theoretical framework of modern conservation as an objective practice based on material science and understanding of how objects were made and deteriorate to care for them using scientifically proven means. With the entrance of science into the arts domain, the post-enlightenment idea of the protection of heritage was influenced by rationalist, realist and positivist philosophies. These philosophies translated into an approach to and practice of heritage preservation based on a belief in scientific knowledge, material honesty, minimal

intervention to retain as much original material as possible, and the idea that heritage should be safeguarded for future generations (Orbaşlı, 2017:159).

## **2.5. From the Classical to the Contemporary, an evolution of conservation theory**

These early philosophical views navigated the development of the field of conservation alongside numerous policy documents to guide its practice. Modern research has a very Euro-American outlook as this is where conservation started to formalise. As a result of European colonialism, South Africa's policies on heritage preservation are closer to European models than for example, an Asian perspective on restoration and the safekeeping of heritage. Changes in approaches to conservation were likewise brought on by significant changes in the historical landscape of the West. The two world wars were particularly influential in changing both ideas of what was considered heritage and the importance of heritage on a national, local and individual level.

The earliest international legislative document was the Athens Charter, initiated by the International Museum Office (IMO) in 1930 to promote current conservation policy. The charter was established after WWI to attend to the restoration of buildings and even whole towns, destroyed or damaged during the War and set benchmarks for heritage conservation.

In the aftermath of WWI's destruction, the discussion on the repair and maintenance of historic buildings was further challenged by modernist architects. They saw the destruction as an opportunity to redesign and rebuild cities in a more effective manner. This was addressed in the 1933 *Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne* (or International Congresses of Modern Architecture), which suggested that although historic structures and city sectors should be retained in principle under particular conditions, they were to be seen as isolated historic monuments surrounded by hygienic green zones and their retention should not alter the quality of life of the current communities with respect to improving living conditions, decongesting traffic and rezoning for a modern city (Plevoets & van Cleempoel, 2013:17).

Architecture and conservation theorists moved closer after WWII. With the increased indiscriminate destruction, there was a realisation that what had been lost went beyond the iconic buildings from antiquity and the Middle Ages. Heritage should extend to other historical periods, including different building typologies as worthy of preservation. As Plevoets and van Cleempoel explain (2013:17), "vernacular architecture, industrial buildings and even entire

historic cities were now considered as falling within the remit of the conservationist. The increased number of buildings that would potentially need “conserving” in this new and expanded context was enormous.” This reconsideration of what can be labelled heritage and how it should be preserved was reflected in international documents. The International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter, 1964) thus points to the importance of “adaptive re-use” as a form of keeping buildings in use and thus preserving them, “the conservation of monuments is always facilitated by making use of them for some socially useful purpose.” This document set the benchmark for architectural conservation and restoration principles, which in turn influenced the care and maintenance of artworks and objects.

Since the Venice Charter, the definition of what is valued, what it is called and how it is defined has evolved. The evolution can be seen in the following 40 charters, declarations and resolutions. The international guidelines have had to adapt and redefine what is seen as having value, what value(s) and why specific heritages deserve protection. In the post-modern era, definitions of heritage have become increasingly complex and layered as the multiplicity of cultures and narratives are recognised, regional and local cultures and values are celebrated within an extended global village.

Today heritage is recognised as including the immovable, movable and non-physical heritage. Immovable heritage is exemplified as buildings, towns, and gardens, while the non-physical can define environments. Movable heritage is the objects, art and artefacts created by humankind. These tangible forms of heritage have been supplemented by recognising the value and importance of intangible heritage with The Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003). The definition of what constitutes heritage is no longer linked to specific list items but includes both tangible and intangible expressions of human action, which can be said to have acquired aesthetic, historic scientific or social value (Vecco, 2010:323).

Beyond the changes in the definition of heritage, challenges in the rapid and complex degradation of new materials, and an emphasis on artistic intent have profoundly challenged the accepted western canon of ‘heritage’ and what are deemed ‘appropriate’ conservation approaches. Advances in technology and new materials such as video, film, born-digital

materials (those that originate in digital form), art installations and perishable works have redefined the ‘object’, its manifestations, as well as its permanence (Dupree, 2002; Stigter, 2016; Burnett, 2015). As a result, what constitutes heritage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been challenged and has had to adapt. Heritage is no longer purely defined based on its materiality but rather on its capacity to arouse specific values within a community or society. Archaeology and cultural resource management disciplines have influenced this move to a values-based approach in conservation. A values-based approach recognises that what defines an object, building or site as heritage and worth preservation are the values placed on it. These values can be intrinsic when relating to individual experiences of heritage. They can also be instrumental when associated with social or economic aspects of heritage. Finally, they can be central to the processes and techniques institutions use to create heritage value (Smith, Mauch Messenger & Soderland, 2010:18).

Looking across the international heritage charters, Clark (2010:91) suggests that heritage can have different types of values attached to it, including artistic or aesthetic, historical and scientific or technical. With the advent of the Burra Charter, Australia recognises ‘evidential’ and ‘social’ value, which can be considered in protecting sites (Byrne et al., 2001). This is particularly significant as there is a growing body of knowledge that speaks to the social value of heritage and material culture to the construction of belonging, validation, identity, memory, and pride both on a personal level, within a minority group, in the broader community or on a national level (Ambrose & Paine, 2006; Ashworth et al., 2007; Holtorf, 2012). As Hoskins (1998:2) points out when referring to biographical objects, “People and the things they valued are so completely intertwined, they could not be disentangled.” People do not just designate objects, buildings and sites as having heritage value; it is often profound and emotional connections that result in people feeling that these ‘things’ should remain and be passed on. The intensity of these feelings is connected to the relationships that have been built with them over time—also the connections with other people that have been facilitated by their presence and are remembered too. Thus, ‘objects’ can be the tangible vessels that hold our memories, facilitate remembering and link us to experiences in and of the past within the present.

For this reason, heritage objects have been used extensively for healing and rehabilitation from medical illness and trauma (Pye, 2008; Pye 2009; Chattergee, 2009; Noble, 2010; Ander et al., 2013; Meskell & Scheermeyer, 2008). In a country such as South Africa, which has a problematic historical legacy shaped by a diversity of cultural influences, the preservation of heritage places, spaces, and objects is vital in responding to the countering of singular and

divided histories. It is essential to expose and validate the value of a multiplicity of shared and entangled histories that challenge hegemonic and singular narratives (Nuttall & Coetzee, 1998; Till, 2008; Lusaka, 2017) and the evidence for these is found in the tangible, “As long as tangible sites and objects exist, there is evidence that people were here, that their histories, their memories and their past mattered, and that they are still here, still matter, and will continue to matter in the future” (Balachandran, 2016). As Balachandran (2019a) so eloquently put it in a recent conference presentation:

Cultural heritage moves us, it makes us feel, it makes us see something in ourselves and it makes us recognise the people of the past as being with us, interacting with us in unpredictable ways. Because objects can collapse space and time, allowing us to glimpse at and know the people of the past and imagine future people doing that with us millennia from now.

The feeling of picking up an object that has travelled through millennia, being able to feel where the original artist/creator of that object held the damp clay, seeing the impression of their palm and fingers as they shaped the vessel connects one’s soul to another through time and place. This feeds a human need for continuity and reassurance that our mortality is transitory and not the end.

Increasing changes in environmental conditions, socio-economic and political changes, natural disasters, human damage, urbanisation, industrialisation, wars, conflict, mismanagement, deferred maintenance, and neglect directly impact the preservation of cultural heritage and cultural landscapes (Kwanda, 2012; Spennemann, 1999; Palumbo, 2005; Najjimi, 2005; Matero, 2008). The scholarly literature suggests that conservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century needs to be responsive and carefully manage these challenges to promote the sustainability and longevity of cultural resources (De Silva & Henderson, 2017), both tangible and intangible. As such, conservation practice and approach as it had developed in Europe, that is as scientifically focussed, expert-led, insular and prescriptive, is no longer appropriate today. Conservation praxis needs to evolve, adapt and change to meet the 21<sup>st</sup> century concerning the sustainability of practice and inclusion of diverse forms of heritage. As a direct response to these inclusions, a more participatory approach, which goes beyond the expertise of conservators to that of artists and originator communities, is needed and indeed increasingly sought-after.

In our rapidly growing world, where resources are increasingly becoming stretched, the sustainability of a particular course of action is targeted and reviewed. There are several practices in heritage management and museum work whose sustainability is questioned, the most evident of which for conservation is the control and maintenance of environmental conditions for the preventive conservation of materials. When standards were initially developed, they were based on the conditions in the tunnels and chambers that housed objects during the world wars. In order to replicate and maintain these accepted standards of 18°C, air conditioning units and dehumidifiers were installed in all major museums, and smaller institutions were encouraged to do the same. Over the years, it has become increasingly apparent that these stringent requirements come at substantial operational costs. These demands are often too costly for smaller institutions to maintain financially. They are also impractical and unrealistic to expect from most institutions in rural areas, remote locations and developing nations. Additionally, from the perspective of museums in developing nations, Broecke (2007:216) notes that institutions in developing countries often have to make do with solutions they deem to be ‘inferior’ as they are typically not considered in the developed world. Therefore, expensive environmental control solutions are considered desirable, as they allow a local museum to assume equal status and be comparable with other national museums of the world.

In our South African context, an unstable power grid and regular load shedding<sup>22</sup> have forced the installation of diesel generators for institutions that want to keep the lights on and the systems running, which is a luxury not afforded most. As the west battles with meeting reduced energy consumption to comply with CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, research on the temperature and humidity requirements for collections has been ongoing. Results over the last decade suggest that it may not necessarily be required to keep collections in such conditions, particularly if they have adapted to other conditions. Changing environments could be more detrimental to collections (King, Daniel & Pearson, 2000). The better course of action would be passive control, as demonstrated in the case of the National Museum of Art in Maputo, where selectively opening and closing doors and windows during different times of day allowed relative humidity to settle under 70% for at least half the year, where before it ranged from 53% to 92% (Broecke,

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<sup>22</sup> Load shedding refers to scheduled electricity blackouts in South Africa as portions of the national electrical grid are ‘shed’ or switched off to alleviate overall demand during times of restricted output such as maintenance or repair of power stations.



2007:216). Additionally, improved use of secondary housing<sup>23</sup> could likewise minimise the degree of temperature and humidity fluctuations (NPS, 2016:4:34). Thus, relatively low-cost preventive measures could positively impact the longevity and sustainability of heritage and need to be selectively promoted within the African context.

‘Heritage’ has evolved from the earliest notions it carried in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, referring to objects and structures of classical antiquity and the Middle Ages. Today definitions of heritage extend to all times of our past and present and include monumental, commemorative and vernacular architecture, landscapes, traditional fine art media, new media, oral history and traditions, dance, cooking, crafts skills and living heritage, to name a few. The literature suggests a paradigm shift has taken place within conservation to adequately safeguard not just new forms of heritage but also to safeguard the values attached to cultural material (Silva, 2015; Ashworth, 2011; Szmelter, 2013; Akagawa, 2016; Hölling, 2017). Ashworth (2011) describes heritage “as a process whereby objects, events, sites, performances and personalities, derived from the past, are transformed into experiences in and for the present”. Ashworth’s description of what today can be viewed as heritage shows an apparent disconnect with the earlier preservationist paradigm concerned solely with the physicality of objects instead of the broader definitions of heritage that we have today. This broader definition and conceptualisation of what can be described as ‘authenticity in heritage’ is a direct result of the Japanese experience where the emphasis was placed on the values, rituals and knowledge embedded in tangible heritage whose fabric was regularly replaced. The Nara Document on Authenticity (ICOMOS, 1994) allowed for recognising and accepting the importance of a diversity of cultural contexts and what is valued by different communities worldwide as being equally valuable and worth preserving. Larsen (1999) thus suggested that the Nara Document, given its non-Western origin, might be a more appropriate framework for looking at non-Western heritage. However, as Ndoro (2018) states, there still appears to be an emphasis on colonial architecture and archaeological remains on the World Heritage list where Africa is concerned, and few sites that have immense cultural value for the local communities have been inscribed on the list as a result of the panel’s decisions on issues of authenticity, despite the Nara Document’s recommendation that cultural context needs to be considered.

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<sup>23</sup> Secondary housing refers to the protective enclosures, boxes, display cases and furniture, which stores objects and provides a barrier or buffer between the ambient environment and the enclosed micro climate within the containment area.



Respect for and consideration for indigenous knowledge<sup>24</sup> needs to be extended beyond simply acknowledging that indigenous communities can advise on protocols for the treatment of sacred objects; and that indigenous knowledge and modes of preservation are equally valuable (Ceesay, 1986:50). Most notably, the originators of cultural material can retain a link to their past, heritage, and in-so-doing to ensure its continuation, revival, and cultural survival (Clavir, Johnson & Shane, 1986:82). This can only be achieved by changing from a ‘material-focused’ conservation process to ‘socially focussed’ conservation, from object-centred to people-centred conservation (Sully & Pombo Cardoso, 2014:181)<sup>25</sup>. As Kreps (2003:149) points out, social and cultural groups affected by the conservation process have challenged the ‘right’ of heritage specialists to make decisions about the conservation of other people’s heritage.

In addition to the consideration of intangible values for indigenous communities, conservation practice based on an understanding of the materiality of things has increasingly been questioned (Ashley-Smith, 1999; Caple, 2000; Pye, 2001; Clavir, 2002; Muñoz Viñas, 2005; Appelbaum, 2007; Richmond & Bracker, 2009); and this has in no small part also been influenced by the consideration for, and recognition of, artistic intent in contemporary art. Conservators and curators have been confronted with the need to consult the artist-creator to advise on how to attend to ageing or damage in their artworks and installations. These discussions led to the realisation that interventions, albeit well intended, have the potential of fundamentally altering the artwork in ways that the artist did not intend, not least of which concerns the longevity and meaning of the artworks, questions of authorship, and artistic intent and vision. An example regarding intent and longevity would be the facial tissue paper bridal gowns of Antoinette Murdoch (exhibited at the Cape Town Biennale in 1997). These gowns were created at a transitory period in the artist’s life where certain feelings and notions were being questioned, and the artist purposefully chose to create these dresses in an ephemeral material, which in a similar manner to a wedding exists in a fleeting moment, and like marriage has a certain fragility. The tissue paper was meant to disintegrate; the bridal gowns were meant to fade into memory. Naturally, some of these artworks were purchased by galleries, leading to a desire to

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<sup>24</sup> Greiner (1998:1) defines indigenous knowledge as “the unique, traditional, local knowledge existing within and developed around specific conditions of women and men indigenous to a particular geographic area”.

<sup>25</sup> This people-centred approach in conservation is likewise reflected in the wider museum sector, as Vollgraaff (2018:374) remarks, “there is a growing emphasis on community-based museum practice, and the growth of new curatorial practices are used to facilitate participation from the bottom-up.” such as reversing the gaze, where the public, academia etc. look at Kreps, 2003:3,10; Mairesse, 2010:44; Sandell, 2012:211–212). This re-orientation of museums’ focus from research to an institution in the service of society (Mairesse, 2010:19) has its roots in the social movements of the 1960s and 70s and the advent of the ‘new museology’.

conserve them and maintain their appearance. However, toilet paper cannot be repaired, and the artist was approached to recreate the dresses, which she refused. To her, those artworks represented another period in her life, a time past when she was different and thought differently, and she could not bring herself back to that point in time (Murdoch, 2016:[sp]).

Museums, by definition, are institutions in the service of society (ICOM, 2007); with a focus on people, there is an increased need to be more inclusive of the diversity of people constituting our communities. Calls for decolonisation<sup>26</sup> in heritage practice are echoed around the globe and profoundly impact museums as keepers of cultural heritage (Kreps, 2003; Onciul, 2017; Sully, 2007). There are calls to return parts of collections as part of permanent restitution claims and allow originator communities access to cultural heritage objects for research and use (Clavir, Johnson & Shane, 1986). These new relationships with cultural heritage pull the conservator out from the sidelines and forces active participation. Conservation becomes a social process, where the conservator is drawn out from the isolation of the laboratory. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the conservator must engage with the material as well as its creator (Stigter, 2016; Golfomitsou, 2016).

Conservation is thus increasingly carried out cross-culturally and requires a knowledge and awareness of both tangible and intangible<sup>27</sup> aspects connected to the object, including the various levels of significance of the object and particular cultural protocols and customs surrounding the object. Cultural competency and cultural safety have as a result become increasingly important in conservation practice, mainly when dealing with sacred objects and religious heritage (Whiting, 2005:14; Cotte, 2010). The conservator needs to be mindful that at times he or she may not be permitted to treat an object and may need to work collaboratively with non-professionals and community members to respect the intangible values associated

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<sup>26</sup> Decolonisation has been described by Betts (2012) as a “calculated process of military engagement and diplomatic negotiation between the two contending parties: colonial and anticolonial”. Initially a political action of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century aimed at dismantling the pre-WWI colonial empires and allowing for self-determination and autonomous governance. Very often the road to Independence for former colonies was obtained through violent revolts and fighting rather than through peaceful negotiations. Beyond political independence the term today has come to denote not only political independence, but also economic development, and a change in power relations and recognition of equal status.

<sup>27</sup> Tangible heritage refers to buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art, and artefacts, whilst Intangible heritage refers to folklore, traditions, language, knowledge, as well as the values and significances connected to the tangible artefacts (Akagawa & Smith, 2009).

with a particular artefact (Chatzigogas, 2005: 73; Sully & Pombo Cardoso, 2014; Cotte, 2010; Pereira Marçal, 2017).

An appropriate example of working with communities and arriving at negotiated decision making was relayed in a conference presentation (Joseph Lo, 19 June 2020) of a textile conservator involved with the conservation of the robes and garments of the founding father of Bhutan—Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel (1591 to 1651) who was also a high Tibetan Buddhist Lama revered in Bhutan as a saint. Thus, his robes and garments were considered to have both high national historical significance and considered spiritual relics with special powers. The robes were in a very poor condition with active insect infestation. In Buddhist belief, the taking of any life is expressly prohibited, including that of insects. In addition, as these insects had been consuming spiritual relics, they were seen as having taken on that spiritual essence, presenting the conservator and the ‘community’ with a serious dilemma. As Lo recounts, the debate was escalated and presented to the Je Khenpo (The Spiritual Leader of Bhutan), the King and the Parliament, and it was eventually decided to dis-infect the garments to save the Zhabdrung’s robes. The treatment had to be performed alongside appropriate Buddhist rites and ceremonies, and once the insects were dead, they were also preserved together with the robes and garments as having eaten the holy relics, they too embed spirituality. Additionally, dealing with sacred objects from another culture highlights the importance for the conservator to operate in a critical, self-reflective and transparent manner, where recording every minutia of detail and decision-making, not just what materials are used to treat an object but also describing the conservation process itself, becomes paramount. Stigter (2016) suggests an auto-ethnographic approach that allows for retrospective reflection and reflexion, noting how the object affects the conservator’s actions while at the same time considering how the conservator’s actions, in turn, affect the object (Stigter, 2016:227). This approach can give insight into why specific treatments are chosen and modified, making the dilemmas in conservation explicit while engaging with the impact of conservation in the present and future interventions. However, it needs to be kept in mind that such an approach requires to be well managed. In dealing with indigenous cultural material, there may be limitations on what can be made public knowledge; only what participants involved in the conservation decision have agreed to share publicly may become publicly accessible.

Ultimately what is required of the modern conservator is multi-fold: to critically evaluate conservation decisions, keeping in mind western biases in ethics and practice; to pursue curiosity for problem-solving outside the western canon; and to question the validity of those

very principles as set out in the codes of ethics, such as authenticity and reversibility, and apply these notions in conservation practice (Muñoz Viñas, 2002).

As definitions of heritage have had to be adapted to contemporary life and production changes, so too have the practice of conservation which is no longer comparable to the early mending of functional objects. Today clear distinctions are drawn between repair, restoration, preservation and conservation (Clavir, 2002; Kreps, 2003). In the context of this study and the development of an academic programme (see chapters 3, 4 and 5), conservation is defined as the over-arching term that encompasses preventive conservation, remedial treatment and restoration. Preventive conservation refers to a continuous application of all those measures used and put in place to reduce deterioration and prevent damage to collections, including appropriate handling, storage, exhibition, collections and risk management, and can include a measure of intervention such as cleaning or dusting to prevent deterioration (Caple, 2002:9).

Interventive treatment includes action on an individual object. This includes several sequential steps followed from initial investigation to identify what the object is made of, its materials, extent and causes of decay and damage, plus a determination of its future use in terms of storage, exhibition and research. Also sought are the expectations of the person requesting the treatment. As most treatments affect interpretation and research, sampling and analytical investigations are usually carried out before any treatment. Following the initial assessment, the object can be cleaned, stabilised to prevent further deterioration and possibly receive further remedial action (Caple, 2000:39). Investigation to understand the material and its causes of deterioration, as well as cleaning and stabilisation navigate between preventive and interventive conservation as these actions can be carried out as both a preventive approach to understand, mitigate or halt potential damage; or as part of remedial treatment as the conservator intervenes directly with the object.

Restoration focuses on remedial treatment performed to compensate for loss, including loss of functionality, loss of component parts or loss in applied decorative layers, which can affect legibility, and appreciation of the object. Restoration includes ‘reassembly’ of broken or disconnected parts of an object, ‘reshaping’ distorted components or areas, as well as ‘reintegration’ that includes in-painting and loss compensation to create the illusion of unity of surface without trying to pass the object off as untainted by the passage of time (Caple, 2000:119). Specifically, restoration in this study will be defined as a practice in which pre-

occupation is placed on the aesthetic value to satisfy a client, and that specific other values may be compromised in that process.

Caple (2000:122) defines reconstruction as including “all actions taken to recreate, in whole or in part, a cultural property, based upon historical, literary, graphic, pictorial, archaeological and scientific evidence. Reconstruction aims to promote an understanding of cultural property and is based on little or no original material but clear evidence of a former state.”

The preceding ideas inform the broad focus that provides an introduction to the critical vocabulary shaping this study.

## **2.6. Conservare: The idea and problem of conservation**

In the preceding section, I made the point that the idea of conserving cultural material to keep it useable, visible and part of continuing human activity was as old as the manufacture of those materials, but that the approach to and conservation of cultural material has changed over time (Winsor, 1998; Pye, 2001; Garachon, 2010). As we speak of it and practice it today, conservation is a young and evolving profession (Henderson and Dollery, 2000; Lester, 2002). Although the first reference to the profession of ‘restorer’ could be traced to the middle of the 18th century, according to Henderson and Dollery (2000:88), conservators have struggled to establish themselves as a distinct profession. Instead, they were viewed as subsets of other related professions, such that the furniture restorer was a subset of the cabinet maker and painting restorers a subset of artists. This notion of the conservator-restorer as a technician “charged with the practical business of keeping or putting the objects in a collection in good condition” (Constable, 1954:97) was one of the main challenges conservator-restorers sought to rectify in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century with the development of formal academic training (Von Buchholtz and Becker, 2014). It was only in 1984 that ICOM proposed a definition of the profession for the conservator-restorer, noting however in its introduction that “in most countries, the profession of the conservator-restorer is still undefined: whosoever conserves and restores is called a conservator or a restorer, regardless of extent and depth of training” (ICOM, 1984). The problematics of conservation then start with the central issue of terminology and definition.

The word ‘conservator’ is derived from the Latin *conservare*, meaning to preserve that which requires care to prevent destruction. The term has been used in the English language in one

form or another (e.g. conservator, conservatory, conservancy) since medieval times to denote the guardian of natural resources (i.e. rivers and forests). The term also refers to the guardianship of people requiring care but cannot do so independently, such as orphans, the aged and the ill. As Wilber et al. (2001:225) explain, “Conservatorship, known as guardianship in many states, is a highly intrusive legal arrangement by which an individual or legal entity termed ‘conservator’ or ‘guardian’ is appointed by the court to manage the affairs of an adult ‘conservatee’ or ‘ward’, essentially reducing that individual to the legal status of a minor”.

The term ‘conservator’ as keeper of collections or guardian of cultural material has only been in use in its current iteration since the 19<sup>th</sup> century as before that collections were entrusted to “keepers of the collection”, whose role combined the efforts of curator, collections manager and conservator. Today these three roles have distinct responsibilities: the *curator* is a subject specialist involved with the acquisition, research and interpretation of cultural heritage; the *collections manager* oversees accessioning, handling, storage, loans, transport and long-term preservation of the collections; and the *conservator* is directly involved with the wellbeing of the collection in both preventative care and remedial treatments. All of these roles overlap in description and responsibilities, particularly in smaller institutions with fewer staff members. This is frequently the case in South Africa, where the curator is often tasked with additional collections management and preventative conservation responsibilities. This overlap of responsibilities is one reason why there are various definitions of conservation and different descriptions of conservators’ work (ICOM, 1984; ECCO, 1993; UKIC, 1997; AIC, 2003; IIC Canada, 1989). This is illustrated in the United Kingdom’s Institute for Conservation (UKIC) definition, which states that conservation includes all actions to safeguard cultural property for the future, including interpretation (UKIC, 1997). Likewise, according to Winsor (1999:4), the UKIC’s definition of conservator-restorer is equally problematic, as it

refers to any person whose primary occupation is the conservation of cultural property, and who has the training, knowledge, ability and experience to carry out conservation activities. The term may also refer to some appropriately qualified and experienced conservation scientists, collection managers, educators and conservation technicians.

To complicate the issue of the definition of a conservator, the title itself is geographically contingent. For example, in the United States, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom and Anglophone Africa, a person carrying out conservation activities is generally referred to as a ‘conservator’, although ICOM-CC in its 1984 definition of the profession refers to the title of

‘conservator-restorer’ (Definition of profession 1984—ICOM-CC, 2020), which is the preferred term throughout continental Europe. Although the two terms are often used interchangeably, a thin line separates conservation and restoration. For their part, the UKIC’s *Guidance for Conservation Practice* (1987) defines conservation as

the means by which the true nature of an object is preserved. The true nature of an object includes evidence of its origins, its original construction, the materials of which it is composed, and information as to the technology used in its manufacture. Subsequent modifications may be of such a significant nature that they should be preserved (UKIC, 1987:375).

Scott (2017:85) adds that conservation “attempts to present an unaltered or unadulterated work of art”. On the other hand, restoration has been described as “action taken to make a deteriorated or damaged artefact understandable with minimal sacrifice of aesthetic and historic integrity” (Ballestrem et al., 1984:75). Very often, conservation treatments to stabilise an object may require additional restoration as the following example of a reap hook with a rusty metal blade from Monger (1988:376): “The treatment of choice would be between stabilising the rust and maintaining the object in a rust-inhibiting environment”.

This example of treatment is preventive in nature and focuses on appropriate housing and environmental control. However, the composite wood and metal object is problematic as these two materials have different needs, particularly concerning relative humidity. Relative humidity (RH) is defined as the amount of water vapour present in a given volume of air at a specific temperature and is expressed as a percentage value of the amount of water needed for saturation at the same temperature. As relative humidity cannot be avoided, in conservation terms, one speaks of incorrect relative humidity, which precipitates chemical reactions and leads to damage and deterioration.<sup>28</sup> Storing the object in a dry environment (low % RH) is beneficial to the metal to prevent further corrosion. However, the dry environment will lead to cracking of the wooden handle. The better option for treatment involves a certain degree of ‘restoration’: to remove the existing rust (removing part of the original object along with the corrosion products), and apply a protective coating to seal the metal (thus adding new material

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<sup>28</sup> Incorrect relative humidity includes damp conditions (over 75% RH) which can cause swelling, softening, deformation and mould growth; RH which is fluctuating, above or below a critical value for that specific object can cause shrinking, swelling, deformation, cracking; and elevated RH can lead to corrosion in metals.



and changing the appearance of the original object), then placing the object in a slightly more humid environment to preserve the wood.

The above example illustrates the delicate balance required in conservation decision-making to ensure the longevity of the object. This is the primary focus of the conservator, even when some measure of restoration is required. According to Clavir (1998:1), two main attributes define the conservator: firstly, the importance of preserving the integrity, particularly the physical integrity of objects, as described by Monger above. “Preserving and stabilising the original physical object is a primary consideration for conservators and is taken into account in other considerations such as those relating to, for example, aesthetic attributes, or, in the case of certain ethnographic objects in museum collections, spiritual attributes.” The second attribute of the conservator is that a systematic scientific approach will give the conservator an understanding of the mechanisms of deterioration at play within the object or its environment and the application of scientifically investigated treatment and preventive measures to arrest deterioration and change (Clavir, 1998:1). Conservation in this context includes examination, documentation, preventive conservation, preservation, restoration and reconstruction (Clavir, 1998:1). Restoration, as it is executed outside the parameters of museum conservation or academically trained conservators, is rarely as conscientious about the object’s integrity and even less about the systematic scientific investigation to pinpoint and understand what the materials are, as well as the associated processes of deterioration involved. As William Boustead, conservator of the Art Gallery of New South Wales indicates in Gettens (1961:1212),

these were men of the old carver-gilder, picture-cleaner, craftsmen type whose methods of restoration of pictures consisted of deep cleaning with ‘spirit of wine’ and turpentine, varnishing with copal resin and, worst of all, the pernicious habit of oiling out canvasses with linseed oil. These tacky layers picked up dirt, dust, and mould spores, provided rich nourishment for mould growth and formed (over the picture) a tough leathery linoxyn skin which is now impossible to remove.

By the 1960s, these practices had mostly become obsolete and as Boustead explains, they were “not tolerated” in more prominent museums because of the known damage and deterioration they caused. In reality though, these practices continued for some time “in some art dealers and picture framers’ private shops and among certain commercial restorers” (Gettens, 1961:1212).



The result is that very often in the past, some measure of original material has been sacrificed to produce a visually attractive or functional object “with the replacement of worn and damaged parts and surface finishes”, additionally “to some with more enthusiasm than respect for historical accuracy, restoration also implies adding more than was there in the first place” (Monger, 1988:376). This liberty with the unnecessary addition of material to project a more complete or more beautiful surface, and the creation of *pastiche* is the exact reason that the authenticity of restored artworks was questioned from the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, both in paintings restoration (Étienne, 2017:88–89; Gettens, 1961:1212) and paper restoration (Poulson, 2008:12). 18<sup>th</sup> century paper restorers used to routinely apply small quantities of gouache paint to disguise tears, missing areas were filled, and in-painted (Poulson, 2008:18), printed works on paper were ‘washed over’ with India ink or colour to deepen the tone of the print (Poulson, 2008:19), or a ‘patina’ induced by using coffee, tea, tobacco, liquorice, pigments or smoke to adjust the tone of the paper and “imitate any degree of age” (Poulson, 2008:20). As Poulson (2008:22) notes of 18<sup>th</sup> century print and paper restorers, “their motivations are, respectively, to increase the value of the print, to preserve it and to improve its appearance for display.” Poulson (2008, 18) further mentions how these ‘deceptive’ practices performed by paper restorers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were mentioned at the time, including Cumberland (1827), Maberley (1844), Willshire (1874) and Slater (1891). It is thus

not surprising that the attitude towards restorers has not always been positive [and] nineteenth-century collector’s manuals often warned their readers against the mischief restorers could cause and the duplicitous acts they could commit (Poulson, 2008:25.

As a result, restorers were increasingly pushed out of working with and on museum objects because of some practitioners’ questionable ethical conduct, but also because of their general lack of understanding of the future consequences of treatment (Gettens, 1961:1212). Since the establishment of conservation (then still called restoration) as more than a trade, tensions thus seem to have appeared between practitioners who worked in or for museums and those who worked in private practice, although these separations may give the impression of false dichotomies, as all are trained to carry out the same types of treatments for the same purpose (namely, extending the life of the artefact). Stevenson (1995:115) identifies three main categories of restorers: “the artist-restorer, the collector-restorer and the domestic-restorer, each with different skills, motivations and aesthetic concerns.”

In addition, from early on, engravings restorers were recognised as a formal profession, whilst others, such as painting restorers, were not listed, although those who achieved a certain notoriety were identified by name in trade almanacks (Étienne, 2017:12). Remuneration differed considerably between private practice and institutional practitioners. Although work for museums sometimes offered lodgings, an equipped studio, and a stable salary, work carried out in private practice was more lucrative, depending on the extent of work and the client's profile (Étienne, 2017:19-21). Institutional archives consulted by Étienne (2017) reveal this to have been standard practice in 18<sup>th</sup> century Paris despite being discouraged, although they recognised that a restorer's "allegiance—if not unique, at least [ought to be] preferential", "Restorers of paintings who have workshops at the Louvre have obtained this favour from the government only so they may constantly be within reach to give their time, when so requested, to the Museum's paintings" (Étienne, 2017:21).

After the French Revolution (5 May 1789 to 9 Nov 1799), restorers were no longer permanently employed in museums, and the issue of sharing of workspaces, both for the restoration of museum objects as well as works of art from private clients, was brought to the fore with museum administration demanding increased transparency of the restorer's work and outputs, as well as full disclosure of the type of materials used and treatments carried out, specifically on museum paintings. This idea of disclosing materials used and treatments carried out is what initially separated some practitioners who did not want to reveal their methods, such as Robert Picault<sup>29</sup>, as they charged exorbitant amounts for their 'expertise' as well as the "high cost and hazardous nature of the 'drugs' used" for example in the case of relining paintings where Picault would charge up to 6000 pounds (Étienne, 2017:33-34). Whilst others, such as Marie-Jacob Godefroid<sup>30</sup>, would charge 500 pounds for the same process, which she explained involved "hot water and patience" (Étienne, 2017:34).

So, whilst Étienne (2017:14) looking at paintings restoration in Paris 1750 to 1815 initially appeared to be a 'networked practice' with many artists, copyists, artist-restorers, art and

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<sup>29</sup> Robert Picault (1705–1781) was a French artisan originally employed to clean the bronzes and gilded surfaces of the royal collection. His reputation and notoriety as a restorer was cemented when he successfully transferred a painting onto a new canvas support, namely Andrea del Sarto's *Charity* (see Massing, 2016: 283).

<sup>30</sup> Marie-Jacob Godefroid born Van Merle (1705–1775), was the widow of Ferdinand-Joseph Godefroid a restorer from Lille in France. When her husband passed, Marie-Jacob herself a restorer and member of the Académie de Saint-Luc since 1736, inherited the rights to practice and expanded the family business to become a prolific restorer of the *Ancien Regime* (see Étienne, 2016:[sp]).

antiquities dealers, consultants, curators and clients working together; and working collaboratively with other artisans, such as one artist-restorer busying himself with retouchings and leaving linings and framing to another who acted as ‘support staff’ (Étienne, 2017:16–17), this seems to have soured over time. Étienne (2017) suggests that these tensions may have been as a result of competition for lucrative contracts, but also because of the discrepancies noted between different practitioners with regards to the type and cost of treatments advertised. This in turn forced the review of restoration practices and the setting of standards, including set prices, which naturally led to tensions between competing practitioners and explains in part, some of the tensions described earlier, which reflect the type of training acquired, ethical codes followed, and as a result, the emphasis on the specific elements of functionality<sup>31</sup>, aesthetics<sup>32</sup>, respect for authenticity<sup>33</sup>, original material<sup>34</sup> and longevity<sup>35</sup> in treatment.

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<sup>31</sup> Functionality refers to returning the object to a state where it can resume its original function, this is particularly important for working objects which have moveable parts as the ‘true nature’ of working objects is revealed when they are in motion, as the activity itself is informative. Think of musical instruments, time pieces, vehicles, machinery etc.

<sup>32</sup> Caple (2000:17) cites *aesthetics*, or beauty in artworks and artefacts as one of the reasons these materials are preserved, citing that “works of art on canvas or paper, sculpture, glass, ceramics, textiles, photographs and buildings are all more likely to be saved because they appeal to the aesthetic sensibilities of the collector.” Aesthetics elicits sensibilities to form, colour, composition, ideas, grandeur, simplicity, reality and abstraction and are culturally determined, so aesthetic appreciation varies from one culture to another and in part explains why one type of aesthetic was valued above another.

<sup>33</sup> Authenticity emerged early on as a key concept in conservation and was formally adopted in the 1964 Venice Charter (ICOMOS, 1964). Respect for authenticity is considered a quest for and preservation of truth in cultural heritage (Jokilehto and King 2001, 33). However, this acceptance of authenticity has been challenged as an essentially Western European concept, which is not applicable, absent, or present albeit with a completely different meaning, in several non-Western cultures (Ito 1995, 34–35). The Nara Document on Authenticity (UNESCO 1994a; see also Larsen 1995) adopted a more dynamic understanding of authenticity including aspects such as ‘form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors’ (article 13). Authenticity is increasingly recognised as unattainable, chimerical and illusionary (Lowenthal 1985: 410; Lowenthal, 1992:185; McBryde 1997; Poullos, 2014).

<sup>34</sup> Many restorers of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century were reprimanded for over-restoration and emphasis on aesthetics, completing incomplete objects and overpainting losses, making objects appear whole and new, or in certain instances creating new material to look old and valuable according to taste. The lines between authentic original material and later additions, as well as falsification became increasingly present. As a result, there was both an aesthetic and philosophical shift and desire to retain original material for both authenticity and interpretation, as altered material could change the meaning of an object. Conservators became concerned with retaining as much original material as possible, as distinct from restoration material so the two would not be confused during later treatments (Malkogeu, 2006).

<sup>35</sup> One of the aims of conservation is to increase and ensure that objects and collections survive over time. This notion of longevity is related not only to the function of museums as ‘permanent institutions (ICOM, 2007), but also as Chris Caple (2000: 18) describes, the veneration of age where objects, people and places have become respected purely because of their age, is one of the motives for preservation. The idea that something has survived for an exceptional length of time suggests that there is something particular, valuable and powerful regarding that object, which differentiates it from the norm, and should be respected.

Although conservation-restoration has greatly developed since the 18<sup>th</sup> century and there is greater homogeneity in training, there still appears to be some remaining tension, and as Tubb, remarks in her 1997 paper on *Ethical Consideration in Conservation* “the private sector conservator is also acutely aware of money in a pay-as-you-earn situation [...] and there is greater pressure to take treatments to greater extremes, to push towards restoration rather than conservation” (Tubb, 1997:45, 46). This is not isolated to Europe, and it has been my experience in South Africa that practitioners will view their peers critically and ‘label’ them as restorers whilst self-identifying as conservators (McGinn, 2016a:[sp]).

This division between conservators and restorers, as outlined above, is just one of the group polarisations in heritage conservation. The field appears divided along areas of specialisation, and tensions exist between eastern and western practice traditional/apprenticeship and academic training, a focus on tangible versus intangible heritage and professional versus public practice (Boyd, 2019:[sp]; Wiznicka-Kleczynska, 1963; Tubb, 1997:41). Hölling (2015:2) suggests that conservation ‘exists between a set of dichotomies of hands and minds, practice and theory, the tangible and intangible, and the traditional and new.’ Although the needs of the object under treatment dictate what would be the most appropriate course of action from the practitioner, for example, the decisions for the selection of a particular adhesive, or not, remains the same; the decision making and subsequent actions can to a large extent be determined by the type of training received, the exposure to a sufficient diversity of materials (both in terms of objects, object needs and conservation materials and techniques) but the problem that the object expresses remains the same.

The field of conservation is further separated into specialisations, as the categories of object types hold such a vast diversity of materials within them that it is virtually impossible for one to work on all materials at an expert level. In fact, object conservators who have been trained to deal with various materials, similarly to general practitioners of medicine, are often scoffed at with the adage “jack of all trade and master of none” (anonymous, pers. comm.). Conservation and conservators are thus usually separated and self-identify through their material specialisation into paper conservators, book conservators, ceramic conservators, paintings conservators, textile conservators etc.; or allied professions such as archaeological conservation, architectural conservation, ethnographic conservation etc.; or delineated according to the function of the objects such as the conservation of furniture, watches, clocks

etc. (Tubb, 1997:42). The International Council for Museum's Conservation Committee (ICOM-CC), according to their website, is divided into 21 working groups reflecting different specialisations and areas for research, including glass and ceramics, graphic documents, leather and related materials, metals, modern materials and contemporary art to name a few (Working groups, ICOM-CC, 2020). These apparent divisions have spilt over into broader issues and discussions in conservation. They may be a result of a tendency within conservation to focus on specific details. Although Tubb (1997:41) suggests this is an "intrinsic part of the process, it is also inherent in the very nature of conservation which tends to involve the practitioner with a single artefact at a microscopic level of enormous intensity." Too narrow a focus can, however, be detrimental and as Henderson and Dollery (2000:88) write, the focus on the minor differences between specialisms, as opposed to the common goals, is restrictive both in how conservation is viewed as a profession, as well as restricting the ability of the profession to influence the wider world.

As it is practised today, conservation was developed in Europe, indicated in the introduction to this study. Although western academic practice now dominates, conservation is understood to mean the care or continued maintenance of what is valued and is apparent in most societies in one form or another. There are several recorded practices of traditional care in many indigenous communities worldwide, including in Africa, such as the annual maintenance of the enormous Djenne Mosque (Marchand, 2013:117), or the stitching of manuscripts (Couvrat Desvergnés, [nd]), and repair of masks, gourds and other objects (Gossiaux, 2007; Speranza, 2008; Jourdain, 1990).

The specifics vary in terms of geography and peoples, sometimes even within a single cultural group. Western academic practice or classical conservation over time has homogenised in its practice and emphasises materiality, authenticity, methodology, record-keeping and a scientific approach, using analytical techniques for research (Leveau, 2011; Kwanda, 2009). Traditional indigenous practices do not necessarily document the changes in heritage objects or the tools, materials and methods used to treat individual objects, which is of such importance in the West. Additionally, outside of western societies, concepts of authenticity tend to emphasise the intangible values associated with the heritage to be preserved, which are often accorded equal, if not more, importance, thus attending to the 'soul' (the immaterial) as well as the 'body' (material) of the heritage object.

This, of course, depends on what is viewed as ‘heritage’, in other words, the physical assets that assign a value to a nation’s society, culture, and knowledge. Several scholars have suggested that collecting objects is linked to certain of our human instincts of survival. As a result, collecting is a universal human activity (Cannon-Brookes, 1984; Pearce, 1992; Pomian, 1994; Clifford, 1997). However, as Cannon-Brookes (1984:115) explains, “the process of collecting cannot be considered separately from the cultural characteristics of the society undertaking it.” Collecting practices and the subsequent care of the objects collected must thus be examined within their particular cultural contexts. According to Cannon-Brookes (1984:115), it differs depending on whether society is ‘concept-centred or ‘object-centred. Cannon-Brooks (1984:115) describes this difference as follows:

Seen in historical context, the vast majority of societies, past and present, are “concept-centred” and for these the individual object is of very limited significance. For these societies the process of collecting/preserving objects is limited to fetishes, totems and so on which perform an ongoing functional role and the transmission of cultural traditions is overwhelmingly oral. However, for the minority – the “object-centred” societies – the accumulation of objects is of crucial importance in the transmission of cultural traditions, and the curiosity manifested by them in artefacts created by the “concept-centred” societies is not reciprocated.

To better illustrate the differences between ‘object-centred and ‘concept-centred’ societies, a few examples from around the world are explored briefly, including the Indonesian Kodi and Dayak communities can be said to be object-centred, whilst Aboriginal, Maori and Somali communities are concept-centred, and in between there exists myriad combinations such as the Japanese who value both object and knowledge when preserving the heritage of, for example, the Grand Ise Shrine<sup>36</sup>.

Hoskins (1998:2), who examined how particular objects can be considered biographical in the way they can tell the stories of people’s lives, describes how “People and the things they valued

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<sup>36</sup> The Grand Ise Shrine or Ise Jingū is a Shinto shrine that has existed for over 1300 years and is located in the City of Ise, Mie prefecture on the eastern coast of Japan. Every 20 years during *Shikinen Sengu* the Grand Ise Shrine is deconstructed, the Shrine and its interior furnishing are then built anew in the same location (Nuwer, 2013).

were so intertwined that they could not be disentangled.” Indonesian communities are well-known for their collections of heirloom property known as *pusaka*; in particular, their valuing of *balanga*, imported Chinese *martavan* or Dragon Jars is well recognised, so much so that they have come to symbolise Dayak culture and identity (Kreps, 2003:36). These imported jars have been an integral part of healing rituals, marriage ceremonies, display of social status, ancestor worship, mortuary practices and ceremonies involving the drinking of rice wine for a thousand years (O’Connor, 1983:403 cited in Kreps, 2003:36). These large jars whose origin was attributed to divine agency were collected and displayed in longhouses and family rooms, and the most treasured of these were those passed down through the generations (Kreps, 2003:36). As Hoskins describes, the origins and circulation of heirloom property were crucial to a sense of time and history (Hoskins, 1998:2). When jars were broken, they were even repaired using a mixture of resin, oil and lime as glue (Harrison, 1990:21).

For many First Nations people of Canada or Native Americans from the United States, objects are empty vessels that have agency not just because of the materials they are made from or how they are made, but more significantly when they are used and ‘danced’. As Gloria Cranmer Webster explains in Clavir (2002:161):

Well, I don’t know if museum people should really be talking about preservation or maintenance of culture because all you’ve got are things and those things [...] really don’t mean much by themselves, sitting on shelves. They only come to life when they are really used. So, I guess your [conservator’s] job is to preserve those ‘things’. It’s our job to preserve the culture that those “things” have meaning in.

Ahern (2001:110) defines agency in the context of objects “as the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act”, objects are made with intentionality for a particular task, and for many objects connected to the sacred and rituals such as those mentioned above, it is only when that intended function is practised that the objects truly (re)gain their intended power and influence. There have been many calls from community elders to be allowed to preserve the life force of cultural objects by providing them with elements necessary to their survival, allowing these objects to breathe, eat, drink, move and continue to be included in aspects of community life.

Gell (1998:16) describes the agency of objects as their ability to act upon the world and other people by eliciting affective (incl. emotional) responses from viewers and users, as was



intended by the creators of the objects. Étienne (2012:1) argues that the agency of objects is culturally dependant and generally linked to time and/or place, such as museums and storage rooms; but that our understanding of an object's agency should also extend to practices such as conservation and restoration and the practitioners involved, suggesting that "the degree of agency of an object varies during its life", this agency can be activated or deactivated through particular practices, including those of conservation and restoration which "are practices which increase or decrease the aliveness and power of objects." This idea of decreased influence and ancient repairs in Africa was embodied in *Objects Blessés* (translated to wounded objects), an exhibition of 120 artefacts with traditional repairs. The purpose of the repairs is "not to restore the object to its original appearance but, more subtly, to recompose a disturbed balance, by instilling new life into the wounded object and restoring its ritual or everyday function. The repair becomes part of the object recreated and is always visible." (Wounded Objects, 2021). Conservation is thus not receptive; it has an active effect of recreation and requalification, as discussed by Étienne (2012:4), who refers to restoration as a transformative process that changes the object's life and life force through the many manipulations (treatments) to which it is subjected. This becomes very significant for the appropriate treatment of sacred and/or ritual objects to preserve materiality, immateriality and significance.

The emphasis on materiality does not hold the same importance everywhere. In much of Africa, indigenous knowledge about natural and cultural aspects of daily life is often documented as part of a rich oral tradition (Mire, 2007:58; Olatokun & Ayanbode, 2008:48–49; Tsindoli, Ongeti & Chang'ach, 2018), delivered through stories, song, poetry, praise, music and dance (Finnigan, 2012; Casley-Hayford, Topp Fargion & Wallace, 2015; Ong, 2002). In these knowledge-centred societies, stories are memorised, and the information is passed on to the next generation forming an oral archive (a repository of knowledge) of a community's lineage, experiences and relations with other groups (Mire, 2007:59). Mire suggests that the emphasis on the preservation of knowledge in a rich oral archive held in intangible aspects of culture (e.g. song, poetry, stories) in Somalia is characteristic of nomadic societies which generally do not have a fixed habitation are bound by specific geographies and spaces. Nomadic groups carry few 'things' and according to Mire (2007:61)

one cannot carry all the requirements when travelling constantly. Worn-out objects are remade and new objects are made in the new camp [...] in such a subsistence strategy it is not about how much you can bring with you to the next camp but what you can



produce from scratch, when you need it. Hence, in a highly volatile and mobile society as that of the nomad, the keeping of the skill rather than the object is essential.

The consequence for the conservation of the material heritage of the nomad tribes of Somalia and certain Pigmy tribes is that of a general abandonment of most functional objects, and which are viewed as a by-product of knowledge production to preserve that knowledge.

Thorn (2006) describes how dialogue with aboriginal communities and elders in Australia has revealed a deep respect for the Land, the People and the Culture, foundational values known as *Tjurkulpa*. This respect (*Tjurkulpa*) translates to continued veneration, care and maintenance at rock art sites by local custodians, particularly elders of the communities. Thorn describes how custodians have a strong need to preserve the image to ensure that it remains evident. The repainting of the images is not an act of reverence in itself. Still, one of maintenance and care and the paintings are repainted only when necessary. However, this may be determined by the custodian, the *Wandjina* (cloud and rain spirits), or possibly through group discussion (Thorn, 2006:133). Re-painting is not carried out consistently at all shelters, and some sites exhibit multiple layers of re-painting, whilst the practice has ceased at others. Thorn (2006:134) indicates in this regard that

the Emu people came here and made the rocks and caves and paintings, then they went on their dreaming path all the way out to the coast to the west. When they went from here they left ochre in each shelter for repainting. The ochre has now all gone. My father used the last of it and now there is no more, so we don't paint here anymore.

This respect was recently recognised in 2017 with the official acknowledgement that *Uluru* (Ayers Rock, Australia), which has always been sacred to its indigenous custodians, the Anangu, will no longer allow tourists to climb the monolith. *Uluru* forms part of the Aboriginal creation myths and is integral to their spirituality. The Aboriginal people had been lamenting this desecration of *Uluru* as one of many sacred sites open to tourists, and when the last tourist came down, an Aboriginal elder was quoted as saying that it was now time to let this most sacred of places “rest and heal” (Mercer, 2019). These stories illustrate how objects (in this case, the rock art) are valued because of their often divine origin, and the materials used carry agency themselves because of the same origin myths and beliefs. Yet objects can be born, live and die, as can all living things, as this is the way of nature; a concept echoed in Native North America and First Nations.

Japan is one of those societies that does not immediately align with Cannon-Brookes' binary classification of object or concept-centred societies. The conservation of built heritage in Asia has forced a reassessment of ethical guidelines for conserving architecture as the emphasis is placed "around the organic relationship with a surrounding natural setting, rather than on the physical structure itself" (Chung, 2005:59). The Grand Ise Shrine is an exciting blend of object- and concept-centred preservation approaches. The shrine is over 1300 years old; however, its wooden structure is entirely rebuilt every 20 years (Nuwer, 2013). The inner shrine *Naiku* and outer shrine *Geku* and many other parts of the temple complex are rebuilt using the original design blueprints from over 1000 years ago, thus ensuring valuable intangible knowledge on architecture, building materials, craft skills, and techniques are passed on through the generations. The rebuilding using traditional methods and materials is part of Shinto (also known as *kami-no-mich*), a Japanese blend of animism and pantheism (see Rankin, 2011) belief in life's impermanence and the renewal brought on by death (Ellwood, 1968). Although the shrines and the materials are not allowed to age and decay, the treasures they contain, the knowledge they embody and the site used have remained constant through time. Although change is celebrated as part of natural cycles, not everything is allowed to decay; and the Japanese have a long tradition of restoration, including *kintsugi* ceramic repair where fragments are re-adhered and losses filled with precious metals such as silver or gold to redress the loss of value engendered by the breakage (Hammil, 2016).

The last area of tension is between the practitioner and non-practitioner<sup>37</sup>, between expert<sup>38</sup> and novice<sup>39</sup> and between professional<sup>40</sup> and public<sup>41</sup>. As in all spheres of society and life through general democratisation and increased access to higher education, professions, including those of museums and conservation, are becoming more inclusive, participatory, diverse, community-oriented and aware of their social responsibilities (Fleming, 2005:[sp]).

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<sup>37</sup> Practitioner, a person directly engaged in an art, discipline or profession. In this case, conservation.

<sup>38</sup> Expert, a person who has a comprehensive and authoritative knowledge or skill in a particular area.

<sup>39</sup> Novice, a person new to or inexperienced in a field or situation.

<sup>40</sup> Professional, a practitioner engaged in a particular activity as one's main paid occupation rather than as a pastime.

<sup>41</sup> Public refers to ordinary laypeople part of a community.

The very definition of a museum and its functions are being reviewed to reflect this greater societal inclusivity (Murphy, 2004:3), and a new definition of what a museum is, was proposed in 2019 to include concepts of human dignity and social justice. The definition was however not accepted as it caused an ideological rift amongst ICOM members worldwide, who viewed it as too political, too Eurocentric, too vague for defining what a museum is and does, not representative of the international museum community, as well as omitting the educational aspect of museums. In addition, the conservation community was unnerved that the wording of conservation had been replaced with the more limiting notion of preservation (Small, 2019:[sp]; Adams, 2019:[sp]). A new committee has been created, with additional consultations, a new definition is to be presented in May 2022 and members of the international museum community will once again be asked to vote<sup>42</sup>.

For many museums, the object and collections have almost become secondary and exist in the support they lend to research, interpretation, teaching and learning to promote social change (Brown & Mairesse, 2018:525; Fleming, 2005:[sp]). Historically, the collection and subsequent conservation of material culture have been justified in many ways, from exoticism and curiosity to the salvaging of disappearing customs, but most important is the idea that the knowledge contained or embodied within objects would advance scientific inquiry and our understanding of the world and peoples within it (Clavir, 2002). However, museums in the post-colonial era are now challenged with reviewing the provenance of indigenous objects within their collections and re-evaluating the retention thereof (Kreps, 2003:79). In the 1990s, the United States passed the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The Act protected Native American burial sites and required a full audit of indigenous human remains, objects and collections in federally funded museums. These inventories were prepared in consultation and collaboration with federal agencies and Native American tribes or Hawaiian organisation, and the inventories were made available to indigenous communities to determine tribal affinity on all NAGPRA covered materials and thus facilitate repatriation requests (Kreps, 2003:80). The result of NAGPRA for institutions was an increased sense of awareness of the content of museum holdings and provenance and

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<sup>42</sup> ICOM (2019) proposed definition of a museum: “Museums are democratising, inclusive and polyphonic spaces for critical dialogue about the pasts and the futures. Acknowledging and addressing the conflicts and challenges of the present, they hold artefacts and specimens in trust for society, safeguard diverse memories for future generations and guarantee equal rights and equal access to heritage for all people. Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing.”

the value of this cultural material in identity construction, self-respect, and empowerment of individuals and communities. In a post-colonial environment, “requests for the return of cultural property are increasingly being seen as part of a larger moral, ethical and legal discussions on the cultural and human rights of indigenous peoples” (Kreps, 2003:80).

Accordingly, conservation is no longer just concerned with stabilising an object, but is increasingly preoccupied with determining what heritage is, who made it, and *how* should it be cared for as opposed to *how* it is currently cared for; *how* it is used, by whom and for whom are all variables now considered during the pre-assessment phase of conservation. Dean Sully (2007:39) defines conservation as a developing social practice, which constantly seeks to understand and manage change rather than arresting it. Sully (2007:39) views conservation “as a means of creating and recreating material cultural heritage that seeks to retain, reveal, and enhance what people value about the material past and sustain those values for future generations.” Sully’s observations echo the sentiments of Miriam Clavir, who worked with requests for the ritual use of objects by originator communities. This aspect of her work impressed on Clavir the need to challenge her peers to consider the value of the cultural and spiritual significance associated with First Nations objects, beyond the materiality of the objects themselves (Clavir, 1969; Clavir, 1986; Clavir, 2002). Thus the role of the conservator is evolving from protector of the physical object to advisor and mediator between museum and communities, whether it is for restitution purposes, or whether enabling and advocating for a process of temporary loan for ritual use by originator communities or accessed in other meaningful ways within the museum (Schwierenga, 2018; Clavir, 1986). As Sully (2000:53) suggests,

The old certainties of a profession based on a technical understanding of the material world are being replaced by an engagement with diverse cultural perspectives and a need to justify the conservation process to a wide range of interested groups—the public, the original producers and the current owners.

As conservators complying with ethical requirements for consultation increasingly engage with various stakeholders, these interested groups keep growing, the term ‘stakeholder’ has dramatically increased in use since the 1980s as observed by Henderson and Nakamoto (2016:67). The ethics checklist developed at the Victoria and Albert Museum (Ashley-Smith & Richmond, 2004) asks of the conservator ‘Have I consulted stakeholders, peers, other specialists?’ and reflects the emphasis on consultation with stakeholders, which appears in numerous conservation codes of ethics (AIC, 1994; CAC & CAPC, 2000; AICCM, 2002). This

emphasis on consultation is usually focused on ensuring that intangible heritage properties such as religious or cultural significance or artistic intent are recognised, understood, and considered when devising treatments not to jeopardise them. However, as Henderson and Nakamoto point out (2016:68), stakeholder consultation can be problematic as the criteria for identifying *who* is to be considered a relevant stakeholder is ill-defined, as is the point and extent to which stakeholder intervention is required, whether it is for understanding the contextual, cultural and spiritual significance, in the devising and carrying out of treatment, storage and/or display recommendations. The survey of 28 case studies involving consultation for conservation treatment was studied in Henderson and Nakamoto's (2016) *Dialogue in conservation decision-making*, and results suggest that stakeholders generally contributed more to an increased understanding of the object and less to determining a course of action for treatment (Henderson and Nakamoto, 2016). However, the authors do remark that "those consulted may not restrict their opinions simply to meaning; their advice might spill over into consequences for practice" (ibid, 2016:69). Furthermore, the authors also noted a general tendency not to consult on treatment and not to act on treatment suggestions unless the input was from fellow professionals. These somewhat disconcerting results show that conservators still may need some time to break free from restrictive and siloed 'expert' practice to a more collaborative one. Increasingly though, as contemporary conservation shifts from materials-based to values-based conservation, more participatory conservation projects are emerging immersed in what Dean Sully refers to as 'peoples-based conservation' (Sully & Cardoso, 2014:181–182). Although a peoples-based approach prioritises the welfare of the contemporary community over material heritage and focusses on what people want (Schuster, 2010), as Sully & Cardoso (2014:182) explain a peoples-based approach:

The reframing of conservation in this way encourages greater diversity in working practice and provides the intellectual justification for challenging established norms of practice that limit the adaptation of conservation practice to the particular needs of the conservation project. It enables a continuity of established conservation practice, associated with a materials focus, where this is considered to be the most appropriate approach. Furthermore, it sanctions the incorporation of a community's cultural values into conservation decision making, where relevant. Significantly, however, it authorises the conservation processes to reflect the diverse ways that people care for and use their own cultural materials.

The potential of peoples-based conservation is illustrated in Sully's work on reviving Hinemihi, a Maori meeting house in Clandon Park, London. Hinemihi was constructed in 1880 as a *whare tupuna* (ancestral meeting house) of the Ngati Hinemihi *hapu* (sub-tribe) in Te Wairoa, Aotearoa (New Zealand). The meeting house was disused after a volcanic eruption, sold in 1892 and relocated to Clandon Park, Surrey in the United Kingdom (Sully, Raymond & Hoete, 2014:209–210). Part of the conservation management strategy for this historic building was to build a community that would allow it to live and serve its original purpose as a Maori ceremonial meeting house or *marae*. These meeting houses are at the heart of the community, and they embody the living ancestors of their *iwi* (tribal group), connecting the present to the past and function as gathering places, community halls where births and marriages are celebrated, relationships confirmed, genealogies affirmed, where guests are welcomed and decisions negotiated. Being detached from a particular local community, Hinemihi would represent the particular tribe that bore her and serve their needs and focus on Maori and Polynesian cultures in the wider community. As Sully et al. (2014) explain, this realisation meant that Hinemihi could not be viewed as a building but rather as an object-centred or object-anchored social network integral to the long-term conservation of Hinemihi. *WhareNOW* was the resulting project, an integrated approach of community-based events that sought to engage the community on the subject of Hinemihi, assemble a stakeholder base for her continued care and survey appropriate conservation strategies. The stakeholders were diverse, including Maori and non-Maori, the descendants of the originating community in New Zealand and other associated *iwi* (peoples), local Maori clubs and groups, Polynesian groups and societies, the New Zealand High Commission, the general public, Heritage Trust staff, students, craftsmen and artists (Sully, Raymond & Hoete, 2014:213). The consultation revealed that the stakeholders shared a great interest in the redevelopment of Hinemihi to serve her original purpose of meeting house. Redevelopment would require restoring and reusing Hinemihi, adding a *whare manaaki* (services building) and *wharau* (performance awning), which would allow Hinemihi to be used year-round as a *marae* (Sully, Raymond & Hoete, 2014:223). The case study is interesting because it is based on active consultation with several stakeholders who have a direct and indirect interest in the continued preservation of Hinemihi. However, the case study also demonstrates that the suggestions and desires of stakeholders raised during the consultation process were considered in deciding the conservation strategy of redevelopment. The case study further illustrates the engagement of the non-professional in the conservation process. In another paper on the same case study, Sully explores the participation of Maori in the determination of paint colours required during Hinemihi's redevelopment

(Sully & Cardoso, 2014). Oral history supplemented archival, documentary and analytical research in determining a paint chronology for the structure. Paint samples had to be obtained to verify which may have the original colours, which as Hinemihi is viewed as a living entity “which embodies ancestral knowledge, character and a range of cultural values. She bears the *wairua* (spirit) and *mana* (customary authority or prestige) of the ancestor Hinemihi. To maintain the mana of Hinemihi, the presence of *tapu* (prohibition, sacredness) and *korero* (narrative) is required. Therefore, the inclusion of Maori protocol associated with meeting houses *tikanga* (protocol), *kawa* (customary practice), and *kaupapa* (underlying Maori principles) was an essential part of the analytical project.” This involved consultation of the work required with the descendants of the creators Ngati Ranana and a *karakia whakatapua* (blessing ceremony) performed by an elder before the conservation team started the physical fabric survey interacting directly with Hinemihi. Daily protocols had to be observed to approach Hinemihi, and typical restrictions for women to look at and work on aspects of Hinemihi had to be lifted, whilst some materials and techniques had to be substituted to prevent contamination (Sully & Cardoso, 2007:199–219).

As Sully (2013:181) explains, “the care of Hinemihi provides an opportunity to examine the potential of peoples-based conservation, both as a theoretical approach and as a practical tool, to build relationships with the people affected by cultural heritage. In this process, we can reconsider the nature of current relationships, power, authority, and control over the cultural heritage of other peoples and their pasts. The nature of participation defines people's relationships to cultural heritage and with each other, as an artefact of the heritage conservation project.”

Beyond community engagement, as illustrated in the example of Hinemihi above, one significant aspect of the inclusion of public participation in conservation activities is in the realm of formal volunteering programmes in museums or the field. The United Kingdom has mainly well-established volunteering programmes for archaeological excavations in the field or as part of the National Trust, which curates and manages thousands of historic properties, and their associated objects and collections. In both cases, the sheer amount of material to be worked on in a relatively short period makes it impossible to rely on professional staff alone and volunteers with little or no training work under the supervision of conservators (Lithgow & Timbrell, 2014:3). Volunteers can assist with recording archaeological finds, documentation, photography, inventories, surface cleaning, packing and storage (Saunders, 2014:5); in



museums and historic buildings. They can also assist with many tasks of preventive conservation with training and supervision by a conservator, including documentation, photography, labelling, cataloguing, updating movement of collection records, assisting with surface cleaning and housekeeping tasks, packing and storage (Lithgow & Timbrell, 2014:6). Although potential damage through incorrect handling can increase the potential for damage, this can be, in general, avoided, by basic training and supervision, as the benefits of extra labour increasing the impact of preventive conservation measures far outweigh potential damage (Saunders, 2014:6). Volunteering extends to include students in conservation, as most graduate programmes outside of South Africa include time in their curricula for student internships and practical work. The advantage of using students in such projects who have already acquired knowledge and skills can allow them to be deployed to deal with more complex aspects of conservation that an untrained person would not be able to do.

## **2.7. Shared cultures on conservation**

The preceding argument highlights some of the tensions, differences and divisions apparent within the field of conservation, and with all of these aspects in focus, it may be difficult to think in terms of shared cultures on conservation. Shared cultures reflect relationships between cultures or cultural groups and shared histories regarding collective responsibility for the care and safeguarding of the significant attributes, meanings, and values of heritage. The concept of Shared culture is, in fact, the theme for The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)<sup>43</sup> 2020 International Day for Monuments and Sites who recognise that the idea of ‘shared’ is “intentionally provocative” and invites a review of traditional thinking, open discussion on sharing and its counterpoints of contestation and resistance (ICOMOS—International Council on Monuments and Sites, 2020). Knowledge, cultural practices and viewpoints are not uniformly shared across the world, particularly in indigenous communities and non-western cultures where many taboos are retained on the sharing of ‘sacred’ or culturally sensitive information to others, even within the community (Thomas, 2004:7). Contestation and resistance can be experienced when heritage is used to bolster selected nationalistic narratives, identity, belonging or exclusion, leading to a silencing of the traditional norms and practices on a local level or the intentional destruction of the perceived ‘other’s’

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<sup>43</sup> ICOMOS, the International Council on Monuments and Sites established 1934, continues to this day.



cultural heritage and significant heritage sites (Trigger, 1984; Dumper & Larkin, 2012; Meskell, 2002; Fisk, 2020).

There are, however, several points that are shared amongst the diversity of conservation practitioners. First and foremost is an understanding that objects decay from the moment they are created and that without careful and appropriate care, they will eventually disintegrate and disappear. The role of conservation as a discipline and conservators as its practitioners is thus to manage this inevitable change while remaining appropriate to particular cultural contexts. The vision and understanding of how this is to be achieved, particularly outside the West, and to what extent, is still contested and varies from culture to culture, as is so poignantly illustrated in the periodic rebuilding of the Grand Ise Shrine, or *Ise Jingû's shikinen sengû*, which ensures “continuity through reproduction, rather than conservation” (Coulmas, 1994:[sp]). That being said, a recent paper by Forster et al. (2019) explores, for the first time, the similarities between Eastern and Western conservation philosophies in building conservation, which they find “practically yield commensurate or quasi approaches in conservation”. Despite a Western bias towards the tangible, in contrast to a greater appreciation for the intangible in East, they liken the acceptance and retention of *patina* (an acceptable and desirable change in the appearance of the surface layer on copper alloys, leather, specific stones and wooden furniture as a result of exposure and age) in the West to the Eastern concept of *wabi-sabi* (a Japanese aesthetic philosophy that finds appreciation of beauty in the imperfect, transient, and incomplete), and the Western concern for discernible fabric repair with *Kintsugi* in the East (visible repair using gold, silver or platinum to fill losses and join fragments), they conclude that these similarities provide the opportunities for “cross-fertilisation of thinking”, exchange and sharing of ideas on conservation philosophy, approach and ultimately treatment (Forster et al., 2019:870).

It is much easier to speak of a shared culture of conservation within the West, rather than globally, and there is a certain amount of homogenisation of practice and ethos of classical conservation, which Leveau (2011) attributes to the early 1920s and 30s, and the establishment of the LoN’s IMO as outlined earlier in this chapter<sup>44</sup>. Numerous international networks were established between 1922 and 1946 in what Leveau (2011:10–11) calls the first wave of conservation, namely, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)<sup>45</sup>,

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<sup>44</sup> See page 22, and again pages 157-158

<sup>45</sup> IFLA, International Federation of Library Associations established 1929, continues to this day.

International Committee for Expert Archivists (CIEA)<sup>46</sup>, International Union for the Protection of Nature (IUPN)<sup>47</sup> and ICOMOS. The networking between museums, laboratories and institutions of higher learning worldwide allowed for the dissemination of goals and ideals ‘in the service of all humanity’, including notions of respect for the past as constituting not only a national heritage but also part of a wider global cultural heritage that had to be preserved for all humanity. By 1932, these shared ideas of the past as non-renewable cultural resources that identify nations, their place in history and identity were well entrenched. The importance of science and scientific techniques in support of heritage was promulgated in 1930, with the Rome conference, and conservation ideals, ethical norms and guidelines, were accepted with the Athens Charter for the Restoration of Historic Monuments (1931) after the 1931 Athens Conference.

## **2.8. Classical material conservation as a practice and a profession**

By the mid-1980s, the profession of the conservator-restorer was still poorly defined, as noted in preceding sections<sup>48</sup>. The contention of who a conservator is, what is considered appropriate and sufficient training, and what characterises the profession has been at the core of developing conservation from an occupation to a recognised profession over the last fifty years. Lester (2002) suggests that conservation is still in the process of professionalisation, particularly in the United Kingdom. He goes on to describe the notion of a ‘profession’ as having “various connotations about occupational characteristics, function in society, engagement with the market and with other occupations, and power, status and reward” (Lester, 2002:87). Although having steadily engaged in activities associated with professional occupations, and having taken on the characteristics of a profession such as upgrading from a trade to a full-time occupation, with training formalised through specialist schools and university courses, the development of professional associations and regulatory bodies that assess and admit members; conservation lacks a few features that other professions have, including challenges with autonomy, status, prestige, power, and a set of characteristics that define conservation to be considered a formal profession (Lester, 2003:270; Henderson & Dollery, 2000:88).

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<sup>46</sup> CIEA, International Committee for Expert Archivists established 1930.

<sup>47</sup> IUPN, International Union for the Protection of Nature established 1948.

<sup>48</sup> See page 49 for ICOM’s 1984 definition of the Conservator-Restorer

According to Lester (2002), conservation has been in the process of professionalisation in many parts of the world since the late 1990s, for example, in the United Kingdom (Lester, 2002; Henderson & Dollery, 2000; Corfield, 1998), in Germany (Gotz, 1996; Schiessel, 1995), in France (Leveau, 2011; Leveau, 2014) and the UK. Lester (2002:89) states that

In the UK, there has been a strengthening of the professional associations, an upgrading of conservation courses often to first or postgraduate degree standard, introduction of a professional accreditation (qualification) scheme and continuing professional development requirements, and the adoption of a common (European) code of ethics. At a European level there has been more emphasis on common definition of the profession and attention to university-level entry routes, with an aspiration to greater uniformity in entry requirements ideally at master's level; this has also extended in some countries to lobbying for legally protected status.

This was mirrored in the United States with the establishment of the American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC) in 1972 and Europe through the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorer's Organisations (ECCO) framework (discussed in Chapter 2.4). Professionalisation is also taking place in South Korea (Lee, 2011). However, in South Africa, like several developing countries, conservation is far from becoming professional (McGinn, 2017; Vollgraaff, 2018; Jansen van Vuuren, 2020). The characteristics of a profession's appellation include the availability of formalised academic training, appropriate requirements for entry into practice, continuing professional development, professional associations and protected legal status. These concepts and realities in South Africa will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

Part of the drive towards professionalisation in many western countries has been going on for decades and results from the presence of a dual entry into conservation practice either through an academic route or apprenticeship. Lester (2002:89) speaks of a dual agenda in the approach to the professionalisation of conservation. Firstly, supporting the need for professional conservation is justified by advocating that a better academically trained and ethical conservation workforce will raise conservation profile into professional status. This public agenda will, in turn, result in greater attention being given to the care of cultural heritage, which in turn assists in raising the accepted standards for conservation work (Lester, 2002:89). The second agenda identified by Lester (2002:89) is market-oriented, where the status of the conservator is raised beyond the level of craft or technical occupation with low salaries and

contract work as opposed to tenure. This has long been a deterrent to those entering the profession or sustaining practice, as there are limited growth opportunities. Lester adds that this is less about creating a niche for conservators than expanding the need for conservation services, its associated level of care, and being fairly rewarded for the work (Lester, 2002:89). One aspect of this dual agenda in the United Kingdom, as Lester (2002:89) outlined, comes through in the interactions between conservators and allied professionals in the heritage field, where there appears to be some measure of professional dominance. Architects, archivists and curators have traditionally held the more influential position, and this is reflected in rewards structures, weight in decision-making and the balancing of heritage needs between conservation versus use and exhibition, tending to be biased towards the latter. Vollgraaff (2018:283) ascribes this change of focus as part of museums' evolution from research-focused educational institutions to social institutions that need to play a key role in social systems and social integration. This 'new museological' approach expects the museum to not only "research, document and communicate cultural and natural heritage, but also actively shape society" by engaging issues of "equality, social justice and human rights." As a result, museum practice moved away from 'the object' to a focus on people, from an emphasis on authenticating the tangible and the past to one emphasising intangibles and the future. Collective memory, oral traditions and personal experiences are the focus of exhibitions, where the object becomes merely illustrative of the narratives, if present at all, the exhibitions at the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre, the Nelson Mandela capture site and Freedom Park are all narrative and experience focussed, with proportionally fewer objects on display. Indeed, Rassool suggests that "it is possible to reconceptualise museums and heritage away from the care of collections to an active process of social mobilisation" (Jaffer & Barends, 2020:4). Additionally, with ever-increasing resource constraints, including financial, turnaround time for rotating exhibits and scarcity of conservation expertise, there is increasing selectivity for carrying out interventive conservation treatments (Smith, 2020).

With this emphasis on the exhibition of objects as illustrative of narratives, Malkogeorgou (2012:3) highlights that

[t]here is a clear division within museum practice between intellectual and technical domains. Conservation is involved in gallery and exhibition projects early on but only on a technical basis, and often conservators are not involved in the more intellectual and

interpretative decisions about the choice of objects, themes and gallery spaces. While conservators participate in museum projects, they rarely are part of the curatorial team.

From my experience, Lester and Malkogeorgou's observations indeed hold true in South Africa. Conservation is often an afterthought in the design of museum buildings, exhibition and storage spaces, and it is only once objects are placed in (inadequate) storage, or alterations have to be made to cater for specific display requirements, that conservation issues are dealt with. Likewise, it is often only when the curator has already selected objects for exhibition preparation that conservation concerns are addressed. "Part of conservation's professionalisation agenda, therefore, concerns gaining equal status with the other occupations concerned with cultural heritage and artistic works" (Lester 2002:90). This recognition for conservation as an independent discipline and not a subset of another profession fulfils the requirement for identity and autonomy, which is one of the markers of an independent profession. The professionalisation of conservation in South Africa would thus require growing the awareness of and recognition for the expertise of conservators beyond technical skills. Therefore a more academic type of training would be more desirable than an informal apprenticeship system.

Many individuals now entering the field do so through academic study at tertiary level, which results in a degree or equivalent qualification. In the contemporary/current context, many also undergo further instruction through postgraduate or mid-career internships, and their technical skills are in little doubt. As Henderson and Dollery (2000) explain, "the fact that conservators work on often irreplaceable heritage material has been collectively recognised through the creation and publication of documents by professional bodies that define accepted standards of work." These international standards, ethical guidelines, and practice codes have also helped align the collections care and treatment benchmarks in the international world of conservation.

Today the title and profession of conservator or conservator-restorer are recognised and protected only in a small number of countries, and although the treatment of cultural heritage by non-professionals is in some instances prohibited by legislation, there are difficulties in both regulation and enforcement (Hoppenbrouwers, 2013; Henderson & Dollery, 2000). Ultimately this is dependant on the legislative frameworks of a particular country, and can depend on the type of cultural heritage such as buildings, archaeological artefacts and remains, or museum

objects. In South Africa, for example, identified and listed movable (objects) and immovable (buildings) heritage enjoys the protection of being part of the national estate, and thus any change or treatment requires a permit application to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), the national regulatory body<sup>49</sup>. This type of permit application system is repeated elsewhere in the world often with the addition of public consultation and participation, and regulating the competencies of the heritage practitioners to ensure that they are qualified to intervene on declared or national heritage. In the United Kingdom there is no specific legislation regulating the conservation profession, there is however a formal accreditation system through the Institute of Conservation (ICON) which regulates practice through a demanding and rigorous peer review process to assess and review skills, ensures standards are maintained through continuing professional development and allows for practitioners who fail to maintain a minimum standard of practice and ethics to lose their accreditation (ICON, 2021). Accredited members are then listed on a conservation register which acts as a registered or preferred suppliers database. It is mandatory for the conservation of state owned cultural heritage to be treated by accredited private conservators, and although this is not enforced for other cultural material, such as in public galleries or private collections, choosing an accredited conservator ensures that cultural material receives the highest level of care and treatment.

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<sup>49</sup> The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) is an agency of the National government Department of Sport, Arts and Culture tasked with the overall legislative mandate to identify, assess, manage, protect, and promote heritage resources in South Africa through the use of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHR Act) number 25 of 1999. SAHRA only regulates clearly identified and listed heritage and although there was a move to encourage private collectors to list the inventories of their collections this is voluntary and not enforced. Types of objects that have the potential to be listed as heritage includes a broad scope of materials as listed in the National Heritage Resources Act, number 25 of 1999. There is additionally a timeline of fifty years where objects or sites older than fifty years should be automatically assessed for significance. This is not to say that heritage younger than fifty years is immediately disregarded, on the contrary if there is recognised value or significance (historic, social, architectural, artistic etc) it will enjoy the same protection. Regulation is carried out through permit applications for permanent export to cover auction sales, relocation of private collections, destructive, donation of specimens or objects, and analysis (Section 32 (19) of the NHR Act 25 of 1999), temporary export which covers loans for exhibition or research (Section 32(19) of the NHR Act 25 of 1999), and the maintenance or restoration permits (Section 21(13) of the NHR Act 25 of 1999). SAHRA consults with experts in different fields who serve on panels in specific areas of research, associations, academics, researchers, museum curators, conservators etc are invited to sit on these panels as needed. When a permit application is submitted, SAHRA will in consultation with the panellists and other experts if required will carry out an assessment of the object's significance, as well as a condition assessment to determine the object's fragility and ability to withstand transport, research, treatment. Maintenance and restoration permits only apply to declared heritage (national, provincial or local), part of this application requires a condition assessment, proposed treatment substantiating choice of treatment, materials and techniques. In this case conservators are consulted in addition to other experts to determine the object's ability to withstand the treatment proposed, as well as to determine whether or not it is necessary. This however supposes that the conservator commissioned to restore or work on an object, knows and understands the legislation and is compelled to abide by the NHR Act 25 of 1999 and that the reviewing panel is competent enough to understand the potential consequences of the proposed treatment. Consult the following website for some useful information: <https://www.sahra.org.za> (HOME-SAHRA, 2020, 2021).

The title of conservator or conservator-restorer is still widely used by craftsmen, artists and technicians and for work that is essentially described by Hoppenbrouwers (2013) as ‘reconstruction or renovation’ rather than conservation. The difference in terminology refers to a preoccupation with aesthetics and functionality as a primary concern in restoration practice, while the principles of conservation such as respect for authenticity, reversibility, re-treatability, legibility and longevity often take a back seat or are ignored. This is further complicated by using the term ‘conservator-restorer’ in much of the literature identifying practising individuals. Although restorers can advise on and carry out conservation work, they are often required by their clients to delve further into aesthetic treatments, such as colour matching, in-painting and presenting an ‘invisible’ repair more than a conservator might in a museum environment. Additionally, a restorer would rarely have to re-treat their own work and challenges with the choice of treatment and materials only have to outlive her. In a museum setting where objects and collections are expected to be maintained for the long term, allowing for the reversibility of treatments to re-treat an object is paramount as once treated, an object enters a maintenance cycle. So, although a conservator is also trained to carry out aesthetic treatments, there is a choice as to *how much* intervention is required to achieve a stable and altogether not ‘too distracting’ result so that the object can be interpreted and appreciated for research or display with the focus remaining on the object and not the repairs.

## **2.9. Conservator core competencies**

To better understand what an academically trained conservator-restorer is required to do and how this training can differ from apprenticeship training, it is perhaps necessary to consider the expected competencies of a conservator. Several documents detail the expected competencies required of a conservator, the most common being the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers Organisations (ECCO) and the American Institute for Artistic and Historic Works (AIC). For this research, AIC was selected for its simple and straightforward wording of skills and knowledge required identified as 12 core competencies. On the other hand, the ECCO framework is more complex as it looks at which competencies are developed and attained during the course of training from novice to expert, throughout the expected five years required for conservator training, which is additionally linked to undergraduate, master’s and doctoral studies (E.C.C.O., 2002; 2003 and 2011). According to AIC, a conservator is defined as “a professional whose primary occupation is the practice of conservation and who, through specialised education, knowledge, training, and experience, formulates and



implements all the activities of conservation in accordance with an ethical code such as the *AIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice*” (AIC, 2003:4). This definition requires that the knowledge, skills and abilities that constitute the required expertise of the conservator, are delineated into essential competencies, “the degree of proficiency required in any specific competency varying according to the conservation specialty and the given task.” The AIC (2003) document further emphasises that “possessing each separate competency is not in itself sufficient, but rather that to be a qualified conservator one must utilise these competencies synergistically to maintain the standards of practice required by the profession”. The following are the twelve essential competencies for practice as identified by the AIC (2003):

1. **Conservation Terminology:** Practitioners are expected to have a working knowledge of the vocabulary of conservation and scientific methodology to effectively: examine an object, assess its condition, understand its history and articulate its needs.
2. **Conservation History, Ethics, Philosophy:** Professional conduct is governed by ethical standards and actions guided by a familiarity of why and how current practices have evolved and what treatments were used in the past. Understanding respect for the integrity of the object. Intervention is a solemn responsibility and should not jeopardise the longevity of an object.
3. **Values and Significance:** Understanding the aesthetic, cultural, economic, historical, political, religious, scientific and social value of heritage when devising conservation treatments, plans and strategies. Understand how past, present and future societal attitudes and values may change with respect for heritage.
4. **History of Technology and Cultural Heritage:** Knowing how materials were acquired, modified, processed or manufactured and how these have evolved through time to better understand objects and care for them. Possess knowledge of the chemical and physical properties and long-term behaviour and interaction of materials.
5. **Access and use of Cultural Heritage:** Practitioners must be cognisant of issues arising from the ways that tangible heritage will be accessed or used by society as this context may be critically important to understanding the object's condition, formulating appropriate treatment and recommending future care.



6. **Health and Safety Policies and Regulations:** Must be knowledgeable about health and safety policies, procedures and regulations that pertain to the practice of conservation to minimise and avoid risks to staff, the environment and heritage.
7. **Scientific Principles and Methods:** Possess a working knowledge of scientific principles as they apply to conservation, including how to access and assess scientific literature. Possess working knowledge of scientific and analytical techniques for the identification of materials and/or determining changes in these materials.
8. **Processes of Deterioration and Change:** Recognise and understand the factors and mechanisms that may chemically and physically change, damage or destroy cultural heritage over time and the means to arrest, counteract or impede the destructive process to promote the longevity of cultural heritage.
9. **Preventive care:** Mitigation of deterioration and damage through the formulation and implementation of policies and procedures for appropriate environmental conditions; handling and maintenance procedures for storage, exhibition, packing, transport, use, integrated pest management, emergency preparedness and response, and reformatting/duplication.
10. **Examination Methods:** Investigating the structure, materials and physical state of cultural heritage, including the identification, extent and cause of damage and deterioration through systematic procedures.
11. **Documentation:** Permanently recording the information derived from examination, research, analysis, and treatment of cultural heritage in both written and pictorial documentation. Maintenance and preservation of the body of information generated during examination and subsequent treatment.
12. **Treatment Methods:** Prolong the expected life of objects and assist in promoting a better understanding of their intrinsic properties and meaning through the deliberate alteration of the chemical and/or physical characteristics of cultural heritage in order to

achieve goals through the appropriate use of tools, equipment, materials, practices, procedures and methods.

These competencies were developed by the Qualifications Task Force formed by the AIC Board in August 2000 as guidelines for expected competencies in the United States.

The task force was further requested to define

the essential areas of knowledge and skills that characterise the conservator, looking at an individual at the very inception of his or her professional career; that is, the point at which a conservator crosses the line into the professional world, the point at which one declares that he or she is a conservator – not a student, not an intern, not a trainee, but a conservator. Therefore, this document identifies the competencies that, taken as a whole, can be regarded as fundamental to the definition of the conservator. It is understood that these fundamental competencies are held in common by conservators of all specialties (AIC, 2003:4).

Similar documents outline the competencies of conservators generally embedded in the Codes of Ethics for practice in other parts of the world, including Canada and Australia. In Europe, the Bologna Process, an intergovernmental initiative, was launched in June 1999 to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) bringing together 48 countries (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018). Through the Bologna process, the signatories aimed to consolidate the EHEA, facilitate mobility, increase employability, and allow for equitable student access and progression through comparable and compatible higher education systems. Before this process, there were substantial discrepancies in the duration of study, structure, content, competencies acquired and qualifications obtained between the teaching and training in European Institutions of Higher Education. This was noticeable within and across national boundaries, which meant that students and qualifications acceptable in one country were often not recognised or unsuitable when exported to the larger European labour market. It was also hoped that this harmonising of qualifications, the introduction of credit systems, flexibility in academic development, and joint degrees between institutions would also make Europe more attractive to international students (UK HE Europe Unit, 2005). The Bologna process affected all curricula, including that of conservation, which will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4, which is aligned, to a discussion about curriculum.

The harmonisation of conservation curricula through the Bologna process was based on the work of the existing network of ECCO established in 1991. ECCO consisted of 14 organisations of conservator-restorers and today represents close to 6 000 professionals and 25 member organisations within 22 countries. In addition, ECCO worked to define the profession (ECCO, 1993), standards for education (ECCO, 2002) and a code of ethics (ECCO, 2003). Finally, in 2011, ECCO promulgated their *Competences for Access to the Conservation-Restoration Profession*. ECCO based these competencies on the conservation-restoration process, starting with examining and assessing the nature of the object, diagnosis of the changes to objects, and an estimate of the risks to the cultural heritage material concerned. The conservator is then expected to provide a needs assessment, including present and future use, which requires knowledge of, and consideration for various regulations, policies and procedures, including health and safety, legislation, facilities and equipment. The next step involves preparation and planning for actual intervention and treatment and includes considerations for the desired result, the level of intervention required, evaluation of alternative treatments, constraints in terms of available resources, stakeholder demands, risks and options for future use.

Both the AIC's and ECCO's requisite competencies highlight the fact that conservation requires practitioners to have both academic knowledge and technical skills. This is one of the many dualities that define conservation and includes an appreciation and sensitivity for the arts and humanities while at the same time exhibiting the rigour and inquisitiveness for scientific analysis and enquiry. The following section turns attention to the position of the conservator at the nexus of these seemingly opposing concepts of theory and practice, art and science.

### **2.10. The conservator: between art and science, theory and practice**

As mentioned previously, teaching and training in heritage conservation have evolved from its initial trade origins (Breuil & Verbeeck, 2014; Golfomitsou, 2015; Henderson, 2005 & 2016). As indicated earlier (Chapters 1 and 2), like most trades, knowledge and practice of art restoration was initially carried out by traders with passing knowledge and skills through an apprenticeship delivery within a studio that closely guarded its secrets (Oddy, 1992; Clavir, 2002). Similarly, as mentioned in the Introduction to this study, the combination of the scientific advances of the European Enlightenment (1685–1815) and the use of scientific

testing to investigate and understand the causes of deterioration and damage in collections and help to mitigate its effects, paved the way for science and scientific laboratories in museums. As Winsor (1999:4) states

[b]y the end of the 19th century, science and technology began to be applied to restoration more systematically. Paintings were being examined by X-ray photography, and ultraviolet light was used to detect over-painting. In 1921 the British Museum opened a Scientific Department, following the 1888 example of The Berlin State Museum. The National Gallery appointed a part-time Scientific Adviser to the Trustees in 1934, and the Courtauld Institute of Art opened its scientific laboratory shortly afterwards.

Museums started to question the respective role and responsibilities of curators, conservators and restorers, which led to questions on managing practitioners and the professionalisation of restoration practice through the formalisation and homogenisation of training (Leveau, 2014). This was achieved by creating specialist schools, ensuring that restoration operated as an independent discipline, distinct from artistic production and the idea that any artist/craftsman could restore (Leveau, 2014). However, the placement of training within the arts or the sciences engendered much debate (A'Bear et al., 2017; Brokerhof, 2015; Campbell et al., 2008; Erez, 2001), and although today there is some consensus that conservation is a multi-disciplinary field requiring a broad knowledge base from the arts to the sciences, there is still no consensus with institutions aligned to the one or the other<sup>50</sup>.

According to Winsor (1999:3), ideally, “[m]odern conservators have the same craft skills and knowledge of the techniques used to make objects as their predecessors, but supplement this with a scientific understanding of the nature of the materials and how these change over time and in different environments.” Likewise, Keck (1978:4) describes conservation training as a careful blend of *savoir-faire* and acquired scientific skills, a combination of lessons learned from tradition and technology.” In essence, conservation training is more than just the practice of craftsmanship skills—it is a knowledge field. Conservation can thus be described as an epistemological process as it involves a deep progression of inquiry that questions the nature and origin of conservation knowledge, combines rational observations supported by an understanding of materials, chemistry and physical properties with sensory impressions and

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<sup>50</sup> See chapter 4.3., page 148

experiences, at times realises that the assumed knowledge may be false and seeks new explanations and solutions.

Notably, the conservator's position between art and science has not been an easy one. As Keck (1978:5) posits, "If we assert that we are the offspring of the so-called marriage between science and art, we had best admit that right now we are nothing to boast about. We have two heads with no strong facial characteristics on either; perhaps only two hands in which case neither knows what the other is up to, and a malfunctioning heart if any." C.P. Snow, a British scientist and novelist, exposed this idea of 'two cultures' in his 1959 Rede lecture, stating, "I believe the intellectual life of the whole of western society is increasingly being split into two polar groups [...] Literary intellectuals at one pole—at the other scientists, and as the most representative, the physical scientists. Between the two a gulf of mutual incomprehension—sometimes (particularly among the young) hostility and dislike, but most of all lack of understanding. They have a curious distorted image of each other. Their attitudes are so different that, even on the level of emotion, they can't find much common ground." (Snow, 1961:4–5). Snow's thesis was that this split and distrust between the two cultures of humanities and science originating from over specialisation in education was a significant handicap in solving the world's problems. His solution was to foster a general interest and understanding for the other culture during the training of both humanists and scientists. Between his 1959 lecture and his 1964 book, *A second look*, Snow started musing with the idea of a 'third' bridging culture that would narrow the breach between the sciences and the humanities and improve dialogue across the disciplinary divide. Attempts to close this divide can be seen generally in the desire to introduce the arts in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education and curricula, moving STEM to STEAM (science, technology, engineering art and mathematics) (Feldman, 2020; Jolly, 2020; Pomeroy, 2020); and through such projects as the ARTECHNE Project<sup>51</sup>, which looks at technique in the arts, the historical epistemology of technical art history and "promises to resolve tensions and allow for fruitful cooperation between the sciences and humanities" (Dupré, 2017:174).

Conservation to a certain extent sits at this nexus point, particularly concerning Technical Art History (TAH), which looks at the materiality of art and artefacts through various technical

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<sup>51</sup> ARTECHNE is a cooperative research project between the Universities of Utrecht and Amsterdam focussing on technique in the Arts from 1500 to 1950. The project looks at how artists master their art and transmit their techniques in art by creating a database of recipes and techniques.

analyses to elucidate questions surrounding the artists' choice of materials, methods and intentions (Bomford, 1998). Hermens describes TAH as "looking at original intention', choice of materials and techniques, as well as the context in and for which the work was created, its meaning and its contemporary perception [...] at its least imaginative, technical art history becomes a taxonomic act of deconstruction: a material text analysed and fragmented" (Hermens, 2012:165). Dupré (2017:174) explains how it is this blend of the humanities and the sciences which makes TAH truly novel and significant, but that "conflicts between the sciences and the humanities seem to be as present as co-operation and synergies." Conservators, although required to understand the manufacture of cultural materials, were early on required to distance themselves from art production and abandon the title of artist-restorer; to acquire the scientific skills and knowledge necessary to assist in the authentication of works and identification of forgeries (deGhetaldi, 2012; Hill Stoner, 2000; Ciulisová, 2012), particularly on the back of the van Meegeren trials<sup>52</sup>; and to align with the over-arching theories of conservation as opposed to that of restoration (Leveau 2014).

Following the establishment of formal training in Europe in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as outlined in chapter 4 of the research, the practice of restoration required regulation to accredit graduates and prohibit non-certified practitioners from practising and calling themselves conservators as distinct from restorers (Maurer, 1932:142). As a result, in 1981, ICOM-CC recognised and ratified the definition of the profession of conservator-restorer (ICOM-CC,

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<sup>52</sup> Henricus Antonius "Han" van Meegeren (10 October 1889–30 December 1947) was a prolific Dutch painter and portraitist, considered to be one of the most ingenious art forgers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see Lopez, 2009). Van Meegeren passed his paintings off as newly discovered works mostly by renowned 17th century artist Jan Vermeer. As most museum collections were in safe storage because of the war, there was little room for authentication by connoisseurs. During the German occupation of the Netherlands, one of van Meegeren's forgeries of a Vermeer *Christ with the Adulteress* was sold to a Nazi banker and art dealer Alois Miedl, who traded the Vermeer to Nazi Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring for 137 looted artworks. Göring hid his collection of looted artwork, including *Christ with the Adulteress*, in an Austrian salt mine, along with 6,750 other pieces of artworks. This cache was discovered and confiscated by the Allies in 1945. The records associated with the artworks led the Allies to Miedl who was questioned regarding the newly discovered Vermeer, and based on Miedl's confession, the painting was traced back to van Meegeren, who was arrested and charged with being a Nazi collaborator and plundering Dutch cultural property. Threatened with the death penalty, van Meegeren confessed that *Christ with the Adulteress* was a forgery of his own creation. The trial of Han van Meegeren began on 29 October 1947 in Room 4 of the Regional Court in Amsterdam, where an international group of experts was convened to address the authenticity of van Meegeren's paintings (the commission included curators, professors, and doctors from the Netherlands, Belgium, and England, and was led by the director of the chemical laboratory at the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Paul B. Coremans). The commission examined the eight Vermeer and Frans Hals paintings, which van Meegeren had identified as forgeries. Many 'experts' relying on connoisseurship were stumped and the importance of scientific analysis for authentication was highlighted. These were so perfect that Van Meegeren was asked to replicate his process in front of the panel, and he painted his last forgery between July and December 1945 in the presence of reporters and court-appointed witnesses: *Jesus among the Doctors*, also called *Young Christ in the Temple* in the style of Vermeer (see Lopez, 2009; Dolnick, 2009).

1981:2), and three decades later, ECCO's requisite competencies for access into the profession, were published (ECCO, 2011).

### **2.11. A tiered conservation approach**

Mariette Westermann's (2015) concluding remarks of the Mellon Art Conservation Workshop that was held at the University of Pretoria in March 2015, and which was in part the origin of the present research, suggest "that a healthy conservation system is tiered, from the advanced research conservator to the great bench conservator to the passionate and well-skilled documentation specialist and conservation technician". A tiered conservation ecosystem is reflected in the AIC documents on core competencies, *Defining the Conservator: Core Competencies* (AIC, 2005) and *Requisite competencies for Conservation Technicians and Collections Care Specialists* (AIC, 2005). The competencies, skills, knowledge and expertise of the conservator have been outlined in an earlier section of this chapter and is not repeated here except to highlight the difference between the expected competencies for technicians and collections care specialists. In the 2015 document, the task team of the AIC realised that conservation technicians as a group perform a wide variety of tasks. However, as individuals in particular contexts, technicians tend to focus their activities on a small number of well-defined tasks, which is particular to the institution's needs where they are employed. Therefore, these institutions often rely on technicians with various skillsets for the required activities, ranging from basic to advanced. The activities of technicians and collections care specialists are always carried out under the guidance or supervision of a conservator or conservation scientist, who ultimately takes responsibility for decisions on how the activity is carried out, including materials, techniques, and methods.

The 2005 document outlines 19 areas of activity<sup>53</sup> for technical conservation staff (conservation technicians and collections care specialists) and further breaks these down into

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<sup>53</sup> AIC 2005 requisite competencies for technicians, 19 Tasks include: Collection housing, condition survey, conservation assessment, documentation, emergency preparedness and disaster recovery, environmental monitoring, examination, exhibition preparation and planning, housekeeping, labelling, laboratory and studio maintenance, outreach, packing moving and transport, pest management, research, sample preparation, site protection, training, and treatment.



20 knowledge sets<sup>54</sup> and 21 skill sets<sup>55</sup> required for each of the 19 areas of activities or tasks.

The competency level for each is then gauged as follows (AIC, 2005:3):

- Level I: a beginning or basic level in which the steps of the task are provided.
- Level II: an intermediate level requiring knowledge of the theoretical underpinnings of the task, finer skills, and hands-on experience.
- Level III: an advanced level at which the technician is able to, independently, carry out a task after instruction.

The 2005 document outlines how each of the 19 identified activities carried out by conservation technicians is measured against a conservator carrying out the same task. An example follows, extracted from the AIC (2005:13) document to illustrate a single task and the different levels of competencies for technicians along with the description of the conservator's role in executing the same task:

**Activity/task: Emergency preparedness and disaster recovery:** protecting cultural property through the evaluation of risk to the collection and minimizing those risks to the extent possible; developing action plans to respond to emergencies; preparing information, materials, supplies, and personnel for emergency response; and responding to the emergency by carrying out recovery activities.

**Task level I:** assembles listed equipment, information, and supplies; maintains and stocks emergency depots as instructed; performs actions and assists others as assigned in response and remedial-level recovery procedures.

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<sup>54</sup> AIC 2005 requisite competencies for technicians, 20 knowledge sets include: collections management; conservation assessment; conservation, history, ethics, philosophies and goals; conservation research; conservation terminology; data collection; deterioration processes; documentation; emergency preparedness; environment; examination; exhibition; health and safety; housekeeping; laboratory and studio maintenance; management; materials properties/conservation chemistry; pest management; preventive care; and treatment.

<sup>55</sup> AIC 2005 requisite competencies for technicians, 21 skillsets include: communication techniques; cosmetic reintegration techniques; database management techniques; documentation techniques; education and training techniques; emergency response techniques; graphic illustration techniques; handling techniques; health and safety techniques; housekeeping techniques; housing techniques; instrumental techniques; laboratory techniques; mending techniques; mount-making techniques; organisational techniques; photography techniques; stabilisation techniques; superficial cleaning techniques; technical examination techniques; treatment techniques.

**Task level II:** completes and maintains portions of an emergency plan as assigned (e.g., updates call and vendor lists); prepares materials, information, and supplies for use in response as instructed; responds to emergencies as instructed by supervisory staff; performs remedial-level recovery procedures as instructed.

**Task level III:** fills an assigned role in emergency planning, assists in creating an emergency plan; assists in responding to an emergency as indicated in the institution's plan; assists with recovery procedures and conservation treatment activities related to the emergency, as appropriate.

**Conservator level:** writes and/or reviews emergency procedures; shares responsibility for all collections care aspects of an emergency plan jointly with all responsible professional colleagues; oversees response and recovery activities related to sites, historic buildings and collections; assigns response and recovery tasks to appropriate personnel.

## 2.12. Conclusion

As motivated in this chapter, conservation as a concept is complex and contested, not least because it appears to navigate the tensions of art and science, theory and practice, restoration and conservation, professional and community. From its early development as restoration and the beautification of objects, the practice turned to conservation where decisions to intervene on an object have become more measured and considerate of the original fabric of the material and respecting the cultural and spiritual values embodied in the object. Although essentially an activity that all creators engage to ensure the continuity of what they have created, conservation is textured by a complex layering of values, beliefs, and judgments constantly in flux and change from culture to culture. What is perceived to be “Classical conservation” and its origins are often traced to western thinking and philosophy of the Enlightenment but are rapidly changing, and a contemporary theory of conservation is emerging where both the identity of the practitioner and the profession are adapting to insights from new contexts and cultural exchanges in our globalised 21<sup>st</sup>-century reality. Increasingly, the demands and varied uses of heritage in identity construction, healing, nationalism, and generating income through display, tourism, and research, place additional burdens on the continued existence of heritage, authentic or replicated. How conservation is carried out, its approach, the materials and

techniques used, with an emphasis on scientific enquiry into the materiality of objects as a way to understand their ageing and deterioration processes and slow these down, is fairly homogenised in practice although perhaps not accessible in many parts of the developing world. As a domain of knowledge and practice, conservation has grown in leaps and bounds over the last fifty years from developing a formal definition of the conservator and the profession to establishing formal training and standards of expected competencies, codes of ethics and professional bodies, multiplying professional journals, one can say that conservation has achieved recognition as an independent profession. In some countries, the title has even been protected, restricting practice for non-conservators. However, this is not the case in all instances, and in many parts of the world, conservation is still evolving into a formalised profession, South Africa included. In the following chapter, I turn to understanding the South African and the African heritage landscape and conservation's place within it.

## CHAPTER 3

### *The local versus the global in museum conservation in South Africa: Mapping the field*

*The conservation of cultural objects should not be carried out against the will of their creators and customary users. An object preserved without the consent of its creators becomes another thing altogether, imbued with a different content, and holding a different meaning. [...] Even though its materials form disappears, an object exists as long as its spirit remains. It is therefore essential that craftsmen who create cultural objects be particularly involved in the work of compiling inventories and ensuring protection, for these artists are able to recreate objects according to custom and oral traditions.*

(Konare, 1983:149)

In developing a description and argument about the making of a curriculum, this chapter explores the current state of museum conservation within the South African context and landscape. To provide an understanding of current practice, it is necessary to consider the importance of the core function of collections care in the development of South African museums from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

Collections care as it was known then, now expanded and referred to as preventative conservation measures was seen to be part of general collections management. They were often part of general museological training and were the responsibility of curators, particularly in smaller institutions (Grobler, 2006:10). This leads to inquiry as to who was responsible for collections care in museums and whether they were appropriately trained. In addition, it is important to question whether their knowledge of preventive conservation was sufficient to care for the collections in their custody, as this would affect the collections' condition over the long term.

This chapter provides a brief perspective on the initial development and growth of the museum profession in South Africa and attempts to address the training needs of local museum personnel, with a specific emphasis on collections care and conservation. As De la Rey (2015:6) notes, the lack of local conservation training options was raised in a 2008 heritage sector audit commissioned by the National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) (DAC,

2008). It concluded that there is a great need to develop multiple avenues (different levels of training including certificate, diploma and both undergraduate and graduate degrees at several institutions) to train conservation technicians, conservation managers, and conservators. The level of collections care and conservation is unevenly distributed within South African museums for several reasons, many of which are related to the training and qualifications of staff working in museums as observed during site visits in 2016 <sup>56</sup> (McGinn, 2017:37). To understand the present situation, this chapter foregrounds the various training programmes presented in museum studies. Specifically, *what* these initiatives consisted of, *where* they were based and *where* they stand today. This chapter considers where South African conservation training initiatives fall within broader museum training to situate South African museum training within the broader continental context. Lastly, the chapter explores the intentions of the University of Pretoria in developing conservation as a field of study to address the competencies (theoretical and practical) central to such a programme developed at the University.

The research for this chapter is mainly descriptive and drawn from multiple sources (see Chapter 1 for a perspective on research design and methodology). It includes archival research, a review of available literature and data generated by the Mellon-funded development grant project through questionnaires and interviews of local practitioners, both past and present (see Appendix 3). Qualitative fieldwork data gathered during these interviews was then compared to available scholarly research and archival documents. Interviewees were chosen from various environments; archives, museums, universities and private practice and encompass a broad range of opinions (access, resources, capacity, demographics, lack of skills, etc.). The interviewees were selected based on recommendations from other practitioners, ‘snowball’ technique described in Chapter 1. The ideal sample would have been as many individuals from as many institutions and fields of expertise as possible. This, however, would not have been possible due to geographic, financial, and practical reasons. Due to the scope of the present research, depth of understanding may not have been reached with shorter, more superficial interviews. However, past the development phase as funded by the Mellon Foundation, additional selective in-depth interviews were carried out with a small number of participants specifically for the purposes of the present research to obtain opinions on details of direct concern to conservators and better understand the South African conservation landscape. With

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<sup>56</sup> See chapter 5.4., page 196.

these, one could then compare conservation values and practice; and better understand the opinions voiced. A dozen additional interviews allowed for a sample of opinions to be represented. Informed consent for both the interview and the publication of data from the interviews was obtained, as is described in the ethical review process. Interviewees included book and paper conservators, paintings conservators, preventive conservators, previous lecturers in museum studies or conservation, and current lecturers in conservation.

### 3.1. Growth of museums and museum skills in South Africa

As outlined in the introduction chapter to this thesis, the development of conservation is directly interrelated with the development of the public museum where a vast majority of people encounter engagements with art and objects (Dickinson, Blair & Ott, 2010; McCellan, 2003). The conservation of its collections being recognised as one of the core functions of the museum. For example, in the city of Pretoria, the rationale behind the establishment in 1892 of the *Staatmuseum van die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (Pretoria, founded 1892)<sup>57</sup> was to collect and preserve objects of general and historical interest (Grobler, 1994:51).

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, eight museums had been established in South Africa, including the previously mentioned *Staatmuseum van die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek*, the South African Museum<sup>58</sup>, the Albany Museum<sup>59</sup>, the Port Elizabeth Museum<sup>60</sup>, the Bloemfontein

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<sup>57</sup> *Staatmuseum van die Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* translated from Afrikaans as the National Museum of the Republic of South Africa.

<sup>58</sup> The South African Museum was the first museum established in South Africa, founded by Lord Charles Somerset in 1825, then governor of the Cape Colony (1814–1826), with Andrew Smith as the first Superintendent. It was however, only in 1855 that the South African Museum was reconstituted by Sir George Grey, with Edgar Layard as the first Director. It was founded as a general museum that housed both natural history and cultural history material, as well as a few ethnographic material from the interior of South Africa (Summers, 1975).

<sup>59</sup> The founding of the Albany Museum in Grahamstown was the brainchild of a group of four doctors namely Armstrong, Atherstone, Edmunds and Hutton, together with A.L. McDonald, an officer of the garrison Ordnance Department, who co-founded the 'Graham's Town Medico-Chirurgical Society'. The original aim was to 'collect specimens in the various departments of Medical Science in all its branches, with the view of forming the nucleus of a Museum' (MacKenzie, 2010:105). The collection of specimens was initially housed in a room at Dr Edmunds's house before moving to the new Town Hall in 1882. Although natural history and palaeontology was a clear focus point, there was no distinct collection policy (MacKenzie, 2010: 109).

<sup>60</sup> According to the Bayworld website (2020:[sp]), the Port Elizabeth Museum was founded in 1856 when land was granted for the erection of a town hall, municipal offices, library and Athenaeum. A small room was set aside in the Athenaeum for the collection of unusual natural history specimens. It was however, only named the Port Elizabeth Museum in 1897, and the Port Elizabeth Museum Complex was formally renamed Bayworld on 1 April 1999 (Bayworld website, 2020:[sp]).

National Museum<sup>61</sup>, the King William's Town Museum<sup>62</sup>, as well as The Durban Museum<sup>63</sup> and Art Gallery<sup>64</sup>. Although most of these museums were headed by learned persons, academics and scientists, few had previous museum experience. Mr W.L. Sclater, Director of the South African Museum from 1896–1906, was the first director with museum experience and highly qualified in the natural sciences<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> The National Museum was founded in Bloemfontein in 1877 following the participation of the Free State Republic in a world fair held in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania, USA) in 1876 to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the American Revolution. Ostrich feathers, ivory, uncut diamonds and animal hides were sent to the fair and although most of these high value items were sold during the fair, the Free State government was adamant that a building be made available to house the remainder of these objects as well as others that represented the natural and cultural identity of the Free State (Van der Bank, 1997).

<sup>62</sup> The Kings Williams Town Museum was founded in 1884 and named after the town. In 1821 it changed its name to the Kaffrarian Museum. As Witz (2015:676) explains, this was “in accord with a mid-19th-century imperial identification of the region as British Kaffraria, conceived as a frontier ‘buffer zone’ between the Cape Colony as the ‘zone of settlement’ and independent Xhosaland.” In 1999 the museum was renamed the Amathole Museum, Amathole meaning ‘calves’, and refer to the nearby mountains. (see Randles, B., Swanepoel, P. and Hirst, M., 1984. *A History of The Kaffrarian Museum*. King William's Town, South Africa: The Museum).

<sup>63</sup> The Durban Museum was established in 1887 in a room in the Town Hall. Early calls for the establishment of a museum in the district began with the formation of a Natural History Society of Natal and so the focus was essentially on natural history specimens (Quickelberge, 1987:10), as well as local ‘curios’, weapons, wood carvings and ceramics (Brown, 2005:18). The Durban Museum was later divided into Durban Natural Science Museum and the Durban Local History Museum (Quickelberge, 1987:101).

<sup>64</sup> The Durban Art Gallery (DAG) was established in Durban in 1892 (Turnbull, Eileen Mary-Anne. 1991. "The painting collection of the Durban Art Gallery 1892–1921: Attitudes and policies governing its development". Master's of Arts in the Dept. of Fine Arts and History of Art, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg).

<sup>65</sup> William Lutley Sclater was born in England, on 23 September 1863, and was educated at Winchester College and Keble College, Oxford, obtaining First Class Honours in Natural Sciences in 1885. In 1887 he became a Demonstrator at Cambridge University, and thereafter, for a few years he was Deputy Superintendent of the Indian Museum in Calcutta. From 1891–1896, he taught science at Eton College. He became Director of the South African Museum in 1896, and was the first director to institute a series of registers, one for each category of objects housed in the museum (Summers, 1975).



When considering the *Staatmuseum*, its first director was the Dutch physician J.W.B. Gunning (1860–1913)<sup>66</sup>, followed by Breijer<sup>67</sup>, a lecturer in physical science, and then Swierstra<sup>68</sup>, an entomologist; all were Dutch-born and emigrated to South Africa.

In 1926 the Directors of the established Southern African museums held a meeting in Pretoria to gauge the possibility of forming a Museums Association. However, disagreements over membership resulted in the matter being abandoned (Swierstra, 1936:1), but resurfacing a year later at the July session of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science<sup>69</sup>. The matter was also abandoned because too few museum delegates attended due to financial constraints (Swierstra, 1936:1). Inadequate funding of museums had been deplored by staff since the establishment of museums in South Africa and was a crucial element in the Miers and Markham report<sup>70</sup>. The Carnegie Trust<sup>71</sup>, which supplied the British Museums Association (BMA) with an office and secretary, invited Sir Henry Miers<sup>72</sup> to compile a report on British

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<sup>66</sup> Jan Willem Boudewijn Gunning (1860–1913) was born in Hilversum in the Netherlands. Educated at the Universities of Amsterdam, Leiden and Jena he came to South Africa in 1884 where he opened a medical practice in the Free State, and later the Cape Colony before moving to Pretoria where he was appointed as both Director of the Staatmuseum and was instrumental in forming the Pretoria Zoological Gardens. (Swierstra, 1913: 110; Grobler, 1994: 92).

<sup>67</sup> Hermann Gottfried Breijer (1864–1923) was born in Arnhem in the Netherlands. He obtained a doctorate in mathematics and physics at the University of Amsterdam in 1893. In the same year, he was appointed as a lecturer in physical science at the State Gymnasium in Pretoria and honorary Director at the Staatmuseum. He was appointed Director at the Transvaal Museum in 1913. NCHMA, System 1 No 14TM1/59, Letter M. Buys, Transvaal Archives to T. Jacobs-Venter, dd 1 May 1959; B.C. Cronjé, “Breyer (Breijer), Herman Gottfried” (unpublished article).

<sup>68</sup> Cornelis Jacobus Swierstra (1874–1952) was born in the Netherlands. Trained as an entomologist at the University of Amsterdam he arrived in the Transvaal in 1894 and was appointed at the Staatmuseum in 1896. Swierstra convened the first meeting of the South African Museums Association and was elected its first president in 1936 (Brain and Erasmus, 1960:115).

<sup>69</sup> The South African Association for the Advancement of Science was founded in 1902, and is still existing under its new name, The Southern Africa Association for the Advancement of Science (S2A3 or S2A3), (see S2A3Home, 2020).

<sup>70</sup> H.A. Miers & S.F. Markham, *The Museums Association survey of Empire museums. A report on the museums and art galleries of British Africa together with a report on the museums of Malta, Cyprus and Gibraltar by Alderman Chas. Squire and D.W. Herdman to the Carnegie Corporation of New York* (Edinburgh, 1932). The Museums Association (compl.), *Directory of museums and art galleries in British Africa and in Malta, Cyprus and Gibraltar* (The Museums Association, London, 1933).

<sup>71</sup> The Carnegie Corporation was established by Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919), born in Scotland but moved to the United States in 1848 where he eventually set up iron and steel production in Pittsburgh, the source of his economic fortune. He established the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust in 1913 to see to the well-being of the people of the British Isles, and through the Trust assisted and supported the British Museums Association.

<sup>72</sup> According to Grobler and Pretorius (2008:48), Sir Henry Alexander Miers (1858–1942) was a noted geologist and academic who served as Principal of the University of London (1908–1915), Vice Chancellor of the University of Manchester (1915–1926), and President of the Museums Association (1929–1933), as well as a trustee of the British Museum.

museums (Grobler & Pretorius, 2008: 47). In 1931, Sir Henry Miers and Sir (later Sir) SF Markham<sup>73</sup> were commissioned to carry out a similar survey of museums throughout the British Empire and compile a directory of those museums. The report covered various museum matters from administration and museum buildings to staffing matters, displays, research and publications (Grobler & Pretorius, 2008:45). Research for the report included visits to 40 museums in Africa, with visits to Cape Town, Kimberley, Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, East London, Durban, Pretoria and Johannesburg (Miers & Markham, 1937: 430):

Those museums cover a wide range in quality and administration as well as in distribution, from the fine South African Museum in Cape Town to the poor apology for a scientific museum [...], which [...] is unworthy of that rich city Johannesburg. Poverty coupled with handsome buildings is the characteristics of the South African museums.

This description taken from the Miers and Markham Report alludes to the vast inequality of South Africa that is still relevant today. In the 1930s, South Africa was reeling from an extended and intense period of drought and the effects of the Great Depression (1929–1932). The combination of these two events led many Afrikaner sharecroppers (tenant farmers who paid rent to the property owners by sharing their crops) to be evicted from their farms as landlords sold or consolidated various farms. This massive rise in poverty and unemployment led families streaming into towns such as Johannesburg in the hope of finding employment in the mining sector, coming into direct competition with the black labourers (Parnell, 1992:116). The decline in the agricultural sector was further exacerbated by the country's rapid industrialisation linked to the increased mining of diamonds, gold, iron, coal, and other minerals.

The rise of white poverty in South Africa was so dire, and it caught the attention of the Carnegie Corporation, which ordered the *Commission on the Poor White Problem in South Africa* (1932–1933). Although the inquiry helped alleviate white poverty, it has also been criticised as the foundation for the formalised system of racial discrimination that later became known as apartheid ('apartness' in the Afrikaans language) and further entrenched massive inequality on racial divisions (Ross, 1981:210). This, set against the backdrop of culture housed in 'handsome' colonial buildings such as the South African National Gallery (SANG), now

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<sup>73</sup> Sir Sydney Frank Markham (1897–1975) was a British politician and the secretary of the British Museums Association.

Iziko South African National Art Gallery (ISANG) and the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), among others.

Several key findings were highlighted in the Miers & Markham Report, including the relative isolation within which museums operated in South Africa and the need for better cooperation between the institutions. Recommending this could be remedied by the establishment of a museums association and a regular publication. The second challenge identified was that of the poor financial support awarded to museums by National, Provincial and local authorities, and as with the Great Depression and drought mentioned previously, it was a particularly difficult time in South Africa. As a result, the Carnegie Corporation, through its Chairman in South Africa, allocated funds, making it possible to convene the inaugural SAMA meeting in Kimberley in 1936, with further funding to assist the Association in its initial start-up.

Some aspects of the Miers-Markham Report were discussed at the South African Museum Association's inaugural meeting in Kimberley in 1936, the first two days focusing on exhibitions and display. These are the only parts of museums that the general public has access to. Discussions at the meeting highlighted concern, from the various museums, about how to increase support from the public and secure education authorities and teachers to make greater use of the museums (Chubb, 1936:5). The first issue of the South African Museums Association Bulletin (hereafter SAMAB) was published in September 1936 and reflects this as well as other matters of importance at the time, including the construction of display cases, display methods and arrangement of objects for display, natural history specimen preparation and preservation, and the care and restoration of artworks. SAMAB was also the place to advertise for duplicate specimens for exchange, the establishment of various museums, collection histories, training opportunities, research expeditions and publications, and staff matters, including hiring new staff, retirements and obituaries.

In addition to the above, the Miers and Markham Report also critically examined the administration of museums and their funding, museum buildings and equipment, exhibitions, collections, collections care and challenges, educational activities, expeditions, research and publications. The report also highlighted the need for a textbook dealing with curatorial problems in the sub-tropics (Miers & Markham, 1933:44) and the need for museum staff to go overseas to broaden their knowledge (Grobler, 2006:53). Although curatorial problems such as pest management and other aspects of preventive conservation were never addressed in a

textbook, articles published in SAMAB dealt with some of these issues (the care of pictures... 1936; ideal conditions for pictures...1943:103; Pringle, 1942; Boyce, 1944).

The Miers and Markham Report (1932) was instrumental in developing a local museum network with the start of SAMA, which initially also comprised Rhodesian (now Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi were also included) museums. The existence of an active professional body, regular meetings and the start of the association's journal was the beginning of formalising the museum profession in southern Africa, further consolidated during the 1940s.

### **3.2. The 1940s, the consolidation of SAMA and the need for museological training**

With the country's growing industrialisation, the government invested in many large-scale projects, particularly favouring the white minority and Afrikaners in particular, even sanctioning businesses that did not employ Afrikaners (Ross, 1981:203). Museums grew in numbers within the growing towns, and by the early 1940s, there were five national, five provincial, and two municipal museums of natural history, seven art galleries and eight cultural history museums in the country (Grobler, 2006:51). The issue of professionalisation, professional status, recognition and training was brought up in the annual proceedings of the association (SAMA, 1943:25). According to Oliver (1943:35), "work in museums and galleries was not recognised as a profession, with professional qualification and status, although the institution of the Diploma, awarded by the Museums Association of Great Britain, pointed in that direction." Oliver suggested that SAMA should look into the possibility of establishing training in South Africa in the same manner that the South African Libraries Association had done with funding from the Carnegie Corporation (Oliver, 1943:35), to assist with the "shockingly understaffed" conditions at South African museums (Oliver, 1943:102). There were requests for local museums training from younger staff entering museums and art galleries, and at the time, the only possibility was to train overseas. Oliver (1943) suggested that SAMA could look to the BMA's Diploma for inspiration, but with certain adjustments to suit the South African context (Oliver, 1943:100–101). In the same article, Oliver suggested that the biggest challenge to museums in South Africa was the public perception that museums were places of research for a few scientists and had no 'real' public function. Indeed due to understaffing and financial pressures in South African museums, staff was generally limited to professional, scientific staff, and most museum functions other than research fell by the

wayside unless the director himself was a museologist who understood the importance of other functions of museums, such as conservation. For example, Mr E.C. Chubb, a British ornithologist and the first Director of the Durban Museum and Art Gallery (1910–1951), understood the harmful effects of Durban’s sub-tropical climate on artworks took a keen interest in their conservation. He installed fans in the public galleries to keep air circulation going, he stocked the research library with the significant conservation journal of the time (including *Technical Studies in the Field of Fine Arts*) and assigned one of the staff members (albeit not a qualified conservator) the task of restoring the Gallery’s collection of sculptures and paintings (Addleson, 1996:410).

This was not the case in all museums. As Grobler (2006:152) reports, at the Transvaal Museum, no conservation department and no conservators was dealing with preservation problems. No internal conservation records appear to have been kept. Nonetheless, there was comprehension for basic conservation requirements, such as the detrimental effects of light on paper (Grobler, 2006:162), foot traffic on carpets<sup>74</sup> (Grobler, 2006:152), damp environments<sup>75</sup> and atmospheric pollutants<sup>76</sup> (Grobler, 2006:153). According to Grobler (2006:152), the benefits of preventive conservation, including good housekeeping and pest control, were understood and preferred, overactive conservation and restoration, although this was carried out at the Transvaal Museum<sup>77</sup> and the Johannesburg Art Gallery, amongst others. SAMAB reflects this with numerous articles on building display cases using appropriate materials, the control of environmental conditions (Ideal conditions for pictures, 1943:107) and infestations (Pringle, 1942:402); but also more infrequently articles on restoration (Prowse, 1939:1; Hendricks, 1941:191; Schofield, 1936:35; “Foxing” of watercolours and prints, 1936:20; Renovation of gold picture frames, 1936:21).

In 1943, a committee including the president of SAMA, the secretary and two others was formed to investigate professional status and training. With staffing a challenge, the biggest concern cited by Oliver (1943:102) was whether there would be sufficient young candidates in

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<sup>74</sup> Transvaal Museum Board of Trustees minutes, meeting 20 February 1936.

<sup>75</sup> Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 1940–1941, departmental report for archaeology, ethnology, numismatics and philately, p.5.

<sup>76</sup> Transvaal Museum Annual Report, 194–1942, departmental report for archaeology, ethnology, numismatics and philately, p.3.

<sup>77</sup> Transvaal museum annual report, 1946–1947, departmental report for archaeology, ethnology, numismatics and philately p.3.

the country to warrant the establishment of local museum training, as opposed to searching for funds to send them for training overseas<sup>78</sup>. SAMA took the matter under consideration in its 1943 meeting (SAMA, 1943:35) and at the 1944 Annual General Meeting (AGM). Again in 1945, SAMA decided to instead support staff attending training through the British Museums Association Diploma. An agreement was passed between the British Museums Association and SAMA. The effect is that museum staff may be eligible to complete the Diploma in the United Kingdom if they qualified with an appropriate university degree or equivalent. In addition, it was proposed that an exchange programme be established for museum and art gallery assistants between South Africa and Great Britain (SAMA, 1945:282). As discussed in Chapter 2, the period 1922–1946 is generally considered the first wave of acknowledging the importance of conservation when numerous international networks were established, emphasising international collaboration and exchange. Although WWII did not directly affect South African heritage in terms of air raids and bombings, SAMA kept its members abreast of happenings in Europe and even discussed *Precautionary measures against effects of possible enemy action* at its 1942 annual meeting in Port Elizabeth (Chubb, 1942: 351). If SAMA and the BMA approved the exchange programme, the Carnegie Corporation could assist with funding (SAMA, 1945:282). Indeed, in the following year (1946), it was announced, during the proceedings of the tenth AGM of the South African Museums Association, that the Carnegie United Kingdom Trustees had agreed to support the proposal of assisting South African Museum staff in attending the BMA Diploma (SAMA, 1946:401). This training did not, however, incorporate more specialised museum functions, such as conservation, and although the need to retain the services of a specialist taxidermist (Miers and Markham, 1937:86; SAMA, 1953:1; SAMA 1954: 1) and a picture restorer (Prowse, 1939:4; SAMA, 1941:215; Wiznicka-Kleczynska, 1963:35) was raised on numerous occasions, this was also considered specialist training beyond the scope of the BMA. Although the registration of South African museum staff for the BMA Museum Diploma was accepted and encouraged, the staff interchange programme was deemed impractical, and the idea was abandoned (SAMA, 1947:51).

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<sup>78</sup> At this stage the Carnegie Foundation in New York was heavily involved in funding museum work in South Africa with travel grants and other funds.



### 3.3. The 1950s, the State and its museums

The changeover in the 1950s marked a new decade and a new political policy for South Africa, with apartheid and segregated development officially enforced in 1948. As a result, museums became political ‘tools’ to influence the public by promoting white Afrikaner nationalism. In museums such as the South African Museum (SAM), “...antitheses are constructed, of primitive as opposed to civilised, of nature vs culture” (Rankin, 1995:61; see also Coombes, 2003 and Ndlovu and Hlongwane, 2019). As Meents (2009: 41) explains, “these antitheses” can be read as hierarchical binaries where a hierarchy is set up as a means to represent a “true” account of history in absolute and fixed terms. Meaning is fixed in hierarchical binary oppositions, wherein terms such as “white culture”, “civilized” and “culture” are all privileged over terms such as “black culture”, “primitive” and “nature”, thereby enabling the process of racial difference to be represented as historical fact.” This translated visually and physically in museums representing white culture as civilised in cultural history or history museums and art galleries, whilst black culture and their material culture was displayed in natural history museums. Legacies of this past remain in museums, which to this day are still grappling with the categorisation of cultural material as ‘historical’ or ‘culture historical’ vs ‘ethnographic’; where the term ‘ethnographic’ does not necessarily refer to the method of acquisition but instead serves to denote material culture of originator communities as ‘indigenous’ as opposed to ‘settler’ communities, in other words ‘black’ cultural material vs ‘white’ cultural material (Olofsdotter Rodéhn, 2008:134–135). This division was further replicated in museum posts which were dominated by educated white and predominantly male personnel.

Despite the new political policy, international relations between SAMA and the BMA continued, and the SAMA Training Committee was tasked with discussing the accreditation requirements for South African candidates to the BMA Diploma. By 1956 several South African applicants to the BMA Diploma could not be accepted as they had not matriculated (examination for completing high school education at 18 years). It was then suggested that they apply for a technical certificate award. However, the BMA suggested that perhaps this should be SAMA's undertaking as it involved inspecting candidates' work in their workplace (SAMA, 1956:1). After considering the matter, the SAMA Council resolved to adopt the Technical Certificate (SAMA-EC, 1956:1). This move placed increasing pressure on SAMA to explore the possibility of developing a Diploma scheme similar to the BMA's in South Africa.

The main reason for this was to reduce their time spent away from their home institutions which was becoming increasingly complex and onerous for curators and directors, both financially



and concerning time away (SAMA-EC, 1957:1). It was initially suggested that the time spent in practical training could be carried out locally for the South African students, the BMAs Education Committee agreed to this, and soon South African students were being examined locally (SAMA-EC, 1958:1).

Another recommendation of the 1933 Miers-Markham Report was the suggestion of the appointment by the South African Government for a commission of inquiry into museum matters such as training, funding etc. (Miers & Markham, 1933:44). The first commission was appointed in October 1948 as the DuToit Commission<sup>79</sup>, which laid the basis for the State-Aided Institutions Amendment Act of 1954<sup>80</sup>. This was followed in 1960 by the Cilliers Committee and two years later, the Booyesen Committee (Grobler, 2006:29). As expected within the socio-political climate of the time, permanent museum staff did not include South Africans of colour who were relegated to technical and assistant posts in museums and could likewise not access formal training.

### **3.4. The 1960s, the start of technical training in South Africa**

The 1960s saw further consolidation of the apartheid state and division along racial lines, with the National Party government placing added restrictions on black South Africans' right

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<sup>79</sup> The Du Toit Commission of 1948 was appointed to “investigate and report upon the future policy of certain State-aided institutions in South Africa.... It is understood that State-aided institutions include museums, art galleries and zoological gardens” (Harding, 1948:861). Dr Petrus Johan du Toit, noted veterinarian, served as its chairman. The commission was to investigate the many challenges faced by the state aided institutions that centred on the suitability of accommodation for collections; outdated equipment; staff training and succession planning. The housing and exhibition of collections was described as cramped, cluttered, old and outdated; and of little educational interest, save for the life-like dioramas and body casts at the South African Museum which according to Harding were immensely valuable in their ‘scientific value’ (Harding, 1948:862). The other main concern staffing in museums “At the present time some appointments seem to go to individuals who have already retired from some other walk of life. In the case of directorships or curatorships, especially, it is important that appointments should go to those who have had training and wide experience in museum work and methods, and who can put in a sufficient number of years of service before reaching retiring age”(Harding, 1948:862).

<sup>80</sup> The State-Aided Institutions Amendment Act of 1954 centralised authority and administration of all state aided institutions to promote white Afrikaner culture and enforce racial policies at libraries (Coates, 2015), museums (Mazel, 2013) and other places of entertainment if they were controlled by public authorities, “whether the audiences gathered to read, to watch boxing or to listen to Brahms (Devenport, 1987:380).

The Act placed all finances, creation of posts and appointments of state-aided institutions under the control of the Department of Education, Arts and Science (Coates, 2015:49). In the 1959 report of the commission of Inquiry into State-Aided Institutions it was suggested that boards fill vacancies in scientific and technical posts following advice and guidance from the South African Museums Association, and that the candidates selected for museum directorship should have preferentially a Diploma from the South African Museum’s Association or the British Museum’s Association in addition to a University Degree; or at least a University degree, museum experience and be registered for the Museum Associations’ Diploma as a condition of employment (Wisznicka 1963:34).

to vote, enforcing education in Afrikaans (which led to the Sharpeville Massacre in 1960), freedom of movement and domicile, as well as the right to marry (see for example Gordon, 2017; Dubow, 2014; and Morris, 2012).

According to Grobler (2006:58) there was a slow and steady growth in the number of museums until the transition to the Republic of South Africa in 1961, which saw an “unprecedented blossoming of new museums and larger, established museums continued to grow and acquire new satellite museums” (Grobler, 2006:59). Grobler (2006:59) also notes that whether corresponding progress was made regarding the maintenance and management of the collections is debatable. What is certain is that the poor salary packages and recognition of professional staff did take a toll in the 1960s, and many senior scientists and researchers left museums for teaching posts at universities in South Africa and abroad (Barry, 1965:178).

The SAMA Technical Certificate was formally introduced in 1963 to respond to demands for practical training for museum technicians (Brain & Erasmus 1986:28). The technical certificate was awarded at the level of present-day grade 11 (then standard 9, corresponding to 11 years of schooling) “for competence in practical museum work and general technical procedures” (SAMA Education Committee, sa:1). The certificate training was only available to potential students who were already members of SAMA and had the minimum of a junior certificate (grade 10/standard 8, corresponding to 10 years of schooling) or equivalent. Candidates were expected to complete 38 weeks of supervised projects within the museum environment, attended two weeks of SAMA technical conferences/course/workshops and completed six written descriptions of technical work. If their supervisor, appointed by the SAMA Education Committee, was satisfied that the candidate had completed all the necessary coursework and requirements, the student could apply for the examinations, which were written, oral as well as an inspection of the candidate’s work in the museum (SAMA Education Committee, sa:1).

The Department of Arts and Crafts offered the National Diploma in Museum Technology at the Cape Technikon (see 3.5.3 in this chapter). Any person working in a museum could apply for the Diploma if they held a Senior Certificate (matriculation, or school leaving certificate). The course was carried out over three years; the first semester of each year was devoted to practical training under the supervision of qualified museum staff, followed by six months of theoretical training at the Cape Technikon and selected museums in Cape Town (SAMA Education Committee, sa:1). Subjects featured in the curriculum included museology (presented over the course of 3 years), conservation techniques (presented over the course of 3

years), design and display (presented in the first and second years), chemistry and laboratory practice (presented in the first year), Introduction to Human and Natural Sciences (presented in the first year), Carpentry and Metalwork (presented in the second year), Modelling and Casting (presented in the second year), Photography (presented in the third year), Museum Draughtsmanship and Mapwork (presented in the third year) and Natural Sciences or Human Sciences, or Art History as an elective subject in the third year. Completing the course was dependant on both written examination in each subject and sufficient in-service training at the museums (SAMA Education Committee, [sa]:1).

This technical training was supplemented in the following decade with curatorial training options at various universities, but sadly, a specific focus on conservation-restoration was still missing in South Africa. As Mrs Wisznicka-Kleczynska (1963:35), curator of the Durban Art Gallery,<sup>81</sup> discusses in a SAMAB article: “It is a sad reality that we are suffering [...] from a lack of qualified persons to fill in the posts of directors-curators, heads of research departments, and restorers.” The problem, she states, is that although South Africa has many ‘self-taught’ conservation practitioners who “painstakingly and conscientiously trained themselves, and gained experience in minor restoration, at least, but who do not possess diplomas or even certificates.” Alongside these well-intentioned and cautious individuals, who could form the core of a conservation cohort with some additional training, were those individuals Wisznicka-Kleczynska (1963:36) refers to as the “presumptuous maniacs”, “these kinds of ‘restorers’ are constantly at loose and at work, and I am sure that all of us have seen several, if not many, paintings ‘cleaned’ through to the canvas; grime, varnish, original paint – the lot – with all sorts of detergents and solutions, not to mention ‘Vim’ on the list of cleaning materials!” For Wisznicka-Kleczynska, the crux of the matter centres on the absence of an accreditation system and regulations regarding the practice of restoration in South Africa. This, she says, could be remedied through several steps: by encouraging practitioners to be accredited for their knowledge and skills through certification by an international body; and locally through our qualifications authority, via SAMA (this will be discussed further in chapter 3.10). Government grants and scholarships for training in conservation-restoration and grants for establishing a Restoration Centre; and finally, protecting the title of conservator-restorer, by establishing salary scales and fixing prices for conservation work carried out (Wisznicka-Kleczynska,

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<sup>81</sup> According to Brown (2005:38) Madame Zofia Wisznicka-Kleczynska was a Fine Arts graduate who had escaped from Poland during the war and was employed at the Durban Museum as an artist/picture restorer and later as the first curator of the Art Gallery (December 1959).

1963:38). Sixty years later, similar discussions and challenges are still prevalent (SAMA Training Committee, 2020).

### **3.5. The 1970s–1980s: countering apartheid and liberation. The start of museology, museography and museum studies in South Africa**

As Stadler (1987:1) writes, “after nearly twenty years of sustained growth, the domestic economy began declining quite dramatically from the mid-1970s. Massive and growing unemployment, together with a radical deterioration of economic conditions and prospects [...] portended a radical intensification of the conflicts within the country” (see also Freund, 2018). The socio-political climate of the 1970s was one of “internal opposition and violent resistance” (Olofsdotter Rodéhn, 2008:2) with the formation of several anti-apartheid organisations locally, e.g. Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) (Magaziner, 2010:1) and internationally, e.g. The British Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) (Gurney, 2009:271). Several strikes<sup>82</sup> (e.g. Durban strikes 1973) and uprisings<sup>83</sup> (e.g. Soweto student uprising 1976) took place, states of emergency were declared, and forced removals became extensive in both rural and urban areas (Olofsdotter Rodéhn, 2008:2). According to Martin (2019:323), the mid-1970s were characterised by a marked decline in visitor numbers at the South African National Gallery (SANG), a decline she says was “fed by the economic downturn, political uncertainty and upheavals of the time” as described above, along with “the introduction of television and rapid growth of suburban shopping centers.” This was likely repeated at other institutions in the country.

In the 1970s, the Apartheid State launched an inquiry into the inability of the Performing Arts Council to manage their work within their allotted budgets. The Commission of Enquiry into the Performing Arts in South Africa (1977), more commonly referred to as the Niemand Commission,<sup>84</sup> investigated the development of the performing arts as a means of cultural

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<sup>82</sup> The Durban strikes of January 1973 saw night watchmen and security personnel down tools over demands for wage increases (Hyman, 1974:59). These wage strikes were followed by others in the brick and tile, transport and mining industries. For a complete list of strikes see South African History Online website.

<sup>83</sup> The Soweto uprising was a series of demonstration and protests initiated by black school children across Soweto, a township outside of Johannesburg and spread countrywide. The protests were in response to the enforcing of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. On 16 June 1976, thousands of children marched to Orlando Stadium for a rally and were met by a heavy police presence who opened fire on the children, resulting in many injuries and deaths. This tragedy has become a national day of remembrance called ‘youth day’ in South Africa.

<sup>84</sup> The Niemand Commission (1977) was appointed by the state to investigate the seeming inability of the Performing Arts Councils to manage their work within the budgets available at the beginning of the 1970s

enrichment of the South African Society. Of interest to museums was the need for training facilities for technicians that was highlighted in the report. Voigt (1979:1), in her Memorandum on the need for the establishment of postgraduate professional training, describes how

the responsibility for museum collections lies with the curator or professional officer [...] however [sic.] only a small proportion of these people hold adequate qualifications to allow them to maintain and utilise these collections, and even fewer hold professional museum qualifications.

Natural history museums, on the whole, fared better than their cultural history counterparts as they have always insisted on a first degree as a minimum requirement for a professional post. Over the years, this minimum requirement has been increased to an honours level. In the late 1970s, a Master's level became the requirement. Curators at cultural history museums, writes Voigt (*ibid*), were often filled by a person without any academic qualification, a fact reflected in the Niemand Commission where less than 10% of curators had any form of academic training. Most people in this position have learnt 'on the job', have limited theoretical knowledge, and are therefore unlikely to appropriately utilise the research potential of the collections in their care, whereas their academically trained counterparts often have subject knowledge but little understanding of museological or museographical practices (Voigt, 1979:3).

Voigt (1979:4) states how professional training, a prerequisite for museum posts overseas, is sadly lacking in South Africa, except SAMA's own Technical Certificate established in 1963. However, SAMA as an organisation was well aware of the need for local museological training, and by the 1970s, several institutions were approached to assist with the provision of such training. One of SAMA's first attempts to provide "local training for professional officers and curators was to persuade the University of Cape Town to run a museology course as part of its Summer School. Mr H. Singleton of Leicester University, England, had introduced a Postgraduate course in Museum Studies, so he was invited to lead the course, which proposed the basics of professional training and had considerable influence on the international museum community" (SAMA, 2016: 10).

Raymond Singleton<sup>85</sup> was of the view that acquiring professional museum skills through "on the job apprenticeships", although allowing junior staff to learn and acquire knowledge and

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<sup>85</sup> Raymond Singleton was the first chairman of ICOM's International Committee for the Training of Personnel from 1968-1974.

skills from their more experienced colleagues, it had one major drawback in that although it allowed for “established techniques and procedures to be transmitted”, it left little space for “initiative, innovation or progress” because of the limited focus and ‘reality testing’ within a single institution (Singleton, 1987:222). Singleton (1987:223) argued against the museum as the site to establish training courses, which would simply experience the same problems as with on the job training,

which provided little opportunity for wider exposure to broader museum dynamics, [...] resulting in a deficiency of preparation of museum professionals for facing the extraordinary variety of institutional challenges in the changing museum environment (Singleton, 1987:221). He argued this was a natural occurrence because “the attention and focus of training programmes located in the museums are usually the policies, methods and challenges pertaining to a single institution with little opportunity for a wider appraisal of the general museum scene.

The alternative location for Museum Studies programmes discussed by Singleton is the University, despite criticism from museum personnel that “such training would be so remote from the everyday problems and situations prevailing in museums as to be of little value; it would at best provide only a second-hand impression and would also probably be apt to concentrate on theoretical consideration only.” Singleton suggested that although universities should host museum programmes, they should collaborate with museums as they would lack the numerous specialists required to cover the different facets required in museum training syllabi. In addition, this would provide students “with the opportunity to visit work in and meet the staff of many different types of museums, thus avoiding the main weakness [narrow focus] of museum-based training programmes” (Singleton, 1987:227). This collaborative arrangement, according to Singleton, “helped not only to dispel the charges against museums of remoteness from the real world but also provided students with opportunities to meet and exchange knowledge with museum specialists” (ibid).

It is unclear whether Singleton ever came to South Africa to teach, or whether he was merely an advisor, but by the mid-1970s, the universities of Stellenbosch, Pretoria and the University of South Africa (UNISA) were all developing or considering developing courses in museum studies, details of which are outlined further in this chapter (see 3.5.1., 3.5.2. and 3.5.3. respectively).



Whilst the major South African universities focussed on the teaching and training of museology and, to a certain extent, its practical museographical applications, SAMA focused on increasing its practical training by offering an increased number of workshops and technical conferences for museum personnel and in particular museum technicians. The workshops focused on various technical skills such as case building<sup>86</sup>; moulding and casting of specimens<sup>87</sup>; correct identification and preventive conservation of a variety of wood, textiles and metal objects<sup>88</sup>, leather<sup>89</sup>, artworks<sup>90</sup>, the preventive conservation, handling and display of paper objects and their basic remedial conservation<sup>91</sup>; preventive conservation and restoration of dolls<sup>92</sup>, aspects of curating natural history collections<sup>93</sup>.

Although collections care and preventive conservation training was available locally, any advanced training in conservation-restoration in the 1970s and 1980s was only possible by attending courses overseas, and many South Africans resorted to this option. Travel was particularly challenging at this time, not just financially, but also because of South Africa's policy of apartheid which culminated in a general cultural boycott, including an academic one, which restricted all South Africans from receiving conservation training, taking up internships or enrolling for academic programmes. June Hosford<sup>94</sup> was planning to enrol for the diploma course offered by the BMA in the 1970s, but the cultural boycott prevented her from doing so.

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<sup>86</sup> Display officers workshop, held at the Transvaal Museum 11–13 July 1978

<sup>87</sup> Moulding and casting in plaster, held at the Natal Museum in Pietermaritzburg 1973–1974

<sup>88</sup> Basic conservation techniques for cultural historians (textiles, metals, wood & furniture) presented by the Transvaal Provincial Library and Museum Services 5–9 February 1979.

<sup>89</sup> SAMA workshop in leather preservation, 2–5 June 1981.

<sup>90</sup> Short course on the Management of Collections of Pictures presented by SAMA in Association with the Africana Museum, held at the Africana Museum, Johannesburg 24–26 September 1981. And again in 1988 a workshop on the Storage, Handling and Care of Pictorial Material presented at the Johannesburg Art Gallery 29–30 August 1988.

<sup>91</sup> Paper workshop presented by SAMA in association with the Johannesburg Art Gallery and Witwatersrand University Library, held at the Johannesburg Art Gallery, February 1979.

<sup>92</sup> Workshop on the Basic Restoration of Old Dolls presented by SAMA, held at Melrose House, 25–26 May 1982. The workshop was presented by René Garvie trained at the Life Time Career School, Los Angeles USA.

<sup>93</sup> Workshop on the Curation of Natural History Collections presented by SAMA in association with the Transvaal Museum, 19–20 November 1980.

<sup>94</sup> June Hosford was the technical assistant responsible for the preventive and interventive care of the ethnographic (and archaeological) collections at the Department of African Studies and Anthropology at the South African Museum in Cape Town (from 1978–1993).



In 1981 the South African Museum (SAM) motivated for, and the British Museum (BM) agreed, to allow her to participate in a six-months, in-service training, in the Organics Laboratory of the BM's Conservation Department, on condition that the SAM continue to pay her salary to support her in the UK during the internship (Hosford, pers. comm., 2020). June later assisted in presenting and moderating the Cape Technikon course and redeveloping the course for the Technikon RSA (now known as Technikon SA).

Despite the cultural and academic boycott of the 1970s and 1980s, SAMA's Training Committee (renamed from the Education committee in 1985) brought out several specialists to present workshops, including gilding restoration presented by Dr Shinar from Israel (SAMA Council, 1980:[sp]); textile conservation presented by Danielle Bosworth<sup>95</sup> (Textile workshop outline October 1988) and the restoration of antique dolls<sup>96</sup>. Coincidentally in 1983, Andrew W. Oddy, Head of Conservation at the British Museum, came to South Africa to examine the Mapungubwe gold objects at the University of Pretoria<sup>97</sup> (Tiley-Nel & Botha, 2013:66–67). In the mid-1970s, Oddy became the manager of metallurgy, x-ray diffraction and radiography at the British Museum and became responsible for coordinating the forensic examination of objects submitted for acquisition. During this period, Oddy's research projects included the manufacture of gold wire in antiquity, the assaying of gold in antiquity, the analysis of gold coins using the Archimedes method, and the composition of niello inlay in antiquity.

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<sup>95</sup> According to (Lennard & Hayward, 2006:xvii) "Danielle Bosworth studied art embroidery and restoration in Paris. She worked as a textile restorer at Maison Brocard, Paris. In 1976 she joined Karen Finch at her London studio as a freelance conservator. The studio moved to Hampton Court Palace when the Textile Conservation Centre was established in 1975, where she was employed as Senior Conservator/Tutor until 1982. Danielle set up her own studio in 1983... [and] also taught for the *Institut Français pour la Restauration des Oeuvres d'Art* (the French Institute for the Restoration of works of art) in Paris".

<sup>96</sup> Workshop on the Basic Restoration of Old Dolls presented by SAMA, held at Melrose House, 25–26 May 1982. The workshop was presented by René Garvie trained at the Life Time Career School, Los Angeles USA.

<sup>97</sup> William Andrew Oddy (1942–) entered the museum profession as scientific officer at the Research Laboratory in the British Museum. His role was to research methods and materials for the conservation of antiquities and he is well known for his publications on this subject as well as numismatics. He worked on numerous largescale projects including cleaning of limestone sculpture and the Elgin Marbles, and preserving waterlogged wood, which led to him overseeing the conservation and scientific examination of the finds from the Sutton Hoo ship burial, excavated in 1939. Oddy was appointed Head of Conservation in 1981 and then elevated to Keeper of Conservation in 1985.

### **3.5.1. Postgraduate Professional Diploma in Museology, Stellenbosch University (1976 – 1999)**

Commencing in 1976, the University of Stellenbosch embarked on presenting a one-year professional postgraduate diploma in museum studies described as the first of its kind in South Africa by Professor Bun Booyens (Booyens, sa:1). The degree was designed in consultation with museum professionals and the SAMA Education Committee, based on the Leicester model in the United Kingdom and included 8 hours of theoretical lectures and demonstrations along with eight hours of practical sessions a week in addition to a further six weeks of supervised internship within at an approved museum (Booyens, sa:2).

By 1995, Stellenbosch's Museology Diploma format changed to accommodate persons already in full-time employment at museums, and it was presented over weekends by the Department of Cultural History (Burden, 1996:59). To accommodate demand further afield, the University decided to present the qualification as a distance learning professional course in addition to the full-time option. Students completing the course by correspondence attended four weeks of intensive teaching in Stellenbosch and completed theoretical and practical assignments linked to their work in the museum where they were employed. The conservation of cultural-historical material formed part of the qualification (Burden, 1996:59). As for many other university diploma courses, this programme was phased out in the late 1990s (Burden, 11 May 2020).

### **3.5.2. Postgraduate Diploma in Museum Studies, University of Pretoria (1976–2017)**

At the same time as the University of Stellenbosch was launching its professional Diploma in 1976, the University of Pretoria had its first intake in the Post-graduate Diploma in Museum Studies. Unlike the Stellenbosch degree, it appears that the SAMA Education Committee was not involved in developing the programme and the University of Pretoria was met with criticism by members of SAMA when it was discussed at their AGM in 1974 (Letter to Professor P. Nel, 23 August 1974:1), as well as from the SAMA Education Committee (SAMA Memorandum, 1974). The programme was seen to be too academic and theoretical, with not enough time allocated for practical skills training, which the University deemed to belong within the ambit of a technical college rather than a University (Tietz, 1976:1). Additionally, SAMA felt that the design of the University of Pretoria course was short-sighted and antiquated in its separation of the museum field into types of museums and its exclusion of the natural science collections. Despite this criticism, the course has been very successful over the years,

and although the diploma was terminated in 2017, museum studies are still offered in a different format (see chapter 3, point 3.9. Museum Studies at the University of Pretoria).

### **3.5.3. National Diploma in Museum Technology, Cape Technikon<sup>98</sup> (1978–1990)**

According to the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (History of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology CPUT website), the “Cape Technikon has its roots in the Cape Technical College, which was established in Longmarket Street in 1920. The establishment of the college followed more than ten years of petitioning by the community for the consolidation of technical courses that had been offered in various venues in Cape Town.” Following the promulgation of the Technikons Act in 1976, the institution was renamed the Cape Technikon and was allowed to offer degree programmes (History of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology CPUT website), including new training programmes such as the National Diploma in Museum Technology. Although approved by the Association of Colleges for Advanced Technical Education, the original curriculum and syllabi for this qualification were initially rejected by the Department of Education. The curriculum was revised, resubmitted, and subsequently approved in 1976, and according to Minutes of the SAMA Council of 1977, the syllabi, course notes and instructions were forwarded to the technical Colleges Association. The course would be introduced in 1978 if at least 20 students registered. The course was designed to be completed in 18 weeks over three years (SAMA, 1977:6). Included in the course were three modules in Conservation Techniques I, II and III.

Julia Fenn, a South African who had completed a BA in Archaeology from Cape Town University, presented the three year major in Conservation (June Hosford). Fenn followed her BA with a postgraduate Diploma in Archaeological and Ethnographic Conservation (1968) at the Institute of Archaeology based at the University College of London (Fenn, 8 June 2020). Fenn returned to South Africa between leaving employment at the British Museum and starting a new post at the Royal Ontario Museum. At this point, the South African Museum asked her to present a conservation course for SAMA’s diploma programme *Caring for Collections*; the intensive six-week course focussed on museum environments, assessing display and storage materials, metals, feathers, beadwork and ethnic clothing. According to (Cooper & Fenn, 2014:11), Fenn “taught and practiced conservation on three continents, working in Turkey, Egypt, Israel and South Africa before settling in England at the British Museum Research

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<sup>98</sup> The Cape Technikon was amalgamated with the Peninsula Technikon in 2005 to form the current Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).

Laboratory.” She then worked at the conservation department at the Royal Ontario Museum (in Canada) until her retirement in 2014. Her specialisations included masks, leather, adhesives and historic plastics.

According to SAMA (2016:12), in 1990, the National Diploma in Museum Techniques run by the Cape Technikon was replaced by the National Diploma in Museum Technology as a distance-learning qualification offered by the Technikon RSA.

#### **3.5.4. Proposal for postgraduate professional training in Museology, UNISA (1979)**

SAMA seems to have had a clear preference for UNISA to deliver correspondence courses as this would appeal to a more significant segment of the sector, including in-service personnel, older or married members of staff, persons of colour (who were restricted in terms of their ability to attend certain establishments), staff who could not take study leave, and those who had no academic background (Barbour, 1974:2). In addition, collaborating with UNISA allowed SAMA to offer practical training in-house and under their supervision.

Although UNISA was sympathetic to SAMAs request, they initially turned down the suggestion citing that the possible small student numbers would not make it feasible for UNISA to invest in this type unless subsidised (van der Merwe, 1979:1).

Although the four most prominent universities at that time experimented or contemplated developing museum studies courses based on an identified need highlighted by SAMA, only three at the University of Stellenbosch, Pretoria and the Cape Technikon seem to have run successfully for a few decades. However each of these institutions appeared to struggle with the same challenges in the curriculum, notably attempting to reconcile and balance both the theoretical and practical requirements necessary for training in the museum profession; in addition to presenting to a very small intake of students. Another vacancy in training and posts lamented by SAMA was that of conservator-restorers. There was minimal training available in South Africa outside the Conservation Techniques I, II and III modules offered through the Cape Technikon, which due to time and capacity constraints, was limited to preventive conservation and a few basic techniques for stabilization (Maree, 2020:[sp]).

The 1970s and 1980s saw many museum-related courses offered, such as SAMA’s technical certificate, through various courses at universities and technikons. For example, in 1984, Potchefstroom University (located in the North West Province of South Africa, now renamed

North-West University), in conjunction with SAMA, presented a Summer School Programme in Museology, the proceedings of which were published in a volume entitled *Contact: the museum in the modern world*, edited by EA Voigt and RM Tietz, Chairman and Secretary of SAMAs Education Committee (SAMA, 2016:10).

With the increasing number of trained museologists being employed at museums and the development of provincial museum services, museums themselves started offering training through workshops and short courses and apprenticeship style hands-on training. One notable example of this is the *Ou Mutual Restourasiesentrum*<sup>99</sup>(Old Mutual Restoration Centre), established at the National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria with a once-off donation of R15,000 by Old Mutual (*Beeld*, Monday 11 August ) to be supplemented by another R30,000 annually (*Die Transvaler*, 4 August 1986) for a further five years (Grobler, 1986:[sp]). The centre was established under the guidance of Vasili Lianouridis, a Greek-born paper conservator, trained in De Tiendschuur<sup>100</sup>, Tilburg in the Netherlands, who had been brought in by the NCHM to preserve the collections, but also to establish a restoration workshop and develop hands-on training in paper and paintings conservation.

By 1986, when a report was prepared for the National Department of Education on the state of Paper and Book Conservation in South Africa, there existed restoration workshops at the NCHM, the Brenthurst Library in Johannesburg, the University of Witwatersrand's Library in Johannesburg, at the Government Archives in Pretoria, the Killie-Campbell Africana Library in Durban, at the Cape Town Library of Parliament, the University of Cape Town Libraries, at the South African Library in Cape Town and the J.S. Gericke Library of Stellenbosch University (Bansa, 1987:1–2). Although Bansa (1987) writes, these workshops all operated within challenging conditions, including unsuitable buildings, unstable environmental conditions, outdated technical knowledge, lack of trained personnel, and where errors were being made that would affect the preservation of the collections under their care. Bansa (1987:44) pointed out that the biggest concern is the uneven distribution of knowledge of care

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<sup>99</sup> Old Mutual is a pan-African insurance, investment, savings and banking group listed on the South African Stock Exchange.

<sup>100</sup> According to the Dutch website [https://wikimiddenbrabant.nl/De\\_Tiendschuur](https://wikimiddenbrabant.nl/De_Tiendschuur), the De Tiendschuur restoration studio was established in 1980, which grew out of the Tilburg Regional Archive's restoration studio, as part of an employment drive. The website further mentions Kees Donkers as leading the studio, which offered paper and textile preservation, restoration of art objects and treatment of water damaged material. In 1986, the Tiendschuur moved to the Dutch Textile Museum and has been part of the Social Employment Service (Diamantgroep) since 1992.

throughout the country and suggested that establishing a “Central Institute” remedy this. This facility could train personnel, house a large well-equipped workshop, and employ several conservators to serve as a regional node for the care and conservation of paper and book collections. This idea had previously been proposed, focussing on a Paper Restoration Centre to remedy the shortage of adequately trained paper and book restorers, however “it would take five years to get it [a restoration centre] established and training people, meanwhile people might be trained at Swellendam” (SAMA, 1975:1). The Museums through SAMA were not the only institutions and professional body that focussed on conservation. The South African Preservation and Conservation Group (SAPCON) that had more of a base with paper and book conservators in the service of libraries and archives were also active. Many paper and book restorers worked at that point, or with the Genadendal Library, and the American based North East Document Conservation Centre (NEDCC) was involved through the auspices of the South African Preservation and Conservation Group (SAPCON). NEDCC brought out experts in book and paper conservation to train local practitioners in specialist treatments, such as Elisa O’Loughlin<sup>101</sup>, who came in 1995 for a series of short courses on removing Pressure Sensitive Tapes (dates).

### **3.6. The 1990s, post-apartheid and transformation in the heritage sector**

The early 1990s were dominated by a drive to redefine the role of SAMA within the new political environment of a post-apartheid South Africa (SAMA, 2016:13). *SAMA beyond 2000: A survey of the role played by the Southern African Museums Association in the 1990s* by Kathryn Mathers included the results of a comprehensive survey of the needs and challenges in South African museums. Mathers (1993) concluded that several issues concerning the professionalism of museologists needed to be addressed. Training in museology, formal and informal, was identified as a pressing need, despite the high number of educated museologists in management positions. The current situation is that more academically trained museologists are located in the management of collections rather than engaged in conservation and practical aspects of museum work, which may still be regarded as a technical post. To elevate the sector as a whole, Sierts (1966:413) believed that the field of museums should broaden and aim at

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<sup>101</sup> Elissa O’Loughlin is based in the US and although now retired, she was Senior Conservator at the National Archives and Records Administration before joining the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland in 2000. The study of pressure sensitive tapes and their removal from cultural heritage objects is her main area of interest and is recognised worldwide as an authority in the subject.

achieving higher standards, adding that “if we require a given standard from our research worker we will have to start setting a higher standard for his assistant as well.”

Training was likewise identified as relatively unavailable in South African educational institutions, despite several institutions having courses on offer, albeit on a postgraduate level, such as the University of Pretoria’s Postgraduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies. By the end of 1994, the new democratically elected South African government focussed on how the arts and culture could support the process of reconciliation and growth through their Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). Dr Ben Ngubane, then Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, established the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG). ACTAG was tasked with devising a new cultural policy for South Africa, with 11 working groups to cover the different arts and cultures genres (SAMA, 2016: 14). These included the Heritage Working Group, where museums, archives, national monuments and living cultures were represented (SAMA, 2016:14). Research highlighted the great need for education and training opportunities in the arts, cultural and heritage sectors (Galla, 1997:2).

### **3.6.1. The National Diploma in Museum Technology, Technikon RSA (1990–2001)**

The National Diploma in Museum Technology, taken on by the Technikon RSA, was modelled on the recently closed, full-time, Cape Technikon Diploma course into a three-year, distance-learning qualification. For example, June Hosford and Nancy Tietz were heavily involved in redeveloping the curriculum and syllabus, compiling course notes, setting and marking examinations, and moderated the papers. Through course notes and assignments, lectures were given in Museology, Conservation Techniques (both three-year majors), and Design with an art option in the third year. Also included and offered was a course on ‘Modelling & Casting’, an introduction to taxidermy. The Technikon itself ran basic courses in Chemistry, Laboratory Techniques and Photography, which SAMA had requested” to facilitate the training of museologists so that they could understand that museum collections are at risk of damage and deterioration (SAMA 2016:12–13). Due mainly to a lack of support from the museum sector for the course, the National Diploma was terminated in 2001 after completing the Museology III and Conservation Techniques III exams (SAMA 2016:19).



### **3.6.2. Museum studies option for Honours in History, Rhodes University (1992)**

Spear-headed by Gerard Corsane, history curator at the Albany Museum, there was a proposal advanced in 1992 for a new history honours course at Rhodes University. The course was aimed at history teachers who wanted to use history collections as a resource, assist historians in using materials culture and other museum resources for research, and provide a qualification for historians wishing to enter the museum profession (Corsane, 1992:1). The course consisted of a framework of weekly seminars for a year, with electives, and the completion of a substantial research paper. Seminar discussions and readings included a section on preventive conservation, and collections care as part of collections management (Corsane, 1992:2).

### **3.6.3. The Postgraduate Diploma in Museum Management, University of Cape Town (1996)**

This programme was launched as a response to a perceived need for a “senior qualification that combined management skills training with an appraisal of the current state of the museum in international literature” (Hall, 1996:60). Although the course was not designed as a comprehensive course in museology, it filled a gap in various museum studies presented at various institutions. UCT allowed for museum professionals without a first degree or equivalent the opportunity to apply for the diploma as an in-service qualification based on individual assessment and merit (Hall, 1996:60). As UCT did not have a Department of Museum Studies, the course housed within the Department of Archaeology was based on the accumulation of credits from various departments in related fields rather than a fixed curriculum (Hall, 1996:61).

### **3.6.4. SAMA School of Conservation (1994–2000)**

Recognising the need for more focussed conservation training, the SAMA School of Conservation was launched in Cape Town on 5 December 1994, set up as a section 21 company with a board of directors drawn from local museums and private conservators. Presenters of short courses and workshops were drawn from other heritage organisations and private contractors with museum and conservation expertise, including archaeology, buildings, natural and cultural history, paper, and furniture. Course materials included both principles preventive conservation and collections care, as well as interventive treatment. The South African Academy of Ceramics Conservation was interested in joining forces with the School, but, after

lengthy discussions, it was decided not to take them up on their offer. However, due to a paucity of teaching and training staff and finances, the school was permanently closed down in 2000 (SAMA 2016:15).

### **3.6.5. The South African Academy of Ceramics Conservation (1994 – present)**

Situated in the scenic Langkloof in the small town of Twee Riviere, the South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation presents teaching and training in conservation. The present Head of Conservation, Hazel Botha, initially began working with ceramics during a six-month internship in Cape Town and opened her home studio from 1988-1993 (Botha, 2015:[sp]). When demand for porcelain restoration services increased and could no longer be referred to other conservators (as they too were overloaded with requests, mainly from the private sector and antiques trade), a burgeoning idea took hold that a facility which could train conservator-restorers and simultaneously offer public services had merit (Botha, A. pers.comm., 2020:[sp]). A visit to the British Museum's conservation labs cemented the idea, and the South African Academy for Ceramics Conservation was born in 1994 (The South African Academy of Ceramics Conservation, 2000:11), with Hazel Botha closing her home studio in favour of focussing on teaching and training. A radio interview in 1994/1995 for an upcoming public information day in Port Elizabeth was syndicated to a national station and re-broadcast across all provinces (Botha, H, 2020:[sp]). The response was overwhelming, and over eighty persons contacted the Academy's office to inquire about such events in their own areas to attend. The Bothas then embarked on a "national circuit of information days in numerous cities" (Botha, H., pers.comm., 2020:[sp]).

From 2002, the Ceramics Academy was brought as a separate department under the umbrella of the South African Institute for Objects Conservation from 2002, and training in the conservation of stone and mortars was inaugurated in 2004. Metals conservation was added in October 2005 as a separate Academy under the Institute (Metals Conservation, 2005:7), with the addition of paper conservation in 2010. The Academy offered hands-on training in remedial conservation to museum staff, collectors, and the general public through short courses, including 'Introductory Level courses' for 20 days and 'Mid-career modules', 5-day workshops on specialist topics (Botha, A., pers.comm., 2020:3).

In 2015 the institution was renamed, The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation (SAInst) as they embarked on a new chapter, suspending their modular courses

to offer a fully-fledged and accredited one-year postgraduate technical diploma. The programme was successfully accredited in December 2016 and had its first intake in January 2018 (The South African Institute for Heritage Science & Conservation, 2018). The one year programme includes all four of its previously independent fields of study, namely ceramics conservation, metals conservation, paper conservation and the conservation of stone and mortars for the built environment (McGinn, 2017:39).

In response to the 2015 Mellon questionnaire (see Appendix 1), the South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation (SAInst, 2015) stated that “the vast majority (340 approximately) of active, practising conservators in South Africa are employed in the private sector, where they practice conservation from privately owned studios.” The Institute estimates having trained over a thousand students between 1994 and 2015 through the short course programme (Botha, A., 2020:[sp]). The overwhelming majority have been trained at the Institute over the years, and “many of these draw on the mentorship of the Institute for their continued professional development” (SAInst, 2015). Although some have gone on to receive additional conservation training, for the most part, many of these practitioners operate in private practice as ‘restorers’ rather than as ‘conservators’ according to the definitions outlined in the preceding chapter. Although this distinction may perpetuate a false dichotomy as both fall under the same umbrella of caring for artefacts and heritage objects, the philosophical underpinnings are vastly different, and some commercial practitioners do not necessarily cater for the consequences of treatment on interpretation future research and retreatability. According to the Institute, in their *Manifesto* (The South African Academy of Ceramics Conservation, 2000:11), describing their position within the familiar restoration versus conservation debate, the training programmes of the South African Academy of Ceramics Conservation (now the South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation) “aspires to a marriage between the vigour of the first and the expertise of the latter – to develop a highly viable skills platform.”

In terms of conservation in museums, of the thousand trained at the Institute through the modular presentations, the Institute estimates that only 16 of these were museum personnel, suggesting that museum personnel were only a “fractional presence—certainly smaller than 2%. Of the 16 museum participants [...] today less than five can be said to have become and remained primarily active within the sphere of conservation” (Botha, A., 2020:[sp]). Interestingly, Botha, A. (2020:[sp]) continues by saying

Following 26 years of education in conservation, it is abundantly clear to us that South African programme candidates, who substantially originate from a museum / archives or similarly curatorial environment, and lacking a foundation in (or natural orientation towards) the hard sciences, on the whole are particularly unsuitable to the domain of conservation studies—and additionally show little personal affinity for this field of work, in practice.

This lack of interest in the field could perhaps, in part, explain the lack of entrenched conservation thinking within museums. But, conversely, perhaps it is the lack of emphasis and prioritisation of conservation in museums that continues to perpetuate this general lack of interest in staff; this could also be ascribed to a lack of awareness of the field and its role within heritage institutions, the lack of exposure to conservators in general, lack of training opportunities, lack of posts, in addition to the view that conservation is a low-paid technical post which is not commensurate to the time and finances required to receive training, as well as poor job progression and opportunities for growth.

### **3.6.6. Postgraduate Diploma in Museum Studies, University of Natal<sup>102</sup> (1997–?).**

A Post Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies, initiated by the Department of Information Studies, was launched at the Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of Natal in 1997. The University decided to implement the course as there was no other postgraduate offering in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The course was designed to provide graduates with a qualification that would allow them to work in any section of a museum. It allowed museum staff to obtain a museum-related qualification, as it was recognised that many museums employed staff who had little or no museological training. The course was based on seminar presentations held on Saturday mornings with discussions and assignments to follow and a minimum 5-week internship placement in a recognised museum. Preventive conservation was one of the four focus areas of the course (Duminy, 1996:62).

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<sup>102</sup> On 1 January 2004, the University of Natal amalgamated with the University of Durban-Westville and changed its name to the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal (History – University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2021).

### **3.6.7. Robben Island Training Programme, (1998–present)**

The Robben Island Training Programme (RITP) started in January 1998 with funding from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). Gerard Corsane, Director of the Albany Museum and chairperson of the SAMA training committee, was tasked with developing the course.

The specific objective of the programme was “to train a core group of black heritage professionals and museologists who can take forward the process of transformation and champion the need for democratising the heritage sector, especially through the development of a coordinated training system based on accessibility, equality and redress” (Morakinyo, 1997:70). The programme offered three consecutive, one-year courses. It provided fast-track affirmative action<sup>103</sup>, education and training for museologists and heritage practitioners working in, or at the point of entering, the heritage sector (SAMA, 2016:17), given the historically demographics in a former racially divided country. Additionally, “the RITP was to provide the practical anchor for the establishment of a National Heritage Training Institute as outlined in SAMA’s working document *The National Strategy for Heritage Training*, which never materialised (SAMA, 2016:17). For the RITP to be of any value, though, it had to have status and credibility; thus, it was preferable to run the programme in partnership with a recognised tertiary institution, and the RITP approach the University of the Western Cape History Department (Morakinyo, 2011:72). Additionally, the University of Cape Town and the Robben Island Museum were brought in as nodes for the diploma, and staff and resources were shared from all three institutions (Morakinyo, 2011:73). As Morakinyo (2011:72) states, “this merger resulted in RITP-designed courses being restructured and incorporated as components of the postgraduate diploma programme in Museum and Heritage Studies Core course and electives.”

### **3.6.8. The proposed National Heritage Training Institute (1997)**

In January 1997, SAMA’s Council put forward a working document on a proposed National Strategy for Heritage Training to “facilitate the development of a coordinated system of

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<sup>103</sup> Affirmative action in the context of employment and allocation of resources, is the practice or policy of favouring groups or individuals belonging to groups recognised as ‘previously disadvantaged’ as an effect of apartheid racial prioritisation of whites over people of colour (and black African people in particular). In South Africa’s context this referred to people of colour being employed preferentially as they were discriminated against during the apartheid regime, but could also include the employment of women in male-dominated fields (Tierney, 1997:165). In a sense ‘affirmative action’ can be described as positive discrimination in order to increase diversity.

education and training which is: useful; flexible; accessible; and, beneficial for personnel, their individual institutions/organisations and the heritage sector as a whole (Corsane, Basson, Biggs & Duminy, 1997:i)”. This would be achieved by setting up a National Heritage Training Institute (NHTI) as a cooperative effort between SAMA and the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, with various stakeholders and funding partners.

According to SAMA Council meeting minutes (1997:12), the initial NHTI proposal was submitted and refused. A second proposal for transformation in the sector to encourage demographic representation and a more diversified approach was drafted (SAMA, 1997:12). This working document eventually led to the development of SAMA’s *Professional Standards and Transformation Indicators* published in 2006.

### **3.6.9. The Proposed African Centre for Cultural and Heritage Sciences, (1997)**

A few months after submitting the proposal for a National Training Institute, another proposal surfaced for an Africa Centre for Cultural and Heritage Sciences. This centre was proposed as an inter-university and inter-disciplinary initiative. Galla (1997:2) states that in June 1996, SAMA and the National Parks Board approached UNISA to establish an Institute for Heritage and Culture Centre Development. The aim was to “provide education, training and research in all aspects related to the arts, culture, heritage based on the changing needs of South Africa. The idea was to provide in-service graduate and postgraduate qualifications in arts, culture and heritage; conduct research in arts, culture and heritage; and liaise and co-operate with organisations, institutions, bodies and persons concerned with the education, training, promotion, development, conservation and funding of any relevant aspects of the arts” (Galla, 1997:3). Another goal was to “establish a facility for the conservation of cultural materials for the arts, culture, and heritage industries and use it for training and the provision of services in conservation with specialisations in art, metals, textiles, objects, paper and archives, audio-visual materials, natural history collections and archaeological materials” (Galla, 1997:4). Galla (1997: 2) further writes that “during the work in progress, UNISA was joined by the University of Pretoria, the largest residential university in Africa, as a strategic partner keen to make the centre and inter-University Centre”. Although this particular centre never

materialised, some twenty years later, the Javett-UP<sup>104</sup> opened to the public, and part of its design was the vision for a functional conservation laboratory that would service the Javett, the UP Museums, and be a training centre for art conservation (see chapter 5 for additional details).

### 3.7. Museology, museography and museum studies in South Africa today.

As outlined in the introductory section to this chapter, beyond our borders, training in the care and the preventive conservation of collections was often undertaken in tandem with or as part of museum training, whilst remedial conservation and restoration were seen as more specialised and the domain of dedicated schools and apprenticeships. Similarly, in South Africa, preventive conservation knowledge and skills to a certain extent (albeit limited) featured in local museum training. Whereas, the skills and knowledge necessary for restoration and remedial treatment were passed through formal apprenticeships, such as that of the *Ou Mutual Restourasiesentrum* (Old Mutual Restoration Centre), which issued a certificate in paper conservation<sup>105</sup> (from the late 1980s to the early 1990s) or informally under the tutelage of a private practitioner<sup>106</sup>. In addition, a few conservator-restorers were completely self-taught, as mentioned previously<sup>107</sup>. Regardless of their original training, many practitioners have to some measure supplemented their knowledge and skills where they could.

Since 1997, museological courses have decreased in South Africa, and today, only a few courses are being offered. According to the *Student's guide to studying Heritage in South Africa* (Stoltz & Stewart, 2018:[sp]) presented by the Heritage portal, fourteen institutions present courses in heritage. However, these are primarily focussed on history and heritage as a product of history, and not so much on the specifics of heritage and even less on heritage

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<sup>104</sup> The Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria, or Javett-UP is a newly established art centre, developed in partnership with the Javett Foundation and housing the retired businessman Michael Javett's art collection (for further details see chapter 5.1., pages 186-190).

<sup>105</sup> Including Sandra Markgraaf, the paintings conservator-restorer who went on to establish the Art Revive studio in Pretoria. She was initially trained by Vasili Lianouridis at the *Ou Mutual Restourasiesentrum* and completed her 3 year paper conservation certificate under his tutelage in 1992.

<sup>106</sup> Hazel Botha for the SAinst initially followed a 6 month apprenticeship in ceramics conservation-restoration in Cape Town before moving to the Eastern Cape (Botha, 2020:1).

<sup>107</sup> This includes a few paintings self-taught conservator-restorers who came in with a background in Fine Arts. Richard Mitchell in Cape Town who has a fine arts background having trained at Plymouth College of Art & Sussex University. After moving to South Africa he taught at the Cape Technikon Fine Art Department until it closed in 1987; he then opened his private conservation-restoration studio working mostly on easel paintings, fine art and long case clocks (Mitchell, 2020:[sp]).



‘objects’. Closer scrutiny of the websites and programmes of each of the fourteen institutions, with programmes mentioned, reveals that only the following have specific courses that cover museum studies, museology and collections care/preventive conservation. These include the Higher Certificate in Heritage Studies (Sol Plaatje University), the postgraduate diploma in museology (University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal), the postgraduate diploma in archives and records management (University of Fort Hare), the Honours in Curatorship (University of Cape Town, whose funding came to an end in 2019), the Honours in Heritage, Museum and Preservation Studies (University of Pretoria), and the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies presented at honours and master's level (the University of the Western Cape and the Robben Island Museum in collaboration). These postgraduate courses are usually a year long and provide a breadth of exposure to museum work, emphasising critical heritage studies and curation, museum development, museum governance and management, and heritage legal frameworks. To a lesser extent, these courses include brief introductions to the current trends in heritage conservation and guidelines for the care and preservation of collections through preventive conservation (McGinn, 2017: 39), including the University of Pretoria.

### **3.8. Museology, museography and museum studies in the wider continent**

Training for museum-related work had been a focus of ICOM since its inception in 1946 (ICTOP History – ICTOP NETWORK, 2020), and from 1967 to 1971, ICOM’s triennial programme included a series of regional museum training surveys and teaching visits, including North and West Africa (Boyland, 1987:227). In the inaugural year of its triennial programme, ICOM members from 8 European countries met in the then Czechoslovakian city of Brno. The meeting aimed to coordinate teaching programmes, diplomas and teaching methods by setting a standard syllabus, which could be adopted into existing and new courses (Boyland, 1987:226). A direct outcome of this meeting was establishing the International Committee for Training of Personnel (ICTOP) in 1968. At its first symposium in Leicester in 1969, the ICTOP committee members resolved, “museology should be recognised as an academic discipline at the level of the university and the museum profession, and museography should be assigned the level of technical training” (Maroević, 1998:97). Museology refers to the theories, procedures, concepts, and organization of museums, whilst museography refers to the practical application of museum skills. Although there was as much emphasis placed on the importance of teaching museology and museography, participants agreed that training had to be tailored, focussed and targeted, depending on who was being trained. In other words,

museum managers and directors needed a more complete and holistic training, museological and museographical, instead of the training of future museum technicians, whose preparation could be strictly museographical in content (Boyland, 1987:227). By the end of the triennial programme in 1971, an ICOM Basic Syllabus set out the minimum elements included in basic professional museum training, whether at a university or in less formal training programmes (Boyland, 1987:228).

These principal elements of the ICOM syllabus, as outlined in Boyland (1987:228), entail aspects that focus on museology, its history and purpose; the operations and management of museums; museum architecture, layout and equipment; object provenance, records and movement; collections care and preservation; exhibition; activities related to the public that included facilities and marketing; and the cultural and educational activities of museums.

According to Maroević (1998:97), the *ICOM Common Basic Syllabus for Professional Museum Training*, outlined above, had a strong practical focus that outweighed the theoretical and scientific components. Morakinyo (2011: 23), who outlines the development of museum studies in Africa, proceeds further to engage that the ICOM basic curriculum was transported to Africa as the basis of museum education. However, “Africans were not given solid professional training that would empower them, nor were they encouraged to make the museums profession their career” (Morakinyo, 2011:25), although some did, as is demonstrated by the *Unsung Heroes* exhibition, which celebrates the Museum’s black staff and preparators at the Ditsong National Museum of Natural History (Jacobs, 2016; Brain, 1998). Morakinyo (2011:25) goes on to state that “What generally emerged was a situation where Africans served as attendants and cleaners. [...] A few were taught how to operate a camera and move objects within the museum and in the field, but were denied the hard-core professional training essential for the profession.”

From the 1990s, there was a move to demographic change in the heritage sector as it emerged polarised and racially divided from the apartheid context, where black people were relegated to the status of labourers or technical staff. This anomaly required serious intervention and change in a post-apartheid reality. According to Arinze (1998:31), as quoted by Morakinyo (2011:23), this absence of professionals in the immediate post-independence period is what entrenched Western-style museum training on the African continent. It ensured that museums did not change much post the colonial period and mostly continued to be influenced by practices and theoretical frameworks derived from the West (Chaterera & Nyawo, 2013;

Thondlana, 2015). Although political transformation was already on SAMA's agenda by the mid-1980s, the Pietermaritzburg Declaration was adopted at the 1987 SAMA National Conference, "committing SAMA and its members to promote inclusivity and create spaces where people can openly express their views" (Vollgraaff, 2018:379). According to Vollgraaff (2018, 379), post-1994, some governmental initiatives were launched to actively transform the museum sector, with SAMA as a key role player, the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG) Report in 1996 and the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage in 1996 laid the foundation for museum policy, which was then reviewed in 2008 by the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), updated and re-circulated for comment in 2014 as the *Policy Framework for National Museums*. The emphasis of these documents seems to be on the need to review and transform the museum sector; however, there are no guidelines or direction on what should be included (Vollgraaff, 2018: 380). The Robben Island Training Programme and the African Programme in Museum and Heritage Studies were meant to facilitate this change by offering African graduates a fast-tracked entrance into the museum sector and change staff diversity quotas to reflect the population demographics of South Africa. However, this more inclusive representation in staff quotas and visitor numbers, as Vollgraaff (2018:379) notes, cannot be considered true transformation as the underlying philosophies and value systems are not interrogated, challenged or changed, nor does it include community consultation and participation for shared decision making. This could be some of the reasons that many African museums still appear as outdated products of a colonial past and have not been able to reinvent themselves as community focussed social centres for change. Vollgraaff (2018:387) further notes that in South Africa, "museum work is still not seen as a specialist field that requires sector-specific knowledge or experience", and in general, few museums employ staff with practical museum experience, knowledge and skills in part due to inadequate job descriptions and interviews for posts being conducted by staff who themselves have little or no museum experience.

Several museum training programmes were established in Africa by UNESCO, such as the Jos Centre, established in Nigeria in 1963, and the Niamey Training Centre, established in 1970 in the Republic of Niger (Gesché-Koning, 2015:5; Hahn, 2008:205). ICCROM established both in association with the University of Abomey-Calavi and the National Museums of Kenya (Gesché-Koning, 2015:11). Close to a zoo, botanical garden, national museum, and open-air museum with historic structures, the Jos Centre provided "the much-needed training facilities for the conservation and preservation of museum objects, monuments, and the cultural and

natural heritage in an African context” (Arinze, 1987: 278). Additionally, the Jos centre offered courses and an internship where students worked alongside museum staff and carried out hands-on practical conservation work on artefacts (Arinze, 1987:278).

Arinze (1998:32) notes that since the withdrawal of international funding in the late 1980s, most training initiatives have ceased to evolve, becoming “stagnant and confused”. This, he says, includes the Jos Centre in Nigeria, which, although successful, could only be sustained for a limited time by the Nigerian government before it too collapsed. The ICOM’s Secretary-General Report for 1980-1983 (see F.T. Masao, as quoted in Morakinyo, 2011: 23),

[t]he lack of financial resources has necessitated the gradual handing over of responsibility for countries in which [...] training centres are located and consequently many more centres are now operating far below the minimum level of funding. They are unable to retain personnel, and the quality of training courses has obviously decreased. Furthermore, placing responsibilities with the host country [...] the training centre has been hindered by purely domestic, political and administrative factors.

Another notable training initiative is the *Académie des Beaux Arts de Kinshasa* (Fine Arts Academy of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo) (Gesché-Koning, 2015). Established in 1943, the *académie* was initially founded by a Belgian missionary as the *École St Luc*, a colonial art school that includes secondary and tertiary education (Cobbaut, [sa]:149). In 1949, the school was renamed and relocated to Kinshasa. The *académie*’s fine arts department has since 2013 a conservation-restoration section, which offers a bachelor’s degree developed in collaboration with the *École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Visuels de "La Cambre"*, Belgium. Students work on collections from the *Institut National des Musées du Congo* (National Institute of Congolese Museums – INMC) and receive training in preventive conservation, documentation, photography, conservation ethics, as well as interventive conservation training in ceramics and wood (Cobbaut, [sa]).

The Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) has been mentioned by African scholars such as Arinze<sup>108</sup> (1998:34), as the solution to the challenges of museum training in Africa, as since 1986, ICCROM has run several training

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<sup>108</sup> Emanuel Nnakenyi Arinze (1945–2005), was a pioneer of Museum and Heritage Studies in Africa and took on a number of high profile leadership roles throughout his career, including: Principal of the Centre for Museum Studies, Jos, Nigeria; executive of Nigeria National Museums; chairperson of the West African Museum Programme (WAMP); ICCROM-PREMA consultant; and vice-chairperson of ICTOP.

courses to address the specific problem of Prevention and Conservation in Museums in Africa (PREMA). The PREMA programmes were developed as a direct response to a needs assessment of the African museum and heritage sector, which looked at conservation, challenges and training requirements (Abangu, 2009:123). Little (2000:10) highlights “lack of trained personnel, the lack of training possibilities, the lack of tools, the lack of motivation, and a great sense of alienation by museum professionals” as critical challenges to be addressed by tailor-made museum and museum conservation training in Africa. Little et al. (1996:116) describe the PREMA programme's setup as similar to a military campaign, developing a strategy to deal with the multifaceted and complex challenges to heritage preservation faced in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite many training initiatives carried out in the developing world, ICCROM realised that single, short-term courses and networking opportunities in the developing world were not sustainable over the long term (Little et al., 1996:116).

The PREMA programme ran from 1990 to 2000 with a dual aim: firstly, to ensure the conservation of sub-Saharan African museum collections and movable heritage; and secondly, to establish a network of African professionals trained in conservation, who could assume responsibility for the conservation of movable property as well as being capable of training others in turn (Little, 2001:9). Little (2002:10) suggests that the development of the PREMA programme was based on the consensus that African museum professionals trained in conservation in Europe or North America were skilled according to the accepted standards, needs and requirements of those countries. Thus, conservation knowledge and skills were deemed unsuitable as they could not be transposed to the African context (Little, 2001:10). The type of materials, climatic, social, cultural and political environments and available resources were vastly different. The PREMA programme attempted to resolve this through a series of coordinated operations. As there was no conservation training available in Africa (Little et al., 1996:117), university courses would be created explicitly for this purpose, with a nine-month theoretical course presented at an international university in alternate years: either in French through the Sorbonne University Paris 1, or in English at the University College of London, Institute of Archaeology (Little, 2001:10). Upon successfully completing the theoretical component, graduates were awarded a Diploma in Conservation Management for Museums of sub-Saharan Africa (Little, 2001:10). After the nine-month course, participants could attend a further national or sub-regional course organised in collaboration with host museums. The regional course offered basic training in preventive conservation for all levels of museum

workers, including technicians, conservators, archivists, keepers and assistant keepers, with a strong train-the-trainer emphasis for future PREMA courses (Little, 2001:15).

There were no conservators in Africa to target for this specific training, so ICCROM directed all levels of museum personnel to be involved in regional courses to create the vocation (Little et al., 1996:117) and sustain personnel development over a decade to ensure succession planning and skills transferal. The current situation of museums working in isolation with little to no communication was also attended to establish multi-cultural networking opportunities and newsletters established to ensure follow-up and exchange (Little et al., 1996:117). To give museum staff support, ICCROM also specifically targeted museum management and Directors, inviting them to be involved in the training and development of their staff; as well as approaching community leaders to get the buy-in of the local communities to recognise and appreciate the educational and cultural value of the artefacts housed in museums (Little et al., 1996:117).

The strength of the PREMA programme, as Terry Little (cited in Morakinyo, 2011:18) explains, was the simultaneous targeting of related challenges in heritage conservation:

“In sub-Saharan Africa, since there was no conservation training in the region at that time (1986), we worked with the universities in London and Paris to create courses and curricula. Since there were no conservators to train, we had to work with all existing museum categories to create the vocation. Since the museum directors were themselves part of the problem, we have to motivate them and involve them in the training of their personnel. Since many of the museums we were involved with seemed foreign or dead to their communities, we worked with the community leaders and the media to create awareness.”

This approach described by Little above recognised the interconnectedness and interdependence of the different aspects of the entire museum and heritage eco-system and attempted to address some existing challenges simultaneously, including internally from the technical staff to management and externally within the communities. The most important was the sensitising professional and non-professional alike to the importance of, and needs for, collections care, both within the museum and in the care of the community, through formal and non-formal interactions at the museum, schools, on the radio, and in the community to ensure an interest and buy-in for heritage in the future.



Little (2000:5), however, also criticises the description of the PREMA as a programme ‘tailor-made for Africa’ where European and American professionals, based in Rome, were formulating and directing museum and heritage training programmes in Africa for Africans. This has resulted in the replication of knowledge, transposed to a different context with some adaptation, thus adding local colour and flavour to existing ‘western’ structures; as opposed to an emphasis on the production of grounded, locally-centred knowledge, creating epistemic diversity and truly diversifying our understanding and knowledge (see chapter 3). However, the PREMA programme was eventually moved to Jos (Nigeria), and based on its success in providing appropriate training, and it was decided at the 6<sup>th</sup> PREMA review in Benin (1998) that a new iteration of the programmes would be launched based in Africa. Two training centres were established, notably L’École du Patrimoine (EPA) in Porto Nuovo, Republic of Benin, to service Francophone Africa, while the Programme for Museum Development in Africa (PDMA) based in Mombasa, Kenya, was established for Anglophone Africa (Little, 2001:49). As financial resources have often been constrained in Africa, there was, in addition, a recommendation put forward for the establishment of a foundation to supply the operational budget for both the Porto Nuovo and Mombasa operations (Little, 2001:44). The shortfall of running costs could then be covered by revenue-generating activities funded by the private sector, public and government organisations and large international organisations such as UNESCO, ICCROM, and the West African Museum Programme (WAMP) (Little, 2001:44).

The Centre for Heritage Development in Africa (CHDA) was established in November 2004 and is based in Mombasa, Kenya. It represents one of the outcomes of the PREMA programmes. According to the official website, the CHDA is “an international Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) dedicated to the preservation, management and promotion of cultural heritage in Africa through a programme of training and development support services.” CHDA courses include “both technical and hard skills and people-related or soft skills, which emphasise that heritage conservation, must use these resources, first, to be sustainable in Africa, and second, to deliver on the Millennium Development Goals”. The focus of CHDA is on immovable heritage conservation and management, intending to equip state parties better to prepare nomination files for inscription on the World Heritage List and comply with the international heritage legal framework. Morakinyo (2011:33) describes the CHDA’s brochures on their short course offerings including developing sustainable tourism and other economic activities within or outside World Heritage Sites. how to Design Site Management Plans, and Ratification and Inventorying. There are also museum centred courses that introduce



new museum staff to the core functions of a museum; and specialised training in practical, low-cost conservation practices in tandem with the crafts sector.

According to George Abungu (2009:64), PREMA was developed with longevity and sustainability in mind by first considering the entire museum ecosystem in Africa (museum directors, curators and technicians and raising awareness within the community), advocating for adaptation to local contexts and available material use, relocating the programme to Africa to make it more accessible, and engaging in presenting training over ten years, in ensuring some continuity between retiring and incoming staff.

Another outcome of the success of the PREMA programme was the Africa 2009 initiative (1998-2009) which aimed to improve the management and conservation of immovable cultural heritage in sub-Saharan Africa. Africa 2009 hoped to achieve this by increasing local capacity in national institutions to manage and conserve immovable heritage by creating awareness and advocating for the importance of preserving immovable cultural heritage, sharing information, and strengthening the network of African cultural heritage professionals (UNESCO, WHC, 2010:2).

Over the 12 years of the programme, 11 three-month courses on Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage were carried out that focusses on the basic concepts of management planning while also looking at issues such as documentation, inventory, and legal frameworks for conservation; 7 technical courses on preventive conservation. Documentation, inventory, and environmental impact assessments were also presented. These courses were highly successful and well attended, with 220 African professionals from 42 countries attending the management courses and 130 professionals from 40 countries attended the technical courses (UNESCO, WHC, 2010:3). A further 17 regional and national seminars also covered documentation, legal frameworks, conservation of sacred sites, and sustainable tourism. Over 800 professionals from the region took part in these seminars (UNESCO, WHC, 2010:3).

As mentioned in earlier sections of this chapter, one of the objectives of PREMA was to establish two regional conservation training centres in Africa, with a different resolution to encourage continued financial support for EPA and CHDA. Both of these institutions worked closely with the Africa 2009 programme and were responsible for implementing some of the training and presentations, becoming formal partners from 2006. EPA and CHDA have since had a significant role in the planning and implementation of the programme, and in return, the

programme has provided equipment and some financial support for staffing at both institutions (UNESCO, WHC, 2010:7).

The 6<sup>th</sup> PREMA National/Sub-Regional course took place in Zimbabwe from November 1995 – 1996 for southern African countries, including Zimbabwe, Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia. South Africa, although not listed, was represented and made valuable contributions (Dijakovic, 1996:54). Kim Siebert, a curator from the Iziko South African National Gallery, attended this PREMA course in 1995. Siebert not only attended the regional course but from 1995-1996, she also participated in the year-long training course at the University of Accra in Ghana, the course, founded by UNESCO and implemented by ICCROM, focussed on Preventive Conservation in Africa (Kaufmann, 2005: 16), as well as attending a two-week workshop on Project Design in Accra in 1997 (Siebert, 1997:28). One of the PREMA programme foci was that participants showed the application of what they had learned when they returned to their home countries. Siebert initiated the ‘Safe House’ project to recruit and train volunteers and staff to stabilise, support, document the condition, and rehouse over 2000 museum objects (Kaufmann, 2005: 16). Over 20 volunteers and staff were trained in preventive conservation through the Safe House project, and training was extended to museum interns from other African countries as well as linking up RITP, whilst a second phase of the project, included the digitisation of the collection (Kaufmann, 2005: 16).

Since 1997 Siebert, along with Gerard Corsane, the Chairperson of SAMA Training Committee, attempted to bring PREMA to South Africa through collaboration with the SAMA School of Conservation (Corsane, 1997:[sp]), and although Terry Little did visit the country in 1997, the PREMA programme was never hosted in South Africa, as there was no affiliation with ICCROM at the time (pers. comm. Little, 2020).

### **3.9. Museum studies at the University of Pretoria, 1976–present**

The University of Pretoria has offered a course in museum studies since 1976. At the time, the only other museology course was located at the University of Stellenbosch, with other courses in history or art, without the general museum subjects (du Plessis, 2019). The course design was modelled on the Leicester museum studies course (Kruger, 2019). Leicester University in the United Kingdom established a dedicated Department of Museum Studies and a programme in museology in 1966 when no such training programme was available in Europe or the United States (Nutting & Morris, 2016:63). This programme, known as the *Leicester model* in

museological education, influenced the development and format of programmes elsewhere, including at the University of Pretoria. The Leicester model included a partnership between the University and the Leicester City Museum, which already had a training programme for museum professionals and allowed a good balance between academic work, instruction in the theory and practice of museum administration, and practical work in museums, including sending students to gain experience in museums (Nutting & Morris, 2016:63).

The programme at the University of Pretoria was developed as a post-graduate diploma in Museum studies under the Department of Afrikaans and Dutch Cultural History (UPA, MKD Timeline 2019). The diploma ran as a one-year full-time or 18-month part-time course, with equal emphasis on theory and practice (Tukkiewerf, 1978:4). The first year focused on theoretical modules and a practical section, including mounting a temporary exhibition by students under supervision and a weeklong visit to various local and provincial museums (Tukkiewerf 1978:4). To complete the course, a mini-dissertation on a museological topic had to be submitted. A strength of the course since its inception was the integration of industry specialists and practitioners as part of the lecturing staff such as staff of the Transvaal Museum, the Director of the Pretoria Art Museum, the Director of the National Cultural History Museum, the Transvaal Museum Services, and the South African National Parks<sup>109</sup> (SANParks). Part of the course completion requirements included hands-on experience and completing a project during a mini-internship at a recognised museum. According to a few interviewees and graduates of the course in 1985 and 1988, respectively, these two aspects of the course meant that students were allowed to network with various heritage practitioners, grow their professional network, and experience first-hand the inner workings of a museum. These elements meant the graduates were better prepared to integrate the workplace, as they had an insight into what was relevant locally and how local institutions were run.

In 1988, the University's Department of Afrikaans and Dutch Cultural History amalgamated with the Department of History to become the Department of History and Cultural History. The Department was then renamed Department of Historical and Heritage Studies in 2001 "to reflect better the additional disciplines and fields of study in which the Department is involved – Heritage and Cultural Tourism, and Heritage and Museum Studies" (Historical & Heritage Studies | University of Pretoria, 2020). In 2004, an honour's degree in Museum and Heritage Studies was offered, including a master's degree (2011–present) and a doctorate (1992–2011).

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<sup>109</sup> SANParks was formed in 1926, and currently manages 19 parks consisting of 3,751,113 hectares, or over 3% of the total area of South Africa (SANParks website, 2020)

By 2011, the doctorate was discontinued due to a lack of interest. The following year, discussions began to find a more suitable home for the programme as no museum studies specialists were permanently employed at the University of Pretoria. The vast majority of guest lecturers were external to the university. By the time I attended the post-graduate diploma course in 2014, very little practical work was included. Eighteen lecturers presented a wide range of topics related to museums and heritage in general, which gave a superb overview of the field. However, there were noticeable gaps, overlaps and contradictions amongst the presentations and a sense that the organisation and coordination of the course content had not been reviewed in some time. The programme needed to be updated and re-organised, and these factors are discussed in Chapter 5.

### **3.10. Challenges in the South African museum sector as related to conservation**

As mentioned in Chapter 2 of this thesis, conservation is still in the process of becoming professional, including in South Africa and Hall (1994) argues that indeed museology is in the same state of professionalization, although great strides have been made in this respect. Hall (1994:30) comments that there had been many discussions over the years at various SAMA conferences about the “statutory recognition of museology as a profession. However, no one has ever taken a serious look at precisely what this means, what the implications are and how, if it is desirable, one reaches such a state of grace.” Several characteristics define a profession, the first of which is formalised training through specialist schools or universities to enter into the profession. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there are currently a variety of training options in museum and heritage studies, some of which includes aspects of collections care. However, there are few such courses specialising in conservation.

Once training has been developed, a trade needs to develop professional associations and regulatory bodies. Although SAMA attempts to fulfil this role, it is not a recognised professional body but rather an association of museums. According to Hall (1994:30), SAMA’s role should be to regulate professional practice through accreditation; set minimum professional standards; exercise control over professional conduct; set minimum standards for training; protect the interest of professionals; advise the government on professional issues, maintain professional prestige. To accomplish all of these goals, a council is established for the profession, including all stakeholders in the profession. Hall (1994:30) compares SAMA to the Council of South African Architects and suggests that a representative council would thus

include personnel employed at museums, academics teaching museum studies, a representative from other strata in the profession (for architecture this includes architectural technicians, draughting technicians, tracers), for museums this could include taxidermists, conservators, exhibition designers etc.; a government representative such as a representative from SAHRA (i.e., the Ministry governed by the Act), as well as two other government representatives who do not work in the museum sector, for example, an archaeologist. Such a council as is composed for architects, veterinarians, etc., in South Africa is vastly different to the composition of SAMA's current National Council, which consists of the chairpersons of each of the regions, the current president of the association as well as past presidents. In the past, members of SAMA came from all echelons of the museum profession and included several museum directors who remained quite active in the field. In recent years this has however changed for a number of reasons and very few museum directors remain active members in leading the association, not only do work pressures place increasing demands on their time but there is also a large amount of disinterest and poor leadership (Jansen van Vuuren, personal communication, 2020). In addition, most museums are governed by the National and provincial departments of Sports, Arts and Culture who oversee museum policies and governance; yet no SAMA representative is involved as a stakeholder in meetings concerning museums. It seems to me that a professional council that combines professionals in and out of the sector and academics who prepare the next generation of practitioners would have a less insular view of the profession and regulate its members' conduct more objectively.

SAMA embarked on the process of setting standards for professionalisation in the 1970s through a system of accreditation for museums. In 1989 the *Professional Standards: Accreditation Handbook for Southern African Museums* was produced, and questionnaires that would assist the evaluation panel in assessing museums for accreditation (SAMA, 2006:1). Problematically it seems that very few museums applied for accreditation, and even fewer could meet the minimum standards required for accreditation, not even some of the long-established national and larger provincial museums. As a result, SAMA decided in 1993 to introduce grading of museums based on 45 basic collection management standards for a Grade 4 museum. Museums could then meet up to 160 standards over time to gradually upgrade to being accredited as a Grade 1 museum. However, by 1994, only one museum met all the minimum standards and was awarded Grade 1 Status (SAMA, 2006:1). Post-1994, SAMA's Accreditation Committee looked at broadening "the scope of the minimum standards to

incorporate museum libraries and research and place a greater emphasis on public services, equity and multi-culturalism” (SAMA, 2006: 1).

In 1996, an Accreditation Handbook compiled by M. Briedenhann and E. A. Voigt was launched. The accreditation handbook provides guidelines to achieve minimum standards for the professional operation of museums by encouraging local museums to regularly assess and evaluate all aspects of their services and encourage funding bodies to use compliance with these minimum standards as a basis for funding. The accreditation system made provision for the grading of museums as “It would be unfair and unethical to expect a museum with only one staff member to render the same public service, deliver the same research output and educational services as a large specialized museum with more than 50 staff members. Therefore, the different grades should distinguish between the sizes of museums and the categories (standards) in which the effectiveness of museums should be measured.” (SAMA, 1996:4). The handbook is separated into six volumes covering different aspects of museum functions, including:

- introduction to the handbook and grading system,
- permanence and administration (the governing body, accommodation housing the museum/collection, finances, staff),
- collection and collections management (permanent collection, documentation, collection management, conservation & restoration),
- public services (accessibility, exhibits, public programmes),
- research and libraries, and
- the accreditation system and process.

However, the accreditation system was a complete failure. Only one museum has been accredited from 1996–2006. In addition, museums were required to review their status periodically (every five years), which museums failed to do. So accreditation simply fell away (SAMA, 2006:1). In 2006, SAMA produced the *Professional Standards and Transformation Indicators* (PSTI) document, which spotlights the four main spheres of museum operation: governance and museum management, collections management (including the care and conservation of collections), public programmes and visitor services and facilities (SAMA, 2006:4). In addition to these core standards, which define a museum, the PSTI document identifies standards that may not apply to all museums. The document states that “the core standards should be regarded as basic standards to be met by all museums regardless of their

source of funding (state or privately owned), specialisation, status, range of collections or staff establishment” (SAMA, 2006:4). Having standards is vital in understanding where an institution is located regarding its performance and what it wants. In turn, this allows for the implementation of strategic planning in terms of allocation, prioritisation, and maximisation of resources to grow and improve. Although many museum professionals do accept the importance of professional standards, the assessment process is seen as “laborious, expensive, complicated and that the standards were too high” (SAMA, 2006:1). Herein lies a problem, as professional standards do not carry much meaning or weight if they cannot be applied to the sector and are not accepted by the sector. In a recent webinar, Dr Roger Layton, CEO of the Ether Initiative was likening the situation to a lack of ‘carrots and sticks’<sup>110</sup>; there simply is no motivation (carrots) for museums to meet these standards, unlike in the UK where accreditation is linked to funding, and where museums which are not accredited have no access to government funding structures (Layton, 2020:[sp]). Looking at SAMA in South Africa, there appear to be no ‘sticks’ either, and there is no widely accepted museum policy within South Africa (although a draft policy exists for the Western Cape), there is as yet still no accepted accreditation process for museums, or accepted range of qualifications that SAMA recognises as minimum qualifications or training for entrance into the museum or heritage profession. SAMA, in addition, represents both the institution and the museum professional, which could be seen as a conflict of interest in promoting the best interest of museum personnel in issues of professional accreditation and accompanying salary scales, where SAMA could be caught between the employee and employer.

Although SAMA did promote a code of ethics to guide practice for South African conservator-restorers (Code of Ethics for Conservators, 1990: 4), there are no requirements for accreditation of conservator-restorers or limitations on conservation-restoration practice in the museum environment. The only professional body which actively represented conservation-restoration in South Africa was the South African Guild for Ceramics Restorers and Conservators founded in 1997 by the Academy of Ceramics Conservation (now the South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation), the guild drew together a number of founding member conservation practitioners however as Botha, A (2020) states “in the absence of recruitment

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<sup>110</sup> Carrots and sticks is a metaphor for the use of a combination of reward and punishment or soft and hard power to induce a desired behaviour. The phrase is found either using their term ‘carrots’ or ‘turnips’ depending on the variant. In *The Children of Mount Ida: and other stories* by Lydia Maria Child (1871:156) where a character in the ‘Neighbour-in-law’ Mrs Fairweather recounts how the master’s beatings could not persuade his donkey to move, until the neighbour tied some fresh turnips to a stick so that the fresh vegetables should dangle in front of the animal’s snout “and he set on a brisk trot, in hopes of overtaking them.”



and conventions, membership has dwindled to a handful of current members in good standing.” The guild itself is not without limitations. It only accepts members who have gone through their training, inadvertently creating a very insular and ‘elite’ cohort of conservator-restorers. The guild's main purpose is to connect clients and conservators and mediate disputes between practitioners and clients, where necessary. At times the guild has suggested some retraining, where the conservator’s services were found to be lacking to ensure that a certain standard of practice (according to their own standards) is upheld and practitioners monitored; however, there is no provision for tiered membership, which would allow for conservators trained outside of the Institute to join the guild as fellows or associates, as does ICON<sup>111</sup> in the UK, or AIC in the U.S.A.

Although SAMA would likely not function in the same way as the guild, the newly re-established SAMA Training Committee is actively looking into registering the association as the museums' professional body by changing SAMA’s constitution to be recognised as an NPO for SAQA registration and accreditation. This would allow SAMA to start identifying training providers and courses that it could accredit, develop standardised job descriptions for various museum posts and set minimum standards and requirements for these posts. Included in this vision is the development of job descriptions for a tiered conservation system that would recognise conservator, conservation technician and preventive conservator positions and include a national register of recognised professionals (a project that has already been initiated).

Botha (2003:252) discusses some of the widespread problems in the art conservation industry in the US and Europe, which, writing in 2003, is still defined as largely unregulated. “With the absence of government regulation, any person may hold himself out as a restorer. There is no accepted standard for training within the industry, nor is there any requirement for accreditation before one is eligible to practice....there is no obligation, even for publicly held works of art, that a proposed conservation project be presented for public comment before it is undertaken” (Botha, 2003: 252). This absence of official certification of professionals is one of the challenges in South Africa. Botha (2003:253) suggests this could potentially be remedied by endorsing professionals either through accreditation or licensing, but notes that “Accreditation

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<sup>111</sup> The Institute for Conservation (ICON), founded in 2005, is a membership organisation and charity which raises awareness for the cultural, social and economic value of caring for heritage and champions high standards for heritage conservation and represents around 2500 individuals and institutions including professional accredited conservators, academics, volunteers, and owners of cultural heritage in both the private and public sectors of the GLAM industry.

would be granted after peer review of a practitioner's abilities, knowledge, and understanding of ethical responsibilities through a highly organized assessment process; licensing would be even more inhibitive, in that membership would be compulsory to practice." This former is similar to the process employed by ASAPA,<sup>112</sup> where applications by new potential members have to be put forward by existing members as 'promoters' of the candidate and supported by the members of the association. Botha (2003:253) notes that "the primary reasons such a system is disfavored within the profession are the fear of subjective judgement being applied to one's work and disagreement as to what constitutes a proper training in conservation." The initial step would thus be to standardise training; however, the mention of comparing programs or peer review of programmes, in my own experience, generally tends to unnerve colleagues, particularly from the more established programmes. Botha (2003:254) suggests that this is partly due to a disparity within the profession as to what constitutes appropriate methodology, and this debate is not reserved for "scholars and practitioners", "standards vary by country as to what constitutes appropriate methodology" and "in general, given the diversity of opinion within the profession, and the great variety of subdisciplines that must be considered, (including painting, sculpture, wood, and ceramics, to name just a few), some commentators are doubtful about whether standards can be precisely described and agreed upon for each aspect of practice" (Botha, 2003:254). Linked to the issue of methodology is that of a greater need for transparency amongst the profession of conservator-restorer and allied professionals, the public, and other stakeholders (Vienna, 1998).

Botha (2003: 256) suggest that transparency can be achieved by making public the reasons for undertaking conservation, and exposing the choice of methods to be applied would increase public awareness of conservation issues. This approach would also ensure that proper documentation is made of all the following conservation activities, including clinical testing before treatment, and that the scientific techniques applied are well-considered and applicable. Although this could apply to large scale conservation projects on the built heritage, landscapes or archaeological sites, it is simply not realistic to expect this for general objects conservation, unless they are declared heritage objects as is the case in South Africa, where for example, permits had to be obtained from SAHRA for conservation treatment to be carried out on declared archaeological artefacts from the National Estate and part of the University of

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<sup>112</sup> The Southern African Association of Professional Archaeologists

Pretoria's Mapungubwe Collection, including low-fired ceramic vessels (McGinn, 2017b) and gold artefacts (see Tiley-Nel & Botha, 2013).

Botha concludes that some level of standardisation in training, approach, and praxis would not only assist in alleviating some of these challenges and is necessary for any system of professional certification to function (Botha, 2003: 255). The biggest stumbling blocks globally up until the late 1990s was the absence of a legal definition of the conservation-restoration profession and its professionals, setting out its relation to other professions or professionals working with cultural heritage in allied fields (Comments to FULCO<sup>113</sup> - A Framework of Competence for Conservators-Restorers in Europe, 1999:5). To grow conservation as a professional field locally would require developing training comparable to other courses globally and working alongside allied professionals to define what conservator-restorers do and develop a local system for accreditation, possibly through SAMA. However, accreditation is considered exclusive, and is generally objected to on this basis overseas, and this will likely be the case in South Africa too, particularly with the limited number of training opportunities and the many avenues current practitioners have entered the field. Several countries have considered how to establish an accreditation system, with ECCO and ENCoRE looking on criteria for a blanket European accreditation system however so far the only accreditation is that the professional formation was completed after 5 years at a university or equivalent training.

The same holds true for the accreditation of museum professionals in South Africa, despite the numerous academic courses in museology. Despite SAMA's efforts to implement standardisation and accreditation measures for museums and their staff, it is still a challenge 84 years later. As Vollgraaff (2014:51) notes, there is a need for a coordinating body for the South African museum sector that could assist in its professionalisation, as this has many implications, including

the profession itself controls the standardisation of job descriptions and the recognition that museum work requires a specific skills base, but also that access, standards, ethics and training through professional bodies [...] As there are no standardised skills requirements, anyone can be appointed to a museum position that requires expert skills.

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<sup>113</sup> Fundamental Levels of Conservator-Restorers (FULCO) was initiated by the Netherlands Institute of Cultural Heritage (ICN), Amsterdam. The aim was to define professional competencies for conservator-restorers as derived from the Document of Pavia, and propose professional standards for conservator-restorers in Europe.

The standardisation of job descriptions and skills requirements is not a straightforward matter as museum work is diverse. Experts from different disciplines apply their expertise within a museum system. At the same time, there are no unit standards or criteria for museum training that makes it possible to assess a person's training. Furthermore, many museum staff have obtained their training informally through in-house mentoring programmes and attending conferences and workshops (Vollgraaff, 2014:51).

These challenges to the museum sector are likewise highlighted on SAMA's website (2020) "Unlike other organisations and associations, such as those to which archaeologists or architects are affiliated, museum professionals are not registered and are not required to belong to a professional body. Museum posts are not defined or designated and are therefore not accepted for registration with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). This causes challenges in the museum sector, including an absence of a standard set of requirements for posts; salaries of museum workers differing vastly from one organisation to another; and, where museums fall under the control of departments or municipalities, employers often do not understand the requirements for posts in the museum sector" (Jansen van Vuuren, 2020:17). In addition, as Arinze (1998:35) points out, "as a result of political interference in museums affairs, unqualified and untrained staff have been imposed whose poor and uninformed leadership has seriously compromised professionalism." He further notes that poor leadership results in an inability to make museums functional and sustainable; museums still have poorly defined policies and a lack of succession planning for growth and development. Sadly, it appears that not much has changed, and these realities are confirmed by available advertisements for museum jobs in South Africa, such as that by SANParks for a senior Curator (2018), a Collections Specialist for The Post Office Museum (2017), or a Curator of the Broster Beadwork Collection (Walter Sisulu University, 2019). These recent advertisements suggest that a museum qualification is an advantage rather than a requirement, although all require some museum or collections management experience. Considering that these job advertisements list collections management and preventive conservation as requirements, it seems irresponsible to entrust collections to people without adequate training or understanding of preventive conservation and materials.

An exception to this is a very recent (June 2021) advertisement by the City of Johannesburg for a permanent position in the post of conservator at Museum Africa ("Vacancy circular 039/2021: Conservator by City of Johannesburg, 2021"). This is quite possibly a first in recent

years, and although it may appear to be a positive development reflecting a general re-appraisal of the need for conservation, however when reading the job requirements which include a tertiary qualification in museum conservation, 3 to 4 years' experience in a variety of materials as found in museums and galleries, as well as the conservator's primary function listed as “[p]reserve, conserve and restore the items in the museum’s collections. Assess, clean, treat and conserve damaged items and restore them where appropriate and ethical and keep record of such treatment.” (“Vacancy circular 039/2021: Conservator by City of Johannesburg, 2021”). These afore-mentioned requirements show a general lack of knowledge and understanding of the South African conservation landscape as until 2018 there was no training in conservation available locally. A potential candidate would have had to either train outside of South Africa or already be an established conservator, suggesting that perhaps a candidate has already been selected and the advertisement is then purely publicised to fulfil a legal requirement.

It has been my experience that many museums in South Africa only advertise externally once the posts have first been advertised within the institution, and there appears to be a preference for in-house promotion even if the person promoted to a new posts does not have the qualifications for it. This approach seems particularly slack, as museums repeatedly indicate that they are understaffed and do not have the time to dedicate to in-service training, as discussed during the regional meetings and site visits explained in chapter 5.

### **3.11. The current conservation landscape in South Africa**

As part of the Mellon-funded development grant (see Chapter 5), I was able to carry out exploratory visits throughout South Africa and grow my network to understand better who are those involved in conservation beyond the confines of the Highveld (the South African inland plateau).

The numerous interviews carried out during the development phase of the master's at the University of Pretoria show a varied conservation landscape with practitioners who had a variety of entry points into the conservation field from apprenticeships to studying abroad.

One of the questions posed in the 2015 Mellon questionnaire asked of participants: *If you see obstacles to expanding conservation capacity in your institution or the country, please describe them.* The most pressing issues and challenges, as stated in McGinn (2017:37), include

“diminishing subsidies, freezing of posts, ageing infrastructure, over-crowding of repositories, a lack of dedicated budgets for conservation, a misunderstanding of the role and purpose of conservation, scant expertise and research, a non-existent publication record on local content, conservation practitioners close to retirement, poor succession planning, and a lack of local training opportunities.” These sentiments were already noted by Vajifdar (2014) when speaking of paper-based collections in museums and archives,

“[i]n the years since I have been here (I arrived from the UK in 1985), I have been saddened that while many curators and individuals recognise the importance of preserving the collections they hold, none of their budgets, or staff complements allow a real effort of conservation. Given urgent national priorities, there has been a lack of attention paid at the highest levels to the preservation of cultural heritage. As a result, many collections are neglected, or relegated to store rooms and conservation interventions are only implemented when there is a preventable disaster: fire, flood, burst water pipe or handling error.”

Inadequate, insufficient or non-existent staff training, and the lack of training opportunities, were repeatedly mentioned as a challenge to conservation and were highlighted as critical issues in several responses.

As the respondent for the National Heritage Resources Agency noted,

[o]bstacles to conservation capacity are not foreseen except, of course, in instances where the management at the institution concerned does not regard this as core business. However, it is foreseen that the conservation advice/training/plan, may not be implemented due to lack of interest of responsible staff, no support from the institution whose core function does not include conservation and no budget” (SAHRA response to the Mellon 2015 questionnaire, unpublished [sp]).

Another similar view came from a respondent from the University of Cape Town, where it was remarked that one of the primary reasons for the lack of conservation capacity is not related to the scarce skills or lack of resources, but because conservation is misunderstood; it is often deemed unnecessary because the value of collections is not recognised, and as such the impetus to allocate funds is weak (UCT response meeting, 2016:[sp]). To redress the situation, collections need to be assigned value beyond the reasons for their being collected in the first place. In other words, scholarship and projects that subject both university as well as colonial

and apartheid collecting practices to new insights, and that can demonstrate the value for contemporary society of these collections, will more likely generate demand for their conservation and facilitate its practice. There is a well-known tension between the needs for conservation and allowing access as part of the public life of a collection; the first requiring minimised handling, as well as appropriately controlled light, humidity and temperature levels to promote longevity; whilst the other requires movement, handling, conservation treatments, as well as lighting and display mounts which allow for enhanced viewing and appreciation of the object by the public or researcher (Barrett, 2014: [sp]). However, “conservation may also proceed – perhaps in some cases better proceed – by releasing collections from the captivity of their institutional vaults, and allowing them a broader public life” (UCT, 2016), which is why increasingly there is a move to digitising entire collections for access beyond the physical confines of the museum walls (Barrett, 2014:[sp]). Although digitisation may sound like an attractive solution, however a digital archive cannot replace the original artefacts which would still require maintenance and care, as would the digital archive itself which requires enormous capital outlay and investment in servers and infrastructure, which few institutions can afford, particularly in South Africa.

The site visits further revealed the decreasing and poor conservation landscape, although this was not always the case. As Addleson (1996:410) describes, “the Durban Museums”<sup>114</sup> boast a distinguished record in respect of the conservation of their collections. From the 1920s to the 1950s, there are frequent references in the archival records to conservation matters and the restoration of items in the collections, although there was no ‘official’ conservator during that period on the staff of these museums.” This emphasis on the appropriate care and conservation of the collections was due in part to Durban Museum and Art Gallery’s inaugural director, Mr E.C. Chubb. During his tenure (1910–1951), Concerned by the possible negative effects Durban’s sub-tropical climate could have on the collection, Chubb assigned a staff member to the care and restoration of the sculptures and paintings of the Gallery and ensured the museum and staff had access to the leading museum and conservation publications of the time. So although there were no trained conservators at that point, staff had access to up-to-date information that they put into practice and kept “brief notes on procedures used in restoring

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<sup>114</sup> Founded by the Durban City Council this group of seven museums included the Durban Art Gallery (established 1892), the Durban Natural Science Museum (established 1887) and the Local History Museums including the Old Durban Room (established in the City Hall in 1920).



individual artworks and these have proved to be useful for work undertaken by subsequent conservators” (Addleson, 1996:410). As conservation gained momentum in the 1960s, and the importance of preserving museum objects and collections increased worldwide in the 1970s, it was also significantly strengthened in South Africa, through “visits by distinguished museum scientists such as Dr A.E.A. Werner, then Keeper of the Research Laboratory at the British Museum, and the late Professor Stephen Rees Jones, Founder Fellow of IIC” (Addleson, 1996:410).

In 1981 the Durban City Council sent their Art Gallery Technician for training in easel painting conservation in the United Kingdom<sup>115</sup>. Commitment to conserving the collections was further improved in 1987, with the establishment of a paper conservation studio and the hiring of two qualified paper conservators, one dedicated to the Local History Museums and one to the Durban Art Gallery collections (Addleson, 1996:411–412)<sup>116</sup>. As it was renamed, the Durban Museums’ Conservation Centre was operational at 102–120 Prince Alfred Street in a disused municipal beer hall that the Museums Department rescued in 1994. The space is still in existence today and services the collections with one staff member responsible for general preventive conservation, repackaging of collections and conservation treatments on textiles. Visiting conservators are contracted in as budgets allow them to complete specific restoration projects, particularly easel paintings. As one paintings conservator previously employed at the Durban Art Gallery stated, by the time she left in 2006, “there was no longer even a budget to buy materials to work on the collection myself. I was buying materials out of my salary. The maintenance budget was also cut, and the high tech air conditioning unit and building maintenance were also seriously frustrating issues. There are several budgetary challenges in public heritage institutions in South Africa” (Blumenthal, 2015). These experiences and budgetary constraints are repeated at other institutions, where two other painting conservators likewise had to purchase their own materials to effect repairs and treatments to collection objects. These out-of-pocket expenses were never reimbursed.

The South African National Gallery (now the Iziko South African National Gallery, ISANG) also has a strong conservation presence that is carried over from 1949, with the arrival of John

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<sup>115</sup> Dale Smith was the Art Gallery Technician sent to the UK in 1981 to complete a Diploma in Paintings Conservation at the Gateshead Technical College (see Appendix 7, and Addleson, 1996:410).

<sup>116</sup> Phillippa Hunt was deployed at the Durban Art Gallery, and Sian Parry at the Local History Museums, both were trained overseas and obtained an MA Conservation of Fine Art, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in association with Gateshead College, UK.

Paris and his vision for the SANG as set out in his Memorandum, which included staffing needs for conservation (Martin, 2019: 46)

The National Cultural History Museum (now Ditsong National Cultural History Museum) also had an in-house paper conservation studio, with a qualified Dutch paper conservator Vasili Lionarides, who was specifically hired and brought to South Africa to work on the collections, set up a conservation studio and train local staff (du Plessis, 2019). Paper and art conservation, along with bookbinding, was developed at the National Cultural History Museum. At that stage, each province had its own centralised museum services that acted as regional support for museums, technical and professional services in terms of preventive conservation, which covered storage and exhibitions, remedial conservation services, etc. With the reshuffling of provincial border lines post 1994, the Transvaal Provincial Museum Services closed down, as the old Transvaal province was split into the North West, Limpopo, Gauteng and Mpumalanga provinces, and individual museums explored possibilities for their collections care. However, the Western Cape, Free State and KZN museum services are still extant and continue to service museums in their respective regions, albeit with severely limited resources. The more prominent national museums were relatively well funded and resourced and were in general better able to care for their collections although over time most have felt the effect of conservation staff leaving either as a result of retirement or to enter private practice and few now have in house staff dedicated to collections care on a permanent basis.

After these exploratory visits for the purpose of the development of the masters at the University of Pretoria, many conservation specialists who had been employed in museums but had left or retired and went into private practice were interviewed. Much experience was gained over time, both on the collections, the profession and the general heritage landscape.

### **3.12. Conclusion**

The preceding description (in large measure historical) demonstrates the numerous attempts at developing training opportunities for preventive and remedial conservation, either part-time or full-time, academic museum studies programmes, or independent courses. In addition to some museology courses which offered a basic introduction to collections care, there has been a plethora of short courses, workshops and train-the-trainer events that have also taken place organised through SAMA, SAPCON, ASAPA and various academic institutions and individual museums, although they have not been listed above, as there are simply too many to list. Most

of these training opportunities have focused on preventive conservation and collections care, with very little focus on interventive or remedial training. The need for locally-based remedial conservation training has been emphasised repeatedly at various levels, ranging from within individual organisations, to SAMA and have even been recognised as part of a national vision in the South African National Development Plan (see *National development Plan 2030: our future, make it work*, 2012). The preservation of cultural heritage is also identified as a continental imperative for inclusive growth and sustainable development as part of the African Union Commission's Agenda 2063 (see *The African Union Commission Agenda 2063*, 2015), as well as having the potential to contribute meaningfully to the Millennium Development Goals (Ndoro & Jaquinta, 2006).

And yet, of all the formal training opportunities, most have unfortunately been terminated due to low student numbers, either because of geographic location, lack of interest from the museum sector or lack of financial resources to fund participants, presenters, or keep the courses running. Teaching and training in conservation are specialised programmes, which require a large staff contingent to attend to the different materials and fields of conservation in any depth. This issue of suitably qualified staff and staff availability to present the academic material was one of the challenges in the SAMA School of Conservation, which eventually led to its closure. Additionally, the space requirements are specific and extensive, the equipment and materials required are costly and often need to be imported, and the student intake is usually small, with between 5 to 12 participants to ensure adequate individual attention and supervision during practical conservation projects (ENCoRE, 2014:6). As stated in McGinn (2017:38), this presents a challenge for academic institutions that rely heavily on government funding as such “programmes can easily be construed as inefficient, being too costly for little visible returns.” The funding model for the SAMA School of Conservation, and indeed the SAInst, was to open the teaching beyond the museum sector and make it accessible to the general public at a cost, using this income to fund the school's operation. The SAInst has over the years trained several museum staff, collectors and private persons, in various aspects of remedial conservation through short certificate courses (not accredited), including ceramics, metals, paper and the built environment. The small amount of museum personnel that have received this training usually refer to themselves as conservators, although this may not be reflected in their job title, and most focus on preventive conservation as the institutions for whom they work often do not have the facilities for an in-house conservation studio, not do they have a dedicated budget for conservation. Additionally, although the Institute have been quite successful at training

conservation technicians in certain aspects of conservation work, the short courses and workshops are limited in the in-depth understanding of material science and critical enquiry required of conservators. Most of the conservators who have that depth of understanding of material science and chemistry required to grasp the potential repercussions of particular remedial treatments were trained abroad, and some have in turn trained others.

One training opportunity presented by SAMA in association with the Dutch Embassy and Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency attempted to remedy this by presenting a series of five ‘train-the-trainer’ workshops (2018–2020) to train the same group of museums and heritage professionals. The guiding philosophy was to improve general knowledge and skills in the preventive care of a wide variety of materials, including paper, photographs, books, wood, textiles, glass, ceramics and metals (Minicka, 2019:46); but also assist in reuniting the same attendees throughout each workshop to build a network of people who could not only support one another but in turn advise and train colleagues, managers and junior staff. The next phase following the 2018-2020 train-the-trainer events would be to include some measure of remedial training to the attendees of the previous cycle, however with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, these plans have been put on hold indefinitely.

However, no matter how much training is devised and established, it seems these initiatives are almost ‘doomed to fail’ if the sector itself has not changed. As Heritage and Golfomitsou (2015: S2-4) state in an article on improving the relevance and impact of conservation science, “Professional fields, regardless of whether they are well established or relatively new, either evolve or die [...] professional fields cannot work in isolation but rather must ally themselves with the rest of society.”

One of the main challenges seems to be the very question of professionalisation of the museum and heritage sector, which SAMA has been unable to achieve to date. Upgrading from a trade to a profession, as discussed in chapter 2.3, requires not only a professional association or regulatory body such as SAMA, but it requires training opportunities to be established that will be recognised and accredited by the sector on a national level and accepted as desirable requirements for entry into the profession. Professionalisation and training are thus linked: to be successful and relevant, and an appropriate needs analysis must identify priorities within the sector and identify relevant stakeholders who will be willing to collaborate and assist. As Heritage and Golfomitsou (2015:S2–2) write, this process, much like any curriculum development, requires regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure that what is delivered still

aligns with the initial goals and targets reached. “Evaluation tools provide a structured way to identify needs and to measure results, offering a basis for learning and improvement.” (Heritage and Golfomtsou, 2015:2). The development of such job requirements and necessary training feature in the following chapter on curriculum.

## CHAPTER 4

### *Curriculum matters*

*My grandmother also made sure I was aware that traditions and ways of doing things varied with each tribal group. I was never to assume that everyone did things the way we Kiowa did. She always said to be respectful of other cultures when among them, and to observe their ways and to listen carefully when told how to conduct myself.*

(Thomas, 2004:7)

The preceding chapter provided a brief overview of the last 50 years of conservation practice and intermittent training in South Africa to provide contextualisation of the challenges and decisions taken when developing the programme for the University of Pretoria (the focus of chapter 5). Before embarking on the details related to the development of the curriculum of the master's in conservation, this chapter focuses on the concept of the curriculum. The chapter reviews what is understood by the term curriculum, the processes of curriculum construction, and the local particularities to be borne in mind in developing curricula in South Africa. The chapter also outlines whether the idea of the curriculum and curriculum construction pertinent to the discipline of conservation in so far as conservation navigates between the arts and the sciences, and its proposed placement within the arts and humanities at the University of Pretoria affect the way it is constructed and delivered. As most of the over 100 conservation training programmes worldwide are located in universities, the chapter further reviews how conservation training has its roots in restoration and apprenticeship-style training into a research-intensive academic discipline in its own right. Thereafter I focussed on the elements, ingredients, architecture and content in respect of the masters Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria.

#### **4.1. What is understood by Curriculum and curriculum development**

The word curriculum derives from the Latin word *currere*, which according to Egan (2003:9), means to run, and refers to a course, with a secondary meaning of “career”. Egan (ibid.) looks at the evolution of Cicero’s (Roman statesman, orator, lawyer, philosopher) use of the word from the race-course and running to intellectual pursuits, and then from reference to the temporal constraints within which things happen to reference to the things that happen

within the constraints, prefigures the general movement of the term through the ancient and modern world. The kind of questions one might ask about a race-course—How long is it? What obstacles are there? - extend easily to the kind of questions one might ask about an intellectual curriculum - How long is it? What kinds of things does it contain?

But, also, what are the end goals? And how can these be achieved? According to Egan, this focus on curriculum as the duration of study remained largely stable and consistent for two millennia, until the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the notions of ‘curriculum’ denoting the length of study were primarily replaced by notions of “curriculum” as method and content (Egan, 2003:11). Egan goes on to suggest that the main reason for this change was the need to address the question of *what* should be taught, as with the rapid change of technological, intellectual, aesthetic and political revolutions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the way people lived and thought was affected, and the type of knowledge required to navigate this new and changing world needed to be different. In addition, Egan suggests this shift was a direct consequence of looking at another curriculum question, namely *how* things should be taught, itself a product of experiments in teaching people with physical, emotional and learning disabilities to integrate them into society (Egan, 2003:12-14).

As Lau (2001:31) describes, “the terms ‘curriculum’ and ‘curriculum development’ are problematic themselves as they imply two well-defined stages – the stage of development and the stage where the curriculum is completed. In fact, there is no line separating the two. Curriculum development is not a process that stops before going into classrooms, and curriculum is not a package that stops developing in the classrooms. It is a continuous process of constructing and modifying.” Implementation of the curriculum requires review and reflection, adaptation and modification to keep the curriculum in pace with developments in the field and state-of-the-art innovations. This is not unlike the conservation process itself, which often requires a planned course of action to be monitored, sometimes halted, its effects evaluated and, if need be adapted depending on the reaction of the object(s) to the selected course of treatment. The particularities of developing the proposed curriculum in Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria will be explored more extensively in Chapter 5, whilst the following paragraphs will attempt to understand the concept of curriculum in greater depth. In Europe, curriculum building/design for conservation courses goes hand in hand with competencies expected on graduation linked to entry-level requirements for the field as defined by the profession. Enforcing the evaluation of these requirements is the task of the



individual course and receiving scrutiny by The European Network for Conservation-Restoration Education (ENCoRE), a central organisation that monitors these courses and enforces standards (ENCoRE, 2001; ENCoRE, 2014; Corr, 2018).

In the 1970s, Bernstein (1975:85) referred to the curriculum as “what counts as valid knowledge”, and Richmond (1971:87) stated that curriculum is a ‘slippery’ concept and there are many competing definitions of ‘curriculum’ as conceptualised across contexts and disciplines (Pinar et al., 1995; Fraser & Bosanquet, 2006; Lattuca & Starck, 2009; Booysen, 2016). There is often confusion between a syllabus and curriculum, and while the two are interrelated, it can be said that the former is much broader while the latter seems to be more narrowly linked to planned content (see Flinders & Thornton; 2012). A curriculum may also be broadly defined as “a set of purposeful, intended experiences” (Knight, 2001: 369), suggesting that teaching and learning are integral to the value of a curriculum. The curriculum framework can be seen as a combination of instructional practices, learning experiences, and students’ performance assessments designed to bring out and evaluate the target learning outcomes as set out in the guidelines of a particular course. A curriculum achieves this by providing a roadmap that guides educators in what courses are to be taught, what is the content required in a given area of study, and what the students are expected to have learnt “The desired outcome of the curriculum is thus the successful transfer and/or development of knowledge, skills and attitudes” (University of Delaware, 2020).

This roadmap is only one aspect of the curriculum process, namely the planning stage. The curriculum process contains the intended (planned) curriculum, the implemented (enacted) curriculum and the attained (experienced) curriculum (Marsh & Willis, 2007; Glatthorn, Boschee, Whitehead and Boschee, 2019:5). The planned or intended curriculum refers to the written curriculum as it is conceived, and this is the vision, the overview of what should be taught and included, as well as the rationale for decision-making during the curriculum design phase (Goodlad 1979; Saylor et al. 1981; Marsh & Willis 2007). Posner (2004) refers to the intended curriculum as the ‘official’ curriculum (Mucavele, 2008:27). These aspects of the curriculum are developed, curated, and influenced by various people, including the government, publishers, parents, academic scholars, and students. Each exerts a different influence and power in the process (Lau, 2001). These power dynamics are uneven as some actors exert more influence than others. Lau (2001:29) thus correctly motivates that

“curriculum is the manifestation of power distribution in society” and that a dominant group can use this power to “shape its notions into mainstream trends”, which is why Bernstein (1975:85) argued that “the stakes are high in the struggle over the selection, organisation and assessment of what a society counts as valid knowledge. This is because what knowledge is selected, how it is taught and how it is evaluated in schools goes to the very heart of issues of individual and social identity”, and more importantly, “what we know affects who we are (or are perceived to be)” (Moore, 2007: 3). Thus, the curriculum can be regarded as a framework that sets standards in teaching practice, allowing for exchange and accreditation between different institutions teaching the same material or subject. This setting of ‘standards’ is contingent on choices being made and those who make these choices and decide what is to be taught, how teaching and learning are carried out and evaluated, and the power to reproduce and maintain a certain status quo. As such, Apple (2004:vii) asserts that the educational arena must be viewed as a site of contestation and conflict and “Any analysis of the ways in which unequal power is reproduced and contested in society must deal with education. Educational institutions provide one of the major mechanisms through which power is maintained and challenged.” Scholarship addressing the concept of the curriculum has increasingly focused on the problematics of what is selected as valuable knowledge, how this knowledge is transferred and who makes these decisions. This type of questioning inevitably leads to particular types of discussions around knowledge, teaching, learning and assessment, the curriculum and curriculum (re)development (Atweh & Singh, 2011: 189) and are at the core of contemporary curriculum debates on transformation, decolonisation and decoloniality, which will be discussed further in this chapter.

It is, however, not only the intended curriculum, which is questioned in the curriculum transformation and decolonisation debates. The manner in which the planned or ‘formal’ curriculum is translated into practice and how it is received, perceived and responds, forms part of the ‘implemented curriculum’ phase of the curriculum planning process (Marsh & Willis, 2007; van den Akker et al., 2003; Saylor et al. 1981), and is also questioned, as is the attained curriculum. The attained curriculum comprises both experiential and learned curriculum, the former referring to the knowledge or skills gained as a result of learning experiences, and the latter are the skills, knowledge and competencies that have been acquired as a direct result of the teaching and learning process (Wren & Wren, 2009).

## 4.2. The hidden curriculum, change, (re)development and transformation

In summary, the curriculum can be seen as the “total stuff” that students take away (Lau, 2001:31) and includes both written and unwritten aspects, overt and covert knowledge, formal and non-formal teaching, hard and soft skills. Because the curriculum can also be seen as the delivery component of an institution’s educational mission, values, and learning theory (University of Delaware, 2020:[sp]), the curriculum is at every level influenced by the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum refers to influences functioning at the level of organisational structure and culture and is found in the spaces, symbols, insignia and narratives that constitute the university, as well as embedded practices, norms and values that constitute the university and in the diversity, or lack thereof, of staff and student cohorts (Lynch, 1989; Margolis, 2001). The landscape and spaces within it adorned with symbols and insignia (sculptures, names of buildings and venues) thus perpetuate the omnipresence of a particular culture and its authorised narrative when the intangible aspects of this culture are perceived as dominant, discriminatory and offensive, the presence of its physical markers become sites of contestation. This influence is pervasive and can act subconsciously; it goes on simply by the presence of staff and students living in and coping with the institutional expectations and routines for several years (Apple, 2004:13). Thus, the hidden curriculum can be seen as part of the socialisation process (Kentli, 2009:83). Henderson and Kesson (2004: 206–207) concur:

What we teach our children embodies what we most value in our society. The curriculum, in all its complexity, is the culture. Embedded in it are our values, beliefs about human nature, visions of the good life, and our hopes for the future. It represents the truths that we have identified as valued and worth passing on.

Learners are thus ‘initiated’ into a particular way of making sense of the world and the “norms, knowledge, and skills that society requires for its continuance” (Egan, 2003:9). For most societies, “this ‘curriculum’ of initiation is not questioned and is frequently enshrined in myths, rituals, and immemorial practices, which have absolute authority” (Egan, 2003:9). Although the notion of a ‘hidden curriculum’ has been researched since the 1960s and 70s with a focus on how students experience this ‘unwritten curriculum’ (see Dreeben (1967), Jackson (1968), Vallance (1973), Lynch (1989), Margolis (2001) and Giroux (2001) as outlined in Kentli 2009:83). Research into aspects of this hidden curriculum has grown tremendously over the last decade with the realization that many curricula require ‘transformation’ from essentially western focussed and dominant ‘authoritarian’ discourses in the planned curriculum, mirrored

in practice in the implemented and attained curriculum (Glatthorn, Boschee, Whitehead and Boschee, 2019:1).

Curriculum transformation entails both ‘decolonisation’<sup>117</sup> and ‘democratisation’<sup>118</sup> of the curriculum, and while curricula changes were effected in South Africa post-1994, the 2015 student protests and calls for transformation revealed that more needs to be done locally and nationally, as foregrounded by the UP Curriculum Transformation Workstream (2016) who explain that transformation should be viewed “as moving from one configuration to another, characterised by on-going rethinking and renewal in the pursuit of social and environmental justice – not only in Higher Education but also in the country at large.”

The development of the Tangible Heritage Conservation programme was initiated at the same time as the South African student protests of 2015, which brought into public view and mainstream discussions several concerns and challenges with the South African higher education landscape (Habib, 2016; Pather, 2015). 2015 saw two waves of student protests. The first was initiated in March 2015 when politics student Chumani Maxwele emptied a bucket of faeces over the statue of British imperialist Cecil John Rhodes on the UCT campus, calling amongst other matters, for the ‘decolonisation’ of higher education and the removal of colonial symbols (UCT student Chumani Maxwele on why he threw faeces on Cecil John Rhodes's statue, 2020; RhodesMustFall, 2015). This sparked the #Rhodesmustfall movement at the University of Cape Town (Alfred, 2015; ANA 2015; Chifamba, 2015; Mbangeni & ANA, 20115; Smith, 2015)<sup>119</sup>, which quickly spread around South Africa’s universities (Sosibo, 2015:[sp])

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<sup>117</sup> Decolonisation referring to notions of restorative justice through cultural, psychological and economic freedom.

<sup>118</sup> Democratisation referring to equitable access.

<sup>119</sup> This act in turn engendered a number of attacks on other monuments across the country and even elicited a response from national government who appointed a task team to investigate the transformation of the South African heritage landscape to (McGinn & de Kamper, 2019:39). The report suggested thirteen action points to be carried out nationally as part of this audit of the heritage landscape to identify gaps in the narrative, including: condemning the vandalism and defacing of statues; resolution through integrated dialogue between all stakeholders; identification of ‘offensive’ persona that should not be displayed in public spaces; opt for the selective rather than blanket removal of these; and remove these within the boundaries of the law; introducing counter narratives and counter memorials where possible; recontextualising and disinvesting colonial and apartheid memorials; re-interpretation and re-dedication; informed selection of new memorials and statues based on enduring values; shift how memorialisation occurs to a more symbolic memorialisation; introduce easy and cost-effective measures for implementation of transformation of the heritage landscape (Kubheka, 2016:2).

The second wave of student protests in the latter part of 2015 was in response to the annual tuition fee increases at universities and technikons, as higher education in South Africa depends on the payment of tuition fees as part of its funding model, includes government subsidies, student fees and private sources. Government funding is linked to and varies according to students' number and financial background (BBC, 2016). The proposed 10% to 12% fee increase across the board sparked demonstrations, beginning at Wits University in October 2015 (BBC, 2016). The students under the banner #FeesMustFall blocked access to the Wits University campus (Johannesburg). The protest started at the Wits campus, spread to UCT (Cape Town) and Rhodes (Grahamstown, Eastern Cape) before rapidly spreading to universities across South Africa. The 2015 protests ended on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015, when then-president Jacob Zuma announced a there would be no tuition-fee increases for the following year (2016); however, the protests quickly sparked again in 2016 with the announcement by the South African Minister of Higher Education announced that there would be fee increases capped at 8% for 2017 (BBC, 2016).

If access to university studies and the diversification of student profiles might have been an effect of the first two decades of democracy in South Africa, then recent developments indicate that there is now an urgent need to return to the idea and meaning of the curriculum within the larger project of epistemic decolonisation (Desai & Sanya, 2016; Morreira, 2017; Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Zondi, 2016; Sleeter, 2010). For these and other reasons, the 'decolonial turn' is a central construct to approach the curriculum transformation question at South African universities. Encompassed in these protests is a questioning of the content and form of curricula and knowledge production, which it is argued are not sufficiently centred within a local context, regional (African) context, and remains predominantly infused with Northern (and western-specific) worldviews (Alvares & Faruqi, 2012; Mamdani, 2016). This trend is not unique to South Africa, and a review of available literature suggests that 'significant reform processes in higher education are underway in both developed and developing countries due to new trends in the world economy and recent socio-economic and political pressures' (Adam, 2009:10). This thesis engages aspects of the debates and discussions centred on curriculum transformation (Biggs, 2007; Bridges, 2000; Clegg, 2016; Ebewo & Sirayi, 2018; Hordern, 2016; Lambert et al., 2007; Luckett & Shay, 2017; Luo, 2011; Maila, 2010; Millar, 2016; Parker, 2003; Roberts, 2015; Siddiqui, 2016; Shay, 2013 & 2015; Wang, 2014 & 2015) broadly, and what this means in practical terms, as the outcome of the research involves the construction of a new curriculum that is conservation centred (see Sully, 2016 & Onciul, 2017).

Transformation is about situated, grounded knowledge aligned to context and history and is particularly apt in conservation when considering the approach to cultural objects outside one's own culture. Should non-western objects be treated with the same intent as objects deriving from western artistic practice, and should there be a different approach for non-western objects in western collections? Conversely, as Kate Seymour explains (personal communication, 2020), objects of western artistic practice present in Asian collections are rarely treated by western conservators, as in Goa, where Christian objects are treated by Hindu's who repaint Christian deities in non-iconographical colour schemes (Teves Reis and Teves Reis, 2008).

The critical literature relevant to the humanities confirms that curriculum change is essential to the learning project (*cf.* Blackmore & Kandiko, 2012, who examine strategic curriculum change in a study of change activities within a group of research-based universities). Curriculum and curriculum reform are practices that appear to be positioned in the field of re-contextualisation – the site where knowledge from many different production sites is selected, rearranged, and transformed in the curriculum. In this sense, much of the rationale underpinning the need for transformation considers changing contexts, varied development needs and shifting national priorities within South Africa. Bernstein (2000: 62) labels this field as an “arena of conflict and struggle for dominance” and will need to be considered in any new curriculum development process. In its response to the need for change and transformation, the University of Pretoria has identified four drivers of curriculum transformation, namely: responsiveness to social context; epistemological diversity, renewal of pedagogy and classroom practices; and institutional culture of openness and critical reflection (UP Curriculum Transformation Workstream, 2016:2). These four areas in part shape the design, development, implementation and practice of the Tangible Heritage Conservation curriculum and will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.

In the contemporary university landscape, various scholars have attempted to clarify what is meant by ‘transformation’ (Amuwo, 2004; Moja, 2008; Sousa, 2011; Higgs, 2016; Ebewo & Sirayi, 2018), ‘decolonisation’ (Sleeter, 2010; Mbembe, 2016; Mathews, 2018; Kumalo and Praeg, 2019;) and ‘decoloniality’ (Desai & Sanya, 2016; Morreira, 2017), how these should be understood in the context of higher education, and how this should be put into practice. Kumalo and Praeg (2019:1) suggest that decolonisation has been an easy term to define “owing to the impetus for freedom and liberation of colonised and Indigenous subjects (e.g. Fanon [1963]/2004; Sartre 1964), the term ‘decoloniality’ is more elusive.” Decolonisation in South

Africa refers to an interrogation of how local institutions of higher learning are still ‘Westernised’ in a post-colonial and post-apartheid context. Mbembe (2015:9) describes these Westernised institutions as “aspiring to become local instantiations of a dominant academic model based on a Eurocentric epistemic canon [...] a canon that attributes truth only to the Western way of knowledge production. It is a canon that disregards other epistemic traditions.” Brayboy (2006:430) describes how “European American thought, knowledge, and power structures dominate present society.” Decolonisation is highly politicised and is essentially ontological, dealing with aspects of being and society. Whilst decoloniality is ‘nuanced, layered and a sliding signifier, which according to Reddy (2019: v) takes two forms, “the ‘epistemological’ case in which decolonisation is seen as constitutive of reorganising and rethinking knowledge; and the ‘historical’ case in which decolonisation is seen as playing an unprecedented role in reviewing and reconstituting social relations and identities in contemporary society.” In practice, this decolonial turn attempts to alter the traditionally Eurocentric or western canons present in curricula by “deliberately interrupting the usual hierarchy of knowledge” (Morreira, 2017:288). Morreira (2017:288) suggests this can be achieved through “teaching postcolonial theory; deconstructing dominant canons or worldviews; using African examples, texts and contexts; correspondent examples of theories from other parts of the so-called third world<sup>120</sup>; or a pedagogy that used African languages as learning resources.”

Generally, in the current networked world, global economies are replacing national ones, production-line workers are being replaced with highly skilled innovative workers, nation-states are inextricably linked to global political frameworks, and societies are networked through technologies, and through social media platforms, people have multiples identities (Adam, 2009:15). These changes, catalysed by rapid technological changes, have enormous implications for knowledge conception and production (Castells 2001a in Adam 2009:15),

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<sup>120</sup> The phrase ‘Third World’ was coined during the Cold War, a period of geopolitical tension between the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as their respective allies (1985-1991). The world’s nations were broadly categorised into three groups (first, second and third world) based on political and economic divisions. Use of the term has been discontinued as it is now widely accepted to be both outdated and derogatory as many of the so-called third world countries were former colonies who having gained independence, were faced with the challenges of nation-building on their own for the first time. The phrase has been replaced by the terms ‘developing nation’, ‘under developed country’, ‘middle income’ or ‘low income country’. South Africa is seen as both a ‘developing nation’ and ‘developed country’ depending on the criteria used which include the state of economic growth, industry and manufacturing, abundance of goods and natural resources as well as poverty and unemployment amongst others .



which results in significant pressures on universities to transform following market and societal needs (Adam, 2009:15).

In this context, there is an appreciation for the pluralistic nature of global societies with many different cultural influences and the need to recognise each of these as unique. Despite this recognition, the power dynamics and imbalances continue to be entrenched worldwide, and many have argued that an imbalance in the education system perpetuates these. It is argued that schools and institutions of higher learning are “sites that reproduce social class, race, and gender inequality. Critical education theorists suggest that educational institutions foster social inequality by serving as conduits for societal privilege and disadvantage” (Hill Collins, 1991:367). Because of globalisation pressures and neo-liberalism, questions of transformation are not exclusive nor unique to South Africa, and there is a general agreement that most nations are going through a process of transformation, strongly affected by global trends and pressures (Alcántara et al., 2013). Despite global pressures leading to similarities across the world, South African higher education changes are also a product of both local and national particularities. Adam (2009) acknowledges that it can prove challenging to identify and separate between global and national economic and social imperatives and that in some cases, both are served, for example, massification and access to higher education, which is both a global phenomenon and a national imperative (Adam, 2009:10).

Much has been written over the last decade on the transformation of higher education in South Africa. A brief survey of the available literature suggests many issues for redress are included in these local demands for transformation, including language policies (Luckett, 2016); increasing physical and epistemic access to higher education (Luckett & Shay, 2017), and increased diversity and inclusivity in both the academic staff and student cohort to lead to diversification of the workforce (Crawley & Crawley, 2009). Lastly, transformation also includes calls for decolonisation and shifting curricula focus from its current mostly western canons to one embedded within the local context and filled with local content, recognising that indigenous knowledge systems value and contribute to learning (Prinsloo, 2010:19). However, it seems that implementation is complicated by a lack of understanding of achieving these goals practically. Few opportunities exist for academics to teach one’s discipline from a multi-cultural perspective (Clark 2002:37).

These questions of the origin of knowledge, whose knowledge is of value, and how it can be transmitted, are relevant in developing the proposed programme in Tangible Heritage

Conservation as any new curriculum development can be seen as transformation in action. Additionally, interrogations on the origins of knowledge and how its (re)presentation shapes identity and memory-making are particularly relevant in the field of heritage and museum studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as museums are seen as the “quintessential inventions of the modern era [...] and a public site of authoritative articulation, inscribing in its visitors the Eurocentric hierarchies of race, class, and gender and the ideological formations required for the social and political reproduction of imperial nations” (Coombes & Phillips, 2020:25), and aim to transform in a postcolonial and global era. Conservation, as mandated with the long term preservation of cultural artefacts and their associated narratives and values, can thus be considered a political endeavour, allowing some narratives and voices to be more visible than others. Beyond this, conservation is not an event but a process directed toward change, improvement, and preservation. It implies that it is shaped by elements that give meaning to transformation: alteration, renovation, and makeover. The broader field of conservation is itself in the process of transformation, to be more inclusive in its acceptance of what constitutes heritage, what has value and to whom; diverse in terms of its approach, understanding and practice, as well as its practitioners (Bloomfield, 2013; Balachandran, 2016; Cummings, 2020; Pearlstein & Martinez Garcia, 2020); and the entire field is shifting from its European origins as a discipline focusing on the object and the impartiality of science to a people and values-based approach with an emphasis on diversity, equity, participation, inclusion and shared decision-making as described in Chapter 2. The present study can thus contribute to the South African academic and epistemic project, as the field of conservation is multi-disciplinary, deals with a plurality of material culture (see Bennett, 2004; Sleeper-Smith, 2009; Mawere, Thondhlana & Chiwaura, 2015), and is Southern-focused to develop knowledge and theory of, and from, the global south (see Comaroff and Comaroff, 2011; Connell, 2007). As Mariët Westermann in her closing comments of the Art Conservation Workshop, University of Pretoria 2015, states so eloquently, “without a thoughtfully preserved artefactual record, a society cannot engage in the review and digestion of its histories, and loses a vital resource for the equitable and imaginative shaping of its futures” (Westermann, 2015:6).

### **4.3. Building blocks for curriculum construction in the Humanities**

According to Bernstein (1999), as cited in Morreira (2017:291), knowledge in higher education depends on its positioning within the natural or social sciences or the humanities. As Bernstein explains, the natural sciences consist of a hierarchy of knowledge,

which is cumulative in nature. Knowledge is focussed on an object of enquiry and what is known about that object. In the Humanities, on the other hand, knowledge is segmented

and the capacities and dispositions of the knower are central to the way a hierarchy of knowledge is created”, it is not cumulative. In the Humanities, emphasis is on the social domain and the “relationship between the knower (the subject) and knowledge Morreira (2017:291).

Interestingly, Bernstein notes that

the social sciences lie somewhere between these two ends of the continuum – they are both social (subject–knowledge relationships) and science (object–knowledge relationships). While in the natural sciences the social position of the scientist is (supposedly) irrelevant to the possibility of scientific insight, in the humanities the ideal knower is always constructed socially. We aim to inculcate our students into the discipline, such that they ‘become’ anthropologists or philosophers – rather than they become people with knowledge of anthropology or philosophy. The humanities then are concerned with identity as well as knowledge. In this context, the issue of what history lies behind the ‘ideal knower’ that we attempt to inculcate becomes central. If our ideal disciplinary knowers spring from a Eurocentric tradition, then the process of inculcation into disciplines could be understood as a colonizing one” (Morreira 2017:291).

As indicated previously (see chapter 2.5), conservation is a discipline and overarching field that looks at preserving cultural heritage and sits at the intersection between the arts and the sciences. At this point, it is essential to highlight that conservation should not be confused with conservation science, as the ultimate goal of a conservator is to treat objects. A conservation scientist operates in the scientific domain, usually having both a science as well as a conservation degree, and having a deep understanding of various scientific domains as well as the knowledge to carry out scientific investigations and analyses; a conservator, however, may not necessarily treat objects themselves (Golfomitsou, 2015:41). Golfomitsou (2015:42), recapping the results of ICCROM surveys in 2013, highlights the need for overlap in training for conservators and conservation scientists to ensure effective interdisciplinary collaboration: “Scientists [need] to be educated in conservation ethics and principles. Similarly,

conservation training also needs to focus on improving science literacy, and in particular the application of scientific principles and methods to conservation.” This idea of increasing both literacy levels and collaboration is exemplified in the emergence of various “Chemistry in Art” courses. Uffelman (2011:1-2) describes how these can vary from broad survey undergraduate courses aimed at non-science majors with, or without lab components; analytical chemistry courses for chemistry majors with lab work; special topic courses for both science and non-science majors with or without lab components; and study abroad courses on particular topics. The courses focus on key ideas of physics and chemistry, including an understanding of materials, reactivity, light, optics and colour. The core principles, as Uffelman (2011:2), describes is to introduce scientific concepts to a diverse cohort of students as “art and cultural heritage provide unique opportunities to engage students in science who might not otherwise study it; art and cultural heritage is significantly enriched by scientific knowledge.”

Conservators work with objects and works of art; they work in studios or laboratories<sup>121</sup>, and their method is a scientific one<sup>122</sup>, relying on the knowledge of what is termed technical art history, which focuses on material science and making use of various analytical techniques to answer their research questions as to *who* made the object, *how* did they make it, is it in a stable condition and *why* is it decaying. Henderson (2010:8) points out that limiting the role of science in conservation to these questions of materiality of objects and treatment is an ‘oversimplification’ of science’s role in conservation and that science’s most significant contribution is in its approach to problem-solving and data handling. Henderson (2010) further explains that this approach includes the formal collection of data rigorously; evaluating the quality of data and source of data if published; consistency in descriptions and procedures; correct interpretation of the data in a rigorous manner; understanding that data has its

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<sup>121</sup> Here again there is some difference in appellation and language use between the terms ‘studio’ and ‘laboratory’ to denote different working environments. This links up again to the placing of conservation at the nexus of the arts and the sciences and as a European colleague described “the use of the term ‘laboratory’ could be seen as a not so subtle manner of ‘scientificizing’ the historically artistic craft practices of conservation that has progressed to an academic level” (personal communication, 2020). The term ‘studio’ tends to be preferred by practitioners in Europe, whilst the use of the term ‘laboratory’ is used only to denote the science laboratories and research laboratories where analytical research is carried out.

<sup>122</sup> Although scientists debate the existence of a ‘scientific method’ (see Gauch Jr, 2002), there are some common ‘basic principles’ that can be applied to all scientific disciplines which are not so much a fixed sequence of steps, but rather competencies in hypothesis formulation and testing, understanding deductive and inductive logic, the carrying out of controlled experimentation with replication and repeatability in mind, interactions between the data and theory and understanding the limits to science’s domain (Gauch Jr, 2002:11). The scientific approach also makes use of a variety of scientific and analytical equipment to quantify variables under research.

limitations; and responding to the collected data in a meaningful way even if this means deviation from the original course of action.

The role of science in conservation is in assisting in understanding materials at play, both within the object's construction and those conservation materials added to the object during treatment, their potential for interaction, and the consequences of those interactions. However, it is crucial to keep in mind that analytical results are dependent on certain critical choices such as what is to be the focus of the research and at which phase, pre, during, or post-treatment is the best time to carry out that particular analysis to obtain a maximum of information. These critical choices will influence the results obtained; for example, infrared (IR) reflectography performed on the first examination of a painting will focus on the condition and deterioration of the object, whilst the same technique applied after cleaning and stabilisation treatments will be aimed at understanding the artist's technique (Varoli-Piazza et al., 2011:2). In addition to answering questions of materiality, additional questions on context such as *where* is this object located, and requirements for treatment such as *how* should the object look, and ultimately questions of future use are what guides the conservator in selecting the most appropriate materials and techniques to achieve the desired outcome for that particular object.

As conservation borrows from the sciences to support the conservation of art, the placement of training within the arts or the sciences was one of the leading debates during the establishment of formal academic training schools (A'Bear et al. 2017; Brokerhof, 2015; Campbell et al., 2008; Erez, 2001) and there is still no consensus today with some conservation programmes placed within the arts faculties, and others aligned to the sciences. In Austria, for example, there are two different courses available, through either the Institute of Conservation at the University of Applied Sciences or the Academy of Fine Arts (see Institute of Conservation, 2020; and Conservation and Restoration, 2020 respectively), with a greater or lesser focus on the science of conservation. The importance accorded to science within conservation usually depends on the research interest of staff and the institution and the financial resources available to procure the analytical equipment. At the University of Pretoria, the Master's in Tangible Heritage Conservation is aligned to the Humanities and located in the School of the Arts; however, as discussed above, science has a prominent role in teaching and practising conservation. Although the degree at the University of Pretoria is not a conservation science degree, the degree is grounded in the basic understanding of scientific principles, research

approach, and design follow a scientific approach, analytical techniques are taught and practised as conservation remains an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary field.

#### **4.4. Planning and designing the intended curriculum**

Although the curriculum has implicit (hidden) components and an explicit or official curriculum, my engagement focuses on the latter. There are differing philosophies in the approach to curriculum development. According to Du Preez & Simmonds (2014:4-5), Tyler (2013:61) views curriculum development as a technical production procedure and focuses on technical questions that approach curriculum development as objective, scientific, and driven rational decision making. Stenhouse (2012), on the other hand, views curriculum development as a socially constructed process where teachers are involved in the development process influenced more by context than pre-determined objectives; whilst for Freire (1970), curriculum development involves critical reflection, problem posing and dialogue which address social, economic and/or political issues. Du Preez and Simmonds (2014) further note that “these different approaches to curriculum development further accentuate that curriculum development presupposes curriculum change.”

Curriculum planning, as mentioned earlier, provides a roadmap for curriculum development, and irrespective of the theoretical approach, there are several steps in the curriculum planning process, including:

- Defining the purpose of the course, its rationale
- Defining the course objectives, namely what are the behaviours, actions, values and skills the course hopes to instil in students
- What is the body of knowledge and skills students should know when they complete the course
- What are the situational constraints which could influence the course structure and delivery
- Course logistics include where the course will be located, the duration of the course, credits, notional hours
- The syllabus includes what will be taught and in what order
- Selection of teaching material (books, articles etc.)
- Entry requirements
- Ongoing assessments to measure student progress

- Exit assessment for graduation purposes
- Course evaluation looks at determining the effectiveness of the course by looking at both students' and lecturers' experiences.

As can be seen above, curriculum development is a complex and dynamic process characterised by different phases, including a development phase (purpose, objectives, content, context, logistics, syllabus, teaching materials and staff), carried out by curriculum designers at various levels, dissemination and implementation of the curriculum, and finally, evaluation of the course (done through assessment of student progress, exit assessments, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the course) carried out by practitioners (Mostert, 1986 as quoted in Bhusal, 2015:9).

The design of teaching and learning strategies should ideally be based on learning theories, as these “provide the frameworks that are in turn used to process and retain knowledge and skills. Theories provide a basis to understand how people learn, how they acquire, organize and deploy skills and knowledge. Learning theories are a way to explain, describe, analyse and predict learning, which can assist decision-making in the design, development and delivery of learning” (15 Learning Theories in Education (A Complete Summary), 2020). There are up to 15 different learning theories, classified in different ways by different authors. However, the three fundamental theories include behaviourism, cognitivism, and constructivism.

Behaviourist learning strategies originated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and were based on studies of the learning abilities of animals. John B. Watson (1878–1958) and B. F. Skinner (1904–1990) are the two principal originators of behaviourist approaches, but the most well-known is Ivan Pavlov (1849–1936), who was studying dogs and noticed that when he repeatedly rang a bell to call the dogs to eat, he could after some time ring the bell and elicit a salivating response from the dogs who had associated the bell with food, in what is termed classical conditioning (Zhou & Brown, 2017:6–7). Behaviourism suggests that learning consists of passive, largely mechanical responses to environmental stimuli achieved through trial-and-error, practice and rote repetition. Ideas could become connected through associative experiences, assuming that the more frequently a particular association is encountered, the stronger the associative bond becomes. In other words, a particular stimulus will engender a predictable response, as with Pavlov's dogs. Also, systems of reward and punishments for good and bad behaviour allowed for behaviour modification. Although behavioural studies in animals were found not to explain the complex ways people learn, behaviourist theories have



made valid contributions in behaviour modification, classroom management, and instruction management (Anon., 2021).

However, behavioural theory and methods have limitations in understanding the complex ways people learn, and psychologists became increasingly frustrated with these limitations. Linguistic studies showed a different learning method was at play; in addition, advancements in technology and computers provided a credible metaphor for human information processing and an effective tool for modelling and exploring human cognitive processes. The basis of cognitive theory is that the human mind processes information in a similar manner to a computer, in that information from the environment is drawn in, processed and stored in memory, with learned capabilities as output. According to Jean Piaget (1952, 1969, 1971), a psychologist in child development, the 'learner' is not passive in the learning process, and the human mind does not simply react to environmental stimuli. Piaget's work focused on how we acquire knowledge and understand the nature of intelligence. Rather than seeing children as mini-adults, Piaget's work demonstrated that children acquire and process knowledge differently. Cognitive theories try to understand how this internal processing and retrieval work; in short, cognitivism tries to understand the mechanics of learning, bearing in mind that the learner is an active participant in the learning process.

Piaget was also a pioneer of constructivist learning theories. There is no single constructivist theory, and current conceptualisations of constructivist learning focus on one of two research areas, either individual development or social lines of research (Piaget, 1952, 1969, 1971; Bruner, 1964, 1966a, 1966b; Vygotsky, 1962, 1978). In the first, the focus is on the individual and how knowledge of the world is constructed based on the individual's interactions between their own ideas and experiences, making the learning experience unique to each learner. In the second, the focus is on the group as constructivists recognise that learning is a collaborative process and is most successful when working with others, particularly if the level of proficiency exceeds that of the learner, allowing the learner to complete tasks they would otherwise not be able to do independently. Constructivist learning theories relate to the individual working off a prior knowledge base and constructing new knowledge independently; misconceptions can occur, and outcomes are difficult to anticipate. Cognitivists emphasise the importance of assessing the learner's cognitive process and not just the result or knowledge construct (Duc, 2012:19). Cunningham (1992) argued that although relevant, traditional tests are not sufficient, and portfolios, self-reflective journals, student interviews and discussion, student participation

in class discussions, student moderation of online discussions, peer evaluation, problem-based learning, research projects, and group collaborations as part of the continuous assessment can all give insight into the student's thinking and learning process, which are all examples of constructivist learning activities (Duc, 2012:19).

Learning theories and concepts can be used alone or in combination, however in general, “educators draw from a variety of learning theories for the teaching strategies that are appropriate for a particular course, learner, and content” (Saylor, 2014:65). Saylor (ibid.) continues by stating that

[r]ewards and reinforcement (behaviourism), role modelling (social cognitive), organisation of content (cognitivism), the unique perspective of the learner (constructivism), and positive regard for students (humanism) all have important benefits. An educator can use strategies from several theoretical models at the same time [...] as the boundaries between theoretical paradigms are somewhat artificial

These learning theories are supplemented by an understanding of learning processes and how people assimilate knowledge and skills. Just as there are different categories of knowledge, and how knowledge is segmented and assimilated, either through horizontal or vertical discourses, with strong or weak grammar (Bernstein, 199), how we teach can also be classified according to the desired objectives we want students to attain. Bloom's taxonomy is the most widely used system for classifying educational learning and was initially designed to improve the communication between educators on curricula and assessments. Bloom's Taxonomy is a multi-tiered hierarchical model of classifying thinking according to six cognitive levels of increasing complexity: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Orey, 2010:42).

Another point to keep in mind are the differences in learning between children and adult learners. Adults are not content centred, adult learners do best when they have the opportunity to apply their experiences and knowledge to solve problems, and according to Candela (2012), they assimilate and retain content better if course material appears relevant and essential to them (Keating, 2014:76). This cognitivist approach is best suited to conservation curricula as content is best taught from multiple perspectives and, as Kala et al. (2010, mentioned in Keating, 2014:76) argues, “providing real-life problems in all their complexity and realism. Apprenticeships, in which learners work in authentic situations with experts, and problem-

based learning are two strategies supported by this approach, since they embrace complex situations, perhaps with more than one good approach.”

#### **4.5. Assessment and evaluation as part of curriculum development – assess, evaluate & improve**

According to Harlen (2016:693), ‘assessment’ refers to judgements about student learning and student performance, whilst ‘evaluation’ refers to judgements of programmes (schools, institutions) and organisational effectiveness (policies).

Assessment in the context of the development of the programme in Tangible Heritage Conservation is thus two-fold, first assessment within the curriculum to gauge student progress and the transfer of skills and knowledge; and secondly evaluation of the course and delivery itself to ensure that the aims of the intended curriculum have indeed been attained successfully (Pye and Ferguson, 2004:28). The latter can be connected to a system of accreditation.

In-course assessment of students can be described as a process in which inferences are drawn about “what students know or can do” (Harlen, 2016: 493) and can be achieved through formative and summative assessments. Summative assessments are typically the most visible and used to measure what students have learned during a particular study period. Summative assessment leads to the degree that the student attains – it is in essence not only the end evaluation of the curriculum to ensure degree requirements have been met, but also often leads to entry-level into a profession (OECD/CERI, 2008: 1). Summative assessments can take the form of final year projects, portfolio presentations and discussions, tests, examinations, theses or dissertations, among others. Summative assessments allow students to demonstrate competence in one or across several areas that have been studied, and the feedback is aimed at providing a summary of what they have and have not yet mastered, rather than providing guidance for further development and growth (UWC, 2020).

Assessment can also have a formative function, with frequent interactive assessments of student progress and understanding (OECD/CERI, 2008:2). Formative quizzes, research that is carried out incrementally with draft submissions that can be discussed and revised, short written or verbal tasks such as group discussions, brainstorming and problem-solving that receive feedback are examples of formative assessments. This allows students to make errors and get constructive, guiding feedback that can be used to develop competency and

understanding (UWC, 2020) and improve learning skills and abilities (OECD/CERI, 2008:2). Formative assessments emphasise the process of teaching and learning; involving students in that process builds skills for peer and self-assessment and helps students understand their own learning (OECD/CERI, 2008: 2).

These assessments should draw on both intellectual knowledge and practical skills that students have been exposed to and have practised in the class environment. Practical skills are essential if training conservation practitioners and bench skills require different assessment tools and teaching methodology (see chapter 4.9).

In addition, assessments should speak to the course outcomes listed in the course descriptors and yearbook. Feedback is an integral part of assessment. It allows both students and lecturers to better understand the students' strengths and weaknesses and which areas require additional focus for both individual students and across the cohort. As the programme in Tangible Heritage Conservation is a new academic programme with no precedent in South Africa, continuous assessments of the students will be vital in ensuring that the level of teaching is appropriate; and that the content is understood, assimilated and reflected upon, and that students grasp and understand the relevant knowledge and employ the related skills and practices to explore and demonstrate their knowledge (UWC, 2020). Continuous assessment will also highlight where content has not been understood or skills grasped, allowing teaching to be responsive, adaptable and flexible to ensure that more time and attention is given to those areas and students who require it. The envisaged small size of the cohort is beneficial in that although the programme is heavily loaded, it can be adjusted where required to allow for some repetition or change of pace to ensure all students grasp the required concepts, content and skills.

#### **4.6. Looking to the north: the establishment of formal academic curricula in heritage conservation**

As indicated earlier in this thesis, conservation is a practice carried out in several fields connected to heritage and can appear in the training of heritage practitioners, museologists, archivists, librarians, information specialists, archaeologists and architects. Subsequently, aspects of conservation or preservation tend to appear as a unit (lecture series, module, or semester) within those specific curricula. This study focuses instead on conservation education which is specifically intended to train conservator-restorers. Although conservation is a

relatively small and highly specialised field of study and practice, there are numerous training opportunities worldwide aimed explicitly at training conservators and conservation technicians, and over 150 have been identified globally (GCPCH, 2017:2, see Appendix 4). These include introductory summer schools, formal pre-programme opportunities, apprenticeship style training, and formal academic undergraduate training. The style and length of study vary from country to country and from institution to institution and has in part been ascribed to the different ways national education is organised throughout the world (Skaug, 1984:1). After the Bologna process, there is now consensus in Europe (except for the UK and the Netherlands) that conservation-restoration requires a minimum of five years of training at a University or equivalent (ECCO, 2003).

The terminal degree for conservation is generally worldwide accepted to be a master's degree, although a few PhD programmes in preventive conservation, conservation and built heritage preservation have been developed in the USA (University of Delaware, UCLA/Getty, Rutgers University, Columbia University), the UK (The Courtauld Institute, the University of Lincoln, University College of London, University of Durham, Cardiff University), Portugal (Nova School of Science and Technology), Italy (Politecnico Di Milano), Sweden (Gotheberg), Norway (University of Oslo), the Netherlands (University of Amsterdam), in Lebanon (Holy Spirit University of Kaslik), and China (Tsinghua University) to name a few (see Appendix 4 for a more complete list).

Academic training has only been around since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and as outlined in the introductory chapter of this study, the maintenance and repair of cultural material reaches far back into antiquity (Williams 1988; Buys and Oakley 1996; Pye, 2001: Dooijes, 2007; Garachon, 2010). The knowledge and skills required to maintain and repair cultural material were initially lodged with the skilled craftsmen, goldsmiths, blacksmiths and artists who created the objects, and it was not uncommon to return objects to their creators to have them repaired and restore functionality (Nkwi, 1996:103; Couvrat Desvergnés, 2020;[sp]; Speranza, 2008). The acquisition of craft skills was generally carried over from a young age and over several years through apprenticeships. Since the knowledge and skills involved in learning the tradition are tacit, these are taught through demonstration and imitation as on-the-job learning, generally in a close one-to-one relationship between student apprentice and master trainer. Learning is complete when the student produces the craft skills to the satisfaction of the master (Donkin, 2001:7). In conservation, knowledge and hand skills are equally important to carrying out treatments successfully. In some disciplines, functionality is paramount to

aesthetics and vice versa. A chair is intended to be sat on, a musical instrument to be played—a painting is only viewed.

This required an additional level of skills, and some craftsmen and artists distinguished themselves from others by focussing on restoration, which gradually became a trade of its own in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Heritage conservation evolved from these initial trade origins (Breuil & Verbeeck, 2014; Golfomitsu, 2015; Henderson, 2005 & 2016), where trade secrets were passed down and taught through apprenticeships as described above (Oddy, 1992; Clavir, 2002).

In Europe, the prevalent apprenticeship approach to restoration teaching and training carried on until the 19<sup>th</sup> century where the rapid industrialization of Europe, with its steam engines, gas lights, factories and public museums, brought a new threat to artworks, namely pollutants. These changes in the appearance of artworks on display, and following visitor complaints (Lambert, 2014:4), scientists were brought in to explain the changes which restorers could not (see chapter 2.1.2). The entrance of science and scientists in the museums brought about a certain rigour to artwork treatment through their systematic and scientific approach to understanding the object and its ailments (Groen, 2011:4). As such, apprenticeship training with its varying skill levels, often lacking in ethical grounding and inadequate understanding of the science at play was no longer deemed suitable by the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century (Groen, 2011:4; te Marvelde, 2015; Lambert, 2014). Increasingly scientific analysis was used to understand and learn more about the materials, techniques and chronology of the manufacture of cultural material, and by default, authorship and authentication. Where previously this understanding was the domain of the connoisseur through a “poetic feeling and history” (Hours, 1976:15) and thus the basis for art history and conservation, this expert knowledge became the domain of scientists and conservators increasingly (see Plesters, 1956), particularly after the Han van Meegeren trials mentioned previously (see Chapter 2.5.). Many notable scholars are linked to the development of conservation and ‘science in the service of the arts’ including Humphry Davy (1778–1829), Jean-Antoine Chaptal (1756–1832), Michel-Eugène Chevreul (1786–1889), Louis Pasteur (1822–1895), and of course Nicéphore Niepce (1765–1833) and Louis Daguerre’s (1787–1851) invention of photography, which made it possible to record and compare both visible and invisible aspects of a painting, but also monitor changes over time (Hours, 1976: 15). The holistic approach of conservation as seen today (see Hill Stoner, 2017; Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1972), not only seeks to treat and reverse damage but also attempts to prevent initial damage from occurring by minimising the effects of the environment, an approach progressively sought after from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

In addition, an increasing amount of material treated by restorers in the past was being brought in for conservation and retreatment, often presenting treatments that could not be reversed safely or with extensive damage brought on by past treatments (Leveau, 2014:4). It was felt that redressing these challenges could be resolved by establishing specialist conservation schools where conservation could be separated from art creation, and thus eliminate the notion that any artist could likewise restore (Leveau, 2014; Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1972: 18). Additionally, replacing apprenticeships with formal training centres allowed some measure of control over the content of what was taught and homogenising the training, skills, and philosophies of conservation as an independent discipline and profession (Leveau, 2014:9). As Tyler (2013: 62) comments on the general decline of apprenticeships at the onset of WWI, which required the rapid training of many people in skilled trades, the older and slower apprenticeship systems were no longer adequate. Similarly, the simultaneous training of several conservators would have helped to deal with the massive post-war reconstruction efforts in many parts of Europe. As highlighted by a colleague

WWII caused a shift and schism in Europe – east versus west which is still in place today with a more academic approach to training in UK/USA than eastern European. In Germany/Austria, students still have to do pre-training internships (now only one year) as the courses are 5–6 years starting at BA level. The training there is seen as one course even though some have a split/gap, and so award two degrees. Mediterranean countries, in particular Spain/Portugal, have two-level programmes—technical level (balance towards practice) and academic level at university (balance towards theory) (Seymour, 2020).

Despite research into the historical development of teaching and training in conservation being a growing field, there are limited sources, mainly concentrated on American programmes and Europe. In Europe, Leveau (2014) focuses on the critical developments between WWI and WWII and how these led to the transformation and professionalisation of conservation from trade to a potential profession in Europe, from 1929 to 2011. The prominent heritage conservation networks we recognise today, for example, UNESCO, ICOM, ICCROM, ICOMOS, and IIC, were all established under UNESCO after WWII and initially had their origins after WWI when the League of Nations (LoN) was established in 1920 (Plenderleith, 1998: 137; Leveau, 2014:). The League of Nations was the first worldwide intergovernmental organisation whose principal mission was to maintain world peace by preventing wars through disarmament and collective security policies and settling disputes through negotiation and



arbitration. The LoN also focused on applying human rights to all segments of the global population, from global health and labour rights to the rights and protection of minorities, indigenous communities, and prisoners of war and working collaboratively to eliminate human trafficking the drug and arms trade. In addition to working on these more extensive international peacekeeping efforts, the League also had smaller agencies premised on international collaboration. One of these was the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) which was established in 1922 to focus on intellectual life, including intellectual cooperation, the protection of intellectual property, inter-university cooperation, co-ordination of bibliographical work, information exchange and international cooperation in archaeological research (Northedge, 1986:187-189). By 1926 the League of Nations' ICIC established the International Museums Office (IMO) to unite museum institutions internationally. The following year, the Museum Office published the first edition of *Mouseion*, a journal published every trimester (see Caillot, 2011), as well as the monograph series *Muséographie* (Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, [sa]:1). It quickly became apparent that members of the IMO and beyond shared similar concerns about conservation and restoration (Suarez san Pablo, 2015:1).

By 1929, the internal debates and quibbles regarding restoration, which were raging between curators, conservators and restorers, came to the fore when the German Museum Council distributed questionnaires throughout its membership. The questionnaire focussed chiefly on ethics, the need and extent of cleaning, and the in-painting of cultural material. This initial survey leant weight to the idea that formal training was required to professionalise conservation practice, accredit graduates and eliminate problematic practitioners; however, there is no evidence this was actually put into practice (Leveau, 2014:4). Formal, academic training through specialist schools would allow for all graduates to have a similar understanding and respect for the conservation of art and cultural material to be conserved, the same ethical grounding and philosophical approach as well as a deeper understanding of science as applied in the arts (bearing in mind there was a definite hierarchy, with besides architecture, an emphasis on antiquities and the fine arts at least in the beginning). Although the results were brought to the IMO to initiate a similar survey within its members, criteria for evaluating conservation competencies and skill were still ill-defined, which delayed the promulgation of the survey. A few years later, this issue was resolved after the IMO organised perhaps the most

significant, if not the first<sup>123</sup>, international conferences on museological and conservation topics. The Conferenza internazionale per lo studio del metodi scientifici applicati all'esame e alla conservazione delle opere d'arte (International conference for the study of scientific methods applied to the examination and preservation of works of art) was held in Rome 13-17 October 1930 and focussed primarily on paintings (Cardinalli, 2017:225).

This was the first of many conferences organised by the IMO in the 1930s to which scientists, archaeologists, conservators, museum directors and scholars from all over the world (Caldararo, 1987:88) were invited, including the United States, South America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and on the African continent, including South Africa (IMO, 1930). However, only selected scholars presented, and although the proceedings have never been published, a small selection of the contributions appeared as separate articles in *Museion* (see Mairesse, 1998; Caldinalli, 2017). The Rome conference was followed in 1931 by the Athens conference, focusing on preserving monuments of art and history, and the Madrid Conference the following year was concerned with general museographic topics (ICIC, 1935:8).

Conservation, training and competencies were discussed at both the Rome (1930) and the Athens (1931) conferences. By 1932, a survey was circulated through the IMO to Museums that already had established laboratories. However, this was limited to the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Germany, Hungary, Egypt and Palestine (IMO, 1932; Leveau, 2014:6; Suarez san Pablo, 2015:6). The survey circulated to museum management and administrators (and a few conservators in museums) focussed on three aspects, namely, “the teaching practices of restoration, the relationship to scientific disciplines and lastly, on the recognition and protection of the title of restorer” (IOM, 1932; Leveau, 2014:6).

The most contentious issue in the 1930s and 40s (and later still, see Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1972; as well as Breuil & Verbeeck, 2014), concerned the academic location of future training. On the one side, the opinion was that if conservation was to separate itself from the tradition of the artist-restorer and become an independent discipline, then conservation should be taught in museum laboratories and not in fine art schools according to the Hungarian National Museum; whilst the Courtauld Institute insisted it be aligned to the discipline of Art

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<sup>123</sup> Caldararo (1987:86) notes that “communication between scholars and scientists on preservation problems were pioneered by Cardinal Ehrle, keeper of the Vatican Library and promoter of the International Conference of St. Gallo on preservation of archival materials in 1898.”

History (Leveau, 2014:7). The French National Conservatory for Arts and Crafts, in turn, insisted that if conservators were to control their trade, future training and restoration schools should be led by practitioners; whilst the British and Italian representatives reminded all that art historians could not teach and train conservators without the collaboration of practitioners, and they should be brought in to advise as these changes would impact on their work (Leveau, 2014:7). Additionally, the practice of the profession had to be regulated as there was no use in having academically trained conservators if there was no means in place to prevent self-taught practitioners from intervening on works, an issue still relevant today (see Castaldi, M., Aguilera Cueco, D., Hutchings, J. and ECCO, 2014; Bather, 1932). Finally, the importance of including conservation science was highlighted as an essential part of conservation training (Lambert, 2014; Breuil & Verbeek, 2014; Keeper of the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery, 1932).

Lastly, the idea that conservation should be tiered, with different levels of practitioners and associated competencies, emerged (Leveau, 2014:9). These recommendations now form a part of the ECCO framework; however, they were quite contentious in the 1930s as it meant sidelining certain practitioners and breaking with the earlier traditions of restoration, apprenticeships and guilds. The issue of accreditation and regulation is still as current in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as it was in the 1930s and is hotly debated, with calls for regulation of the profession escalating with every botched restoration attempt (Carrera-Ramirez, 2013:1; Jhala, 2020), whilst concerns are raised over the potential for ‘overregulation’ of the profession (Njolomole, 2020).

The IMO’s view was that separating the creation process from the conservation process would address two problems that museums were facing: any artist could restore works of art, which led to artwork being damaged by inappropriate treatments (see Artwatch, 2020). The second major challenge museums were facing was an increase in forgeries and issues of over-restoration, bringing the authenticity of an artwork into question. The IMO hoped that enforcing notions of minimum intervention, respect for the original, understanding the history and provenance of the object, coupled with a scientific examination, would equip conservators with the ability to diagnose original, degraded and later applied materials. The hope was that this would ensure a certain authenticity of artworks and that artworks were not entirely redone under the guise of restoration. The conservators’ abilities and understanding and the instruments and technology that allow this type of investigation are now much advanced and support the conservator’s work.

Lastly, the IMO, which was founded on international collaboration and information exchange principles, felt that the close-knit restoration community with its guilds and closely guarded trade secrets did not advance sharing of information and the scientific principles of collaboration (Cellerier, 1932; Leveau, 2014:11). However, it was not until 1938 that the IMO published guidelines on restoring paintings, including recommendations for establishing dedicated conservation schools, numerous institutes, and training centres (IMO, 1940).

Although Leveau (2014) notes that the United States was not involved in these discussions, George Stout attended the conference and the Fogg Art Museum (at Harvard), where he worked as a lecturer and conservator from 1929 and headed its conservation department from 1933-1947. The Fogg Museum was one of the first to have a laboratory in the museum and evolved into a teaching art museum under the guidance of Edward Waldo Forbes (its director from 1909–1944). Forbes' interests in technical analyses on artworks began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and he repeatedly emphasised the importance of training museum professionals to understand and care for the works in their collections. And to do so, he would advise that "a curator's guardianship calls for expert knowledge of physics and chemistry as they apply to his profession" (Lie, Bewer & Spunk, 1999:21; see also Brewer, 2010, and Brewer 2014). During the 1920s and 30s, Forbes led two courses on the *Methods and Processes of Painting* where students prepared pigments and grounds; as well as *Problems in Attribution in Light of Recent Developments in the Technical Study of Paintings*, this was about the technical examination and led ultimately to the discipline of Technical Art History.

By 1927 Forbes had initiated a formal programme for the regular cleaning and preservation of the museum's collections, and in the following year, he established an independent department for conservation research. As it was known, the Department for Technical Studies was instrumental in establishing conservation science as a new academic discipline in the United States. The journal *Technical Studies in the Field of the Fine Arts*, published between 1932 and 1942 and initiated by Forbes, provided an international platform for the publication of conservation and technical research in English (Lie, Bewer & Spunk, 1999:21). *Technical Studies* was continued as *Studies in Conservation* (first published in 1952) after the IIC was founded in 1950 and continues to be the leading conservation journal in the world (de Groen,

2011:7). Many of Forbes' students<sup>124</sup> who had been fascinated by his conservation and technical analysis of artworks went on to work in museums and developed what they had learnt under his guidance in their own institutions, thus assisting in growing the field in other parts of the USA.

In Europe, the earliest training course in conservation was in 1918, with the foundation of the Grabar All-Russian Restoration Center in Moscow (History - The Grabar Art Conservation Center, 2020). The first dedicated academic conservation programme was followed at the Courtauld Institute in London in 1934 (Courtauld Institute website, 2019). This was followed by the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Vienna<sup>125</sup> (Austria) in 1935 (Akademie der Bildenden Künste website, 2019), the founding of the *Staatliche Prüf- und Forschungsanstalt für Farbentechnik*<sup>126</sup> (the Doerner Institute) in 1937 (the Doerner Institute website, 2019), the Istituto Centrale per il Restauro<sup>127</sup> (ICR) in Rome in 1939 (ISCR website, 2019) to name a few. These initial programmes varied in the length of time necessary to complete the training and acquire the requisite skills and the type of outcome and qualification obtained. Despite a few private Institutions running programmes in conservation, by the early 1940s there were still unresolved challenges to the growth of conservation as an academic discipline; according to Leveau (2014:13) these included: still no clear separation between conservation and art production as distinct disciplines and conservation required teaching studios separate from art studios; coherent curricula with well-defined skills and knowledge centred on core concepts and outcomes had yet to be fully developed; retention of teaching staff that would adhere to

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<sup>124</sup> In a letter Forbes wrote to his associate Paul J. Sachs on September 29, 1941, he lists some of his notable assistants and students who took the Methods and Processes of Italian Painting (the "Egg and Plaster" course) including George L. Stout head of the Technical Department of the Fogg Museum, Daniel V. Thompson, Jr. assistant professor at Yale, professor at the Courtauld Institute, Murray Pease -- restorer at the Fogg Museum and Metropolitan Museum of Art (Bewer, 2010). Pease is particularly notable as a founding member of the International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic works, as well as the International Institute for Conservation, American Group. Murray Pease chaired the Committee on Professional Standards and Procedures that was tasked with "setting out the basic procedural requirements for the proper conduct of professional conservation in the USA" (Murray Pease Report, 1964) and became widely known as the Murray Pease Report, which lays the foundation for conservation ethical codes and guidelines for practice.

<sup>125</sup> Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Vienna, translated as the *Academy of Fine Arts*.

<sup>126</sup> Staatliche Prüf- und Forschungsanstalt für Farbentechnik in Munich, translated as the State Institute for Technical Tests and Research in the field of painting.

<sup>127</sup> Istituto Centrale di Restauro or *Central Institute of Restoration*, renamed the Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro, translated as the *High Institute for Conservation and Restoration*.

the principles of interdisciplinary collaboration and research who would break away from more traditional practice were few and far between; regulations had to be put into place to recognise conservation as a profession, protect the title of conservator and regulate practice by non-accredited practitioners; and finally it was suggested that these legislative requirements ultimately depended national organisation and enforcement in different countries signatory country (Leveau, 2014:13; Foundoukadis, 1932). As outlined in chapter 2, these points have systematically been addressed as part of the ongoing professionalisation of conservation over the last 50 years. Although the logical first step may be to agree on the definition of what it is that a conservator does, the definition of the conservator-restorer was only accepted in 1984, despite earlier charters and documents that set out guiding principles (Athens Charter, 1931, Athens Charter, 1933<sup>128</sup>; the Roerich Pact, 1935<sup>129</sup>; the Hague Convention, 1954<sup>130</sup>; the European Cultural Convention, 1954; the Venice Charter 1968<sup>131</sup>; the Florence Charter, 1981<sup>132</sup> amongst others).

The inter-war period between WWI and WWII saw the emigration of several art historians and restorers from Germany and Austria, including Dr Johannes Hell and Helmut Ruhemann, who both worked in the Conservation Department of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin, albeit at different times (Runeberg, 2005:341). Hell and Ruhemann, amongst others, worked for various institutions in London, including at the National Gallery<sup>133</sup>, the Courtauld Institute<sup>134</sup>, and the Dulwich Picture Gallery<sup>135</sup>. Hell and Ruhemann became internationally renowned

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<sup>128</sup> The Athens Charter of 1933 was a result of the IV International Congress of Modern Architecture focused on urbanism and the importance of planning in urban development schemes recommending the destruction of urban slums and creation of "verdant areas" in their place.

<sup>129</sup> The Roerich Pact or the *Protection of Artistic and Scientific Institutions and Historic Monuments*, 1935

<sup>130</sup> The Hague Convention or the *Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*, 1954.

<sup>131</sup> The Venice Charter or *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites*, 1964.

<sup>132</sup> The Florence Charter or *International Charter on the Preservation of Historic Gardens*, 1981.

<sup>133</sup> At the National Gallery, Ruhemann was in turn Freelance Restorer 1934, Consultant Restorer 1946, and Chief Restorer until 1972. Hell was Freelance Restorer at the Gallery from 1947-1950. Worked on the care of evacuated paintings 1939 Avening, later Bangor and Manod Quarry. Working for Tate Gallery and NG Collection. Worked as a Freelance Restorer, 1945–1970 for both the Tate Gallery in London, as well as the Royal Collection, as Restorer at the Glasgow Art Gallery 1942–1944 (Runeberg, 2005:341).

<sup>134</sup> From 1934 Ruhemann collaborated with the Courtauld Institute and became its Head of Department of Technology in 1946 (Runeberg, 2005:341).

<sup>135</sup> Hell was Freelance Restorer for the Dulwich Picture Gallery from 1945–1970 (Runeberg, 2005:341).



experts in both the technical examination and treatment of paintings, albeit with vastly different philosophies and approaches (Runeberg, 2005:341; Hill Stoner, 2000:20) as demonstrated by the official cleaning policies at the Dulwich Picture Gallery (Dr Johannes Hell), and the London National Gallery (Helmut Ruhemann) and ethical debates regarding the cleaning and removal of varnish layers and the restoration of paintings using of visible and neutral retouching or deceptive restorations. Ruhemann's innovative approach to treatment, including the complete removal of old varnish, and visible retouching in neutral colours, synthetic materials and the application of x-rays (Runeberg, 2005:344), stood in sharp contrast to Hell's rather traditional attitudes towards the examination and treatment of paintings. Hell's approach used aesthetic 'invisible' retouching methods to maintain the original aura (Runeberg, 2005:346). The debates between the Dulwich and National Gallery approach culminated in the post-war exhibition of a selection of both the Dulwich Gallery collection at the National Gallery in June 1947, followed two months later by the National Gallery's own 'Exhibition of Cleaned Pictures (1936–1946)'. The contrast in appearance was striking and led to claims of Ruhemann 'overcleaning' and thus destroying the Old Master Paintings Ruhemann's who had lost the patina of time, with Ruhemann responding that partial removal of the old yellowed and degraded varnish would over time cause further uneven degradation, leading to a patchy appearance in the works, which would then require retreatment (Runeberg, 2005:356).

The initial steps were to define how the conservator approaches to practice with guidelines such as the Athens Charter (1931), a draft Convention for the Protection of Historic Buildings and Works of Art in Times of War presented to the League of Nations' Council and General Assembly in (1938). The International Museums Office, based in Paris, ceased its functions in 1946 when it was replaced with creating the United Nations system, UNESCO and the International Council of Museums (ICOM). An International Committee of Archivist Experts (CIEA) was also established in 1930 to carry out the mission that eventually became the International Committee of Archives (ICA) in 1948. All these bodies depended on the Organization for Intellectual Cooperation (CICI), which was to the League of Nations what UNESCO is to the UN. The Venice Charter (1964) and the promulgation of various codes of ethics from the 1980s to the 2000s added to the growing standardisation of practice. In the meantime, additional academic programmes were established, and teaching continued. In the UK, teaching practice and philosophy was highly influenced by Ruhemann, whilst in the US, John Brealey, a student of Johannes Hell, greatly influenced the period 1940-1970 in cleaning and retouching paintings which repeated itself in teaching practices and curricula. In the United



States, the earliest graduate degree programme was launched at New York University with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation in 1960. The Conservation Centre at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University-trained museum conservators in art history, art connoisseurship, the history and science of art materials and techniques, ethics and philosophy of conservation, general collections care and preventive conservation, and laboratory practice in the examination and treatment of objects (Banks, 1981:191). The four-year programme conferred on graduates a master's degree in art history and a certificate in conservation. Similar programmes followed at the State University of New York at Oneonta and the New-York Historical Society at Cooperstown, New York (1970), the University of Delaware and the Henry Francis DuPont Winterthur Museum (1974) (Banks, 1981: 192).

The advantage of establishing a new programme in South Africa currently is in having existing international curricula for comparison and having clear guidelines and ethical codes as guidance, particularly in the light of changing theories in conservation and aligning with contemporary understandings of heritage. Chapter 5 zeroes in on developing the Master's in Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria and engages in structuring how that particular curriculum aims to align with these changes.

#### **4.7. Establishing and adapting conservation curricula**

With the establishment of academic training in conservation, the next challenge was the significant disparity in conservation curricula, which was the source of contestation and consternation in Europe from the mid to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1991, The European Confederation of Conservator-Restorer Organisations was established by fourteen organisations of conservator-restorers, and today represents close to six thousand professionals and twenty-five member organisations within twenty-two countries (<http://www.ecco-eu.org/about-ecco>). The organisation was established to assist with the professionalisation of conservation throughout the European Union by standardising requisite competencies for access to the profession of conservator-restorer through the homogenisation of training offered<sup>136</sup>. However, the title of conservator-restorer remains generally unprotected, leading to

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<sup>136</sup> Although the European experience is mainly foregrounded in this text (as this was the origin point of the academic discipline of conservation), I am deeply aware of other domains of knowledge and experience and the importance of the redistribution of conservation authority as the concepts of caring for objects is inherently present in all cultures around the world.

ruined restorations and calls for increased regulation (Njolomole, 2020; Hoppenbrouwers, 2013).

A few years later, some representatives of various conservation schools in Europe, namely the Hochschule für Bildende Künste<sup>137</sup> (Dresden), Akademie der Bildenden Künste<sup>138</sup> (Vienna), and the School of Conservation at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts (Copenhagen) met with representatives of other conservation-restoration academic programmes in Dresden, 8–9 November 1997. At this meeting, the European Network for Conservation / Restoration Education (ENCoRE) was established to promote education and research in the field of conservation-restoration (ENCoRE, 1997). “ENCoRE seeks to develop and promote professional conservation-restoration education at the highest level and to improve and encourage cooperation between academic programmes and institutions which offer courses and research programmes in conservation-restoration of cultural heritage. Further objectives are to support and increase the mobility of teaching staff and students within Europe and promote collaborative research in the discipline of conservation-restoration of cultural heritage” (ENCoRE, 1997). These words mirror the guidelines of the Bologna Process, launched in June 1999 to create a European Higher Education Area (EHEA) bringing together 48 countries (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018). Through the Bologna process, the signatories aimed to consolidate the EHEA, facilitate mobility, increase employability, and allow equitable student access and progression through comparable and compatible higher education systems. Before this process, there were substantial discrepancies in terms of duration of study, structure, content, competencies acquired and qualifications obtained between the teaching and training in European Institutions of Higher Education. This was noticeable within and across national boundaries, which meant that students and qualifications acceptable in one country were unrecognised or unsuitable when exported to the larger European labour market. The opening of the borders within the European Union (EU) and the ability of EU citizens to move and work across borders deemed this necessary. It was also hoped that this harmonizing of qualifications, introducing credit systems, flexibility in academic development, and joint degrees between institutions would also make Europe more attractive to international students (UK HE Europe Unit, 2005). The Bologna process affected all curricula, including in the field of conservation. In Europe, curriculum building/design for

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<sup>137</sup> Hochschule für Bildende Künste, translated as the *University of Fine Arts*.

<sup>138</sup> Akademie der Bildenden Künste, translated as the *Academy of Fine Arts*.

conservation courses goes hand in hand with competencies expected on graduation linked to entry-level requirements for the field as defined by the profession. Enforcing the evaluation of these requirements is the individual course's task, but a central organisation monitors these courses and enforces standards (see "Statutes for European Network for Conservation-Restoration Education", 2021). As a result, "it is now possible to compare the different programmes based on defined learning outcomes, the quality of teaching and didactic methods. Also, the exchange and mobility of teachers and students are better facilitated, although traditional language barriers are still an issue" (Hoppenbrouwers, 2013:13).

#### **4.8. Growing conservation education globally**

Research on academic conservation programmes as part of the thesis was limited by both availability of published material and language access, as well as by the availability of research which is largely centered in northern contexts, and minimally represented from the southern context. However, looking at the European and American developments helps understand how conservation has been shaped globally as the colonial projects enforced their influence in the colonised world. There is likewise a bias in the history of conservation of different specialisations with a strong preference in favour of paintings conservation-restoration and its practitioners (Gorinne, 1978; Incerpi, 1978; Slesinski, 1978; Hill Stoner, 2000; Hill Stoner & Rushfield, 2012; Granville et al., 2013), closely followed by book and paper conservation (Schweidler and Perkinson, 2006; Holben Ellis, 2014; Di Febo, 2019; Holben Ellis, 2019; Pearson, 1980a & 1980b). There have been a few papers published on the South American experience in the 1980s and 1990s (Henriquez, 1980; UNESCO, 1987; Souza Marder et al., 2000; Rua & Rajer, 1990; Deal Booth, 1991; Rajer et al., 1996; Reis Veloso, 1996; Medina & Santamato, 2007; Borghese, 2013), and although we still need to learn more, the field of conservation history is growing (see Te Marvelde, 2015). Studies from other parts of the world are appearing as evidenced by the ICOM-CC Conference papers on the Dominican Republic (Utermöhlen, 2002), Ghana (Labi, 1993), India (Sinha, 2008; Grow, 2020), but also more generally data-mining can be useful in understanding the history and use of particular types of conservation treatments as recorded in treatment reports (Golfomitsou et al., 2017). As conservation is part of museum work, its activities were often transplanted throughout the world and the spread of museums, during and post-colonisation. This is not to say that conservation practices were non-existent in other parts of the world. Certainly, there have been traditional and indigenous modes of care and conservation worldwide, and many international

training efforts in recent years have attempted to record these (see Brennan, J., Pianprasankit, N. & Pochoom, P., 2014) and blend both scientific knowledge of materials, and traditional care practices to optimize conservation for viability and sustainability in under-resourced areas, for example, ICCROM's CollAsia programme (<https://www.iccrom.org/collasia-programme>) in Southeast Asia (ICCROM, 2015:[sp]), the IIC's participation in projects in Kerala in India (Gupta and Krist, 2020), or the Indian Conservation Fellowship (Seymour, K., Hoppenbrouwers, R., Pilosi, S. and Daniel, V., 2019). Literature on historic preservation, the development of academic programmes and the professionalization of conservation are appearing in the Anglophone literature and in international conferences with increasing regularity, which gives a glimpse into both historical and new developments in Korea (Lee, 2011), Thailand (Akagawa & Tiamsoon, 2005; UNESCO Bangkok, 2017:[sp]), India (Balachandran, 2019b; Sah, 2018; Sah, 2019; Grow, 2020), in South-East Asian and Australia (Cook, 2018). Much of the available heritage conservation literature in Asia presents a strong architectural bias, as the traditional vernacular structures and large archaeological sites and structures receive attention because of their existence on the World Heritage List or potential to be nominated on the List (Akagawa & Tiamsoon, 2005; Henderson, 2011; Schmuecker et al., 2011:1). Some articles on adaptive reuse of buildings in urban settings are fuelled by growing spatial demands (Langston & Shen, 2007). Accessible literature on the conservation of objects and collections remains scant but is appearing with increased regularity, and this could be attributed to several factors, including an increase in academic programmes beyond the confines of the West with a corresponding increase in emphasis of research and publication as requirements for completion. Although many professional bodies publish in their own language, most international journals are published in English, limiting the possibility of publication for non-English speakers and thus limited articles from non-English speaking countries. The effects of globalisation and the increase of university-based exchange and short course programmes for international students have increased the teaching and use of English, including for University courses in non-English speaking countries, such as the Netherlands University of Amsterdam (see Amsterdam, 2020). Additionally, as 'the public' takes a keen interest and questions the content of collections, their acquisition and handling, there is an increased need for transparency in how these objects are looked after, exhibited and stored and many collaborative projects are carried out, with the result that conservation has been placed on display in exhibitions with entire exhibitions dedicated to conservation (Sah, 2016) pamphlets or exhibition panels dealing with the conservation of specific objects (CSMVS); live conservation projects carried out in-situ in galleries where the public can ask questions such as

The Nightwatch project at the Rijksmuseum; Project Blue Boy at the Huntington Library (Huntington SArt Library website, 2020); or The Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg's (SRAL)<sup>139</sup> 'open studio' as part of the permanent exhibition at the Bonnefanten museum (SRAL, 2020); including a presence on social media platforms and as part of television programming such as the BBC's *Secrets of the Museum* (BBC website, 2020).

#### **4.8. The content of conservation curricula and modes of learning**

A vast scholarly literature exists on curriculum planning and development in several disciplines, and the field of conservation education, despite being reasonably recent as a research interest, is a growing one. The available research on how conservation is taught and its main theories have only been the focus of research in the last few years and are primarily based in the Northern hemisphere, and specifically European in origin (Watkinson, 1994; Manti, Henderson & Watkinson, 2011; Seymour, 2014; Henderson, 2001; Henderson, 2016). The formalisation of conservation teaching in dedicated institutions or as part of academic institutions has only been in existence since the 1930s (Hill Stoner, 2017: 630), and there are still some discrepancies on the content and format that such courses should offer (Skaug, 1984: 1). Training programmes range in duration from two to seven years and are offered at the undergraduate or postgraduate level, part-time or full-time, vary in terms of the subject areas and specialisations offered and the qualifications obtained (See Appendix 4).

The focus of teaching and learning in conservation still has two main routes. According to Henderson (2016:99), specific programmes are immersed in practical teaching akin to the old apprenticeship systems that “allow a novice to work with and learn from a practitioner with finely tuned skills and a bank of experiences and knowledge to draw from. The tutor and tutee often work side-by-side practising, refining and improving as the student progresses through the programme”, such as at the Hamilton Kerr Institute (Cannon-Brookes et al., 1988:283). The second route to which most academic programmes at universities subscribe tends to be research-focused and connects theory to practice. This second approach aligns with ICOM's definition of the profession of conservator-restorer, where practice forms an integral component of the training required to instil the extensive and complex set of required professional competencies (ICOM-CC, 1984). The balance between theory and practice has always been central to conservation which has consistently had a significant practical or

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<sup>139</sup> Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg, translated as the Foundation Restoration Studio Limburg

technical component (Seymour, 2014; Chmielewski, 2014; Breuil & Verbeeck, 2014). Conservators do not only have to be armed with a body of knowledge to carry out their work; they are also required to have a certain expert level of fine motor skills to grasp and manipulate objects or parts thereof carefully and with purpose. Development of manual dexterity occurs over time and with repeated practice as this includes “a combination of muscular, skeletal and neurological functions” to execute small and precise motions (Mafoske, 2011). Unfortunately, unlike the manual skills required of a surgeon, this has meant that conservators have often been viewed as technical staff, particularly as early academic qualifications were often technical diplomas offered by technical colleges, such as Gateshead (see Harley, 1987). As more and more graduates entered into conservation training, courses such as the one at Gateshead college were re-developed into postgraduate degrees<sup>140</sup>, generally on the master’s level. As part of establishing conservation as a recognised profession, as discussed in Chapter 2, this professionalisation went in part with formalised academic education. As this new mode of entering the field of conservation became entrenched in western countries and replicated in other parts of the world, there was an emphasis on chemistry, analytical techniques and theoretical knowledge, and less so on manual and artisan skills. Indeed, Denise Thomas (1986:181), a Conservator of Works of Art on Paper at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, notes that “in our efforts to become more professional, the craft is sometimes forgotten.” A sentiment echoed by Kirby Talley Jr. (1992:353) who states a few years later that

craftsmanship skills are coming under increasing attack in the conservation community [...] the movement against craftsmanship skills is primarily a British initiative, but interestingly enough, it is not to be found in any of the leading British training programmes. It is the result, I believe, of a profound inferiority complex suffered by many conservators for the simple reason that their profession and I emphasise the word profession, has for far too long not been taken seriously by museum directors, curators, ministry officials, or their other employers.

This issue of ‘parity of esteem’ is echoed in Kirby Talley’s argument ‘*losing the edge*’, where he suggests that practical skills are dwindling in conservation education, favouring more time

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<sup>140</sup> From 1965 Gateshead Technical College offered a Diploma in the conservation of Paintings. Between 1983 and 1987 successful students were awarded both the diploma as well as a BTech Higher Diploma in Conservation of Fine Art, specialising in the Conservation of Easel Paintings and Works of Art on Paper. From 1988 however, students were instead awarded a Master of Arts Degree in the Conservation of Fine Art from Newcastle Upon Tyne Polytechnic in Association with Gateshead College. Some of the conservators in South Africa obtained these degrees, see Pringle, Hunt, Parry and Smith in Appendix 7.

devoted to other academic endeavours. This was not always the case, as Harley (1987:1034) describes the newly established Master's in Art Conservation between Gateshead College and Newcastle upon Tyne. Two-thirds of the student's time was devoted to practice. The changeover in the balance between theory and practice is likely due to many factors, including the diversification of skills beyond the manual skills required of bench conservators to include analytical and preventive conservation skills. The apparent lack of balance between theory and practice in training programmes has been criticised by many who view it as insufficient and often only used as a teaching aid to demonstrate decision-making (Marincola, 2003; Seymour, 2014; Ashley-Smith, 2016). This balancing act is not new as Banks (1981:197,201) states apprenticeships would concentrate on the manual aspects of conservation at the expense of technical aspects, whilst the new academic programmes of the 1960s to 1980s (and since) attempted to 'give roughly equal emphasis' to conservation treatment and other aspects of conservation.

This balancing act is also reflected in the tasks a museum conservator is required to do, where increasingly few conservators in small museums carry out full restorative treatments; the tendency is to outsource such projects to conservators in private practice, as the museum conservator's job is filled with loan and collections management, as well as preventive conservation and administrative tasks.

Pye and Ferguson (2004:3) in their ICCROM document *Our Students and Oruselves, approaching course design*, conservation courses are about both 'training' and 'education' where the former was the domain of apprenticeships and the latter that of academic courses. The difference, they state, is where the trained person can demonstrate their skills under a variety of conditions, whilst the educated person is capable of adapting their skills and taking decisions to formulate the policies and strategies upon which decisions might be taken. Conservation students need to be both educated and trained as "the one informs the other in a reciprocal relationship" to allow students to work not only in conventional circumstances, but to also be capable of adapting their knowledge and skills to "unusual or unforeseen circumstances" (Pye and Ferguson, 2004:3).

Knowledge can be separated into factual, procedural, conceptual and metacognitive. As Kate Seymour, Head of the SRAL, states (2014:15) that

[f]actual knowledge, [...] is declarative – statements, terms, specific details and elements fall into this category. Procedural knowledge covers specific material, techniques and methods, and when to use these. Conceptual knowledge refers to



classifications, principles and theories. Lastly, metacognitive knowledge involves a more strategic approach in which reflection on the other three knowledge domains plays a significant role.

Seymour (2014:10) further suggests that the teaching of conservation students requires a careful blend of equally-weighted declarative (facts) and procedural knowledge (knowing *how*) early on in the training of conservation students, and the best method of doing this is through ‘Experiential Learning’ in which the student applies the theoretical knowledge in an actual situation observing the results. Learning is achieved by putting into practice (doing) the theoretical components presented in the classroom environment. Practice then involves

[the] proper identification of the historical context of a work of art, the determination of the causes and extent of damage, the analysis of its physical structure, the planning of conservation treatments using the appropriate methods and materials, and finally, the hands-on conservation treatments (Chmielewski, 2014: 8).

As such, ‘practice’ is central to conservation teaching and training. It is therefore difficult to distinguish between knowledge and practice in conservation restoration. A key element in conservation training is decision-making and risk assessment for treatment options and their potential consequences. Caple (2001:6), in his exploration of perception, judgement and learning in conservation, explains that personal learning experiences are more powerful and better retained than the sharing of other experiences such as through readings and lectures and that similarly learning by mistakes and reflection on past performance is better retained, particularly when looking at risk assessment.

In *Conservation Skills: judgement, method and decision-making*, Caple (2001:4) further explains how judgement is achieved through pattern recognition, through one of two routes. The first relies on observations or ‘seeing that’ approach where “an intuitive line is drawn through existing facts and extrapolated to form the complete picture, theory or idea. This provides the unconscious ‘jumps’ in understanding”; the second approach is the ‘reasoning why’ approach, which typically follows on from observations in the ‘seeing that’ process and “proceeds by logical reasoned steps through the facts leading to the understanding indicated from the ‘seeing that’ process” (ibid.) Both approaches are carried out in the learning process. Caple (2001:4) describes the ‘seeing that’ process as equated with belief, while the ‘reasoning why’ process is rationalisation. Information is assimilated into existing patterns of understanding with greater ease in areas with already substantial levels of understanding, which

is why experts can readily take in additional knowledge in their field and ask relevant and probing questions.

The learning process is based on existing patterns of understanding or about similar patterns, and these are altered by trial-and-error, improved with new cues adding other patterns to the growing range of knowledge and activities until a fundamental level of understanding or proficiency in an activity has been built up. This is why Kate Seymour (2014:1) suggests that combining practical hands-on skills and a thorough theoretical understanding of materials and techniques should be carried over by embedding practice within the academic framework. An effective way of doing this is to demonstrate actions to the student, who attempts to replicate the process, and later has to take on the teacher's role and demonstrate the action to peers, explaining it and 'teaching' them. This process of seeing, doing and explaining becomes a lived experience embedded within the student. The final nugget is then to reflect on results and reason what could be improved, enhancing the trial-and-error approach.

As a student progresses from novice to expert, at each level, knowledge acquisition is paramount. Each level of expertise requires a different set of knowledge values, which logically build upon the previously gained experience and are interlinked. As each level of knowledge is reached, new goals and achievements are defined. Meaningful learning, in which knowledge is retained and applied, is essential for student involvement and knowledge retention. Caple (2000:1) suggests that in the learning process, retaining knowledge of different conservation techniques and materials is less daunting for novice conservators than judging which one to apply in a particular scenario. He defines judgement as the

weighting of knowledge leading to a decision: and includes ethical considerations, the best way of achieving the aims of conservation, the extent of cleaning, the extent of restoration, the extent to which limited time or funding should influence the conservation, the wishes of the object owner, risks of damage to an object, the health and safety of the conservator, aesthetic considerations and many other factors" (Caple, 2000:1)

and goes on to conclude that

[w]hile senior conservators have the benefit of many years of experience in order to help them make this judgement, inexperienced conservators need some assistance. They need to be aware of all the issues but cannot possess this experience until they have gained it through practice.

Sound judgement, evaluation and decision-making are much more complicated for students who are still learning and have not yet established a pattern of understanding on which to hang additional information.

Caple (2001:9) further observes that “pattern-matching to achieve perception, extrapolation of facts to a future through the ‘seeing that’ or ‘reasoning why’ approaches to achieve understanding, the development of new schemata or patterns of understanding to achieve learning” must all have some correspondence with reality to be an effective problem-solving tool and as such some measure of reality testing is required. This is carried out through one of two ways, either by communicating verbally or in written format the student’s understanding and comparing his/her judgement with that of others (peers, teachers etc.); or by correspondence of perceptions with real objects and real situations. Confidence is gained when the judgement and thinking process is aligned with others or proven correct (Caple, 2001: 9).

Typical testing under exam conditions or written essays graded and returned does not provide sufficient reality testing for professional conservators. The type mentioned earlier only requires correspondence of understanding between the lecturer and the wider academic community. As each heritage object may react differently, there is no prescribed recipe for treatment, and conservators must closely correspond between their understanding and the reality of the objects they handle and conserve (Caple, 2001:9). As Caple further clarifies, conservation requires constant reality testing, which translates into a substantial component of hands-on work, handling and conserving real (museum) objects to thoroughly test the student's developing understanding. “Working with real objects means that learning progresses iteratively, with constant cycles of learning and testing being undertaken” (Caple, 2001:9), allowing the building up of a comparative database of treatments, which in turn can be used to aid in the student’s decision making process when selecting and modifying treatment practices.

Although repetition allows the student to process factual knowledge to translate it into experience, Seymour and others note that it is crucial to guard against learning by rote, which is essentially memorisation of tasks by repetition (Seymour, 2014; Kolb and Fry, 1975). “Rote repetition [...] will not by itself improve performance. Deliberate practice involves attention, rehearsal, and repetition, leading to new knowledge or skills that can later be developed into more complex knowledge and skills (Campitelli & Gobet, 2011).” Thus, although pattern recognition is the basis for learning, experiential learning should be reflective. A wide range of design models embeds experiential learning as reality testing, including laboratory, workshop

or studio work either as part of classwork or apprenticeships. This experiential learning can be problem-based learning, case-based learning, project-based learning, inquiry-based learning or cooperative (work or community based) learning (Moon, 2004).

As Kolb and Fry (1975:33) suggest in their Experiential Learning Model (ELM), learning should correspond to a cycle of 1) giving students factual, procedural and conceptual knowledge, to prepare them for active experimentation, 2) Putting acquired knowledge into practice through a concrete experience, and gathering observed data, 3) implementing metacognitive knowledge as the student reflects on actions and outcomes, 4) applying this increased understanding theoretically and practically to new scenarios and learning additional factual knowledge as his/her experience and understanding increases; and the cycle is repeated. To develop factual knowledge, Seymour (2014:15) suggests that repeated experiences should increase in complexity, “supplemented with a conceptual understanding that can be put into application and finally (students) should independently evaluate and propose new strategies.” For problem-solving in scenarios that have never been encountered before, this judgement is defined by Margolis (1987) as an ability to solve a problem not previously encountered that requires a measure of imagination for its solution. In other words, “the more extensive the memory capacity and the greater the level of experience (older) then, theoretically, the wider range of options and choices and the greater level of consideration which attends any response” (Caple, 2001:3).

To maximise the reality testing, students need to communicate their understanding of objects comfortably, proposed treatment, experiences and results, including challenges and errors in both written and verbal ways as part of assessing their knowledge and skills. As such, an auto-ethnographic approach that records the treatment being carried, the conservator’s observations and emotional responses, as well as the object’s responses to the treatments as suggested by Stigter (2016), could be a valuable tool for encouraging self-reflection in decision-making, mainly as students engage with practice in the early stages of their studies in conservation and are likely to make mistakes, which is part of adaptive learning. Marincola & Maisey (2011:1) discuss at length how mistakes and errors are “invaluable tools for learning and development”, and the absence of conservation-restoration literature and discussion around failed or unsuccessful treatments breeds a culture of infallibility, and risk aversion within conservation, which is understandable as the material conservators work with are often irreplaceable. However, this hampers our collective acknowledgement and sharing of mistakes, which in turn

“can raise collective awareness of specific, error-prone activities and reduce the likelihood of mistakes occurring in the future.” Marincola and Maisey (2011:2) suggest that regular pauses to reflect on an ongoing project and review course of action and alternatives, particularly in a team (or class) setting, can prevent simple execution errors reducing latent factors.

Like Marincola and Maisey (2011:5), I believe in raising awareness amongst students of the potential for errors in decision-making and intervention, as all too often unsuccessful treatments are only highlighted as poor practices carried out by ‘restoration cowboys’, commercial restorers and previous generations of conservators who ‘didn’t know any better’. It is essential, particularly for conservation students, to be made aware of challenging treatments and potential pitfalls and consequences of errors, whilst at the same time understanding that although undesirable, to err is human and that errors present an opportunity for learning and growth. Marincola and Maisey (2011:4-5) describe how the medical profession is attempting a profession-wide change with regards to errors in the field by including error awareness in the post-graduate curriculum for physicians and in the UK releasing a publication where senior physicians recounted detailed accounts of their own serious errors in an attempt to educate junior doctors, and “such examples serve as a powerful educational tool, ensuring that the younger generation of professionals is aware of and open to the possibility of mistakes.” (Marincola & Maisey, 2011:6). This notion of “a failure shared is not a failure” as we learn from our mistakes has in recent years become a feature of the AIC’s annual meeting to encourage the professional community to share their experiences to foster a “healthier and more realistic attitude so that when things do go wrong, we can ‘fail productively’.”

Holben Ellis (2019: 18) emphasises how conservation students are taught to design treatments with particular attention paid to each step of the decision making process, including weighing up of risks and benefits of various treatment options, offering alternatives to more aggressive and invasive treatments; to be able to explain the impact of the proposed treatment on the object under treatment both in the short term with regards to visual appearance, as well as long-term consequences on a molecular and structural level and weighs this against taking no action. As Holben Ellis (2019: 18) states, “the limits and limitations of a treatment design emerge during these directed deliberations”, and these thorough discussions offer the opportunity to not only refine decision-making but also minimise the potential for errors. Taking *all* experiences as opportunities for growth, building understanding and confidence relies on good communications skills and should therefore be an essential focus of training in conservation.

Developing good communication skills is also an essential aspect of conservation training both due to the interdisciplinary nature of the conservator's role who liaises with other conservators within the same area of specialisation or different disciplines, conservation scientists and object custodians; but also with multiple stakeholders outside conservation, including professionals in allied fields (archaeologists, architects, engineers to name a few), but also policy and decision-makers at the institutional and governmental level, community leaders and cultural representatives in a variety of contexts, the general public and learners—as such, learning the specialised terminology of other disciplines to enhance communication across disciplines is essential. Perreira-Marçal (2017:97) observes that museums worldwide are investing in becoming participatory spaces as a result of a shift in the meaning associated with the role of museums 'in the service of society', but also as a response to an increased online presence and digital interactions between museums and their communities, which have considerably widened in both numbers and profile. There has also been the influence of an invitation to increased transparency both literally, as museums reveal museum activities behind the scenes (including making conservation visible to the public as part of in-situ studios in museum galleries, open days and 'antique roadshows', conferences and 'ask a conservator day'; and figuratively, where decision-making processes have become participatory, including in conservation. This response is two-fold, based on performance-based, interactive, participatory or socially engaged artworks where the artist or creator is involved in the setup, care and maintenance of the artwork to both respect artistic intent and the conceptual integrity of the works; but also in the care, handling and maintenance of indigenous cultural materials in consultation with originator communities (Clavir, 2002; Wharton, 2008; Henderson & Nakamoto, 2016). This focus on the people whose stories are recounted (or not), by whom and for who, or illustrated by various forms of heritage objects; as well as the role of conservation and decisions of what is preserved and how involving these originator communities and artists are the focus of peoples-based practice. This is particularly challenging for conservators who need a deeper understanding of history and social constraints, in addition to good communication skills, including understanding and listening, are vital to navigating often difficult discussions, particularly when opposing viewpoints are deliberated for decision making.

These 'people skills' or 'soft skills' as listed by Padhi (2014:2), include a cluster of personality traits and abilities such as self-confidence, self-discipline, time management, professional presence, language proficiency, communication skills, networking, interpersonal skills, the

ability to motivate oneself as well as others, leadership, teamwork, work ethics, the ability to accept and learn from criticism, friendliness, courtesy, cultural sensitivity, optimism, and creativity become a vital part being able to navigate the demands of the conservation profession, and complement the ‘hard’ skills, not only in participatory decision-making but also more generally when advocating for the need for conservation, which is often an arena of negotiation and learning among individuals and groups. In the South African context, the importance of advocacy for the need to conserve and preserve is vitally important as we grapple with complex and often traumatic heritage, in part as a result of what was collected in the past, but also how it was collected, including looting and confiscation, and physical markers of oppression and violence as seen in monuments and memorials. Conservation can be seen as deeply political, as the statement by Black Art Conservators (2020) states, “Conservators help shape what our society values by making decisions on what to preserve, whom to include in our work, and therefore whose stories we remember.” What is conserved links back to what is valued and how these values are applied to cultural material, who decides what to conserve, which cultural material is conserved, whose objects are conserved and by whom, and recognising that “conservation routinely excludes certain hands, voices, perspectives, histories and legacies” (Balachandran, 2016). Increasingly questions are also being raised about the conservator’s role and agency in mediating what is conserved. Smith (2020:[sp]) writes about how as conservators, “We don’t always know how the materials that we treat in the lab will be used, or in what context they will be presented to students, researchers, and library visitors.” Smith (2020:[sp]) suggests that our role as conservators goes beyond merely conserving cultural material, as she says:

Our work is very slow, and our institutions’ budgets are finite (and shrinking). What we work on matters [...] We do have a say in the projects we take on—we regularly determine how much time to spend on a given treatment (sometimes even advising curators against treatment entirely) and in what order objects will be treated [...] We have a responsibility to think critically about the work that we do—and the work that we aren’t doing. What materials are not being treated? Whose stories are not being told?

Despite this, the conservator’s role can be that of mediator, particularly if they recognise the contested milieu within which they work and the delicate nature of their work. The development of ‘soft’ skills should be particularly encouraged in conservation, although they



do not necessarily feature prominently in conservation curricula. This does not mean that existing courses should be replaced, or separate courses in soft skills should be introduced; instead, as Hagmann et al. (2003:22) suggest in their own field, soft skills should be interwoven with existing courses for students “to understand these (soft skills) conceptually and master them practically”. “The ‘ideal’ graduates would have the capacity to integrate across disciplines and skills (hard and soft skills). They would be creative and critical thinkers, team players, take responsibility for their own development, and be able to facilitate learning in groups and communities” Moyo and Hagmann (2000), thus facilitating the conservation advocacy agenda and equipping students with skills to navigate interdisciplinary and participatory projects. These soft skills can be heightened through role-play, group discussions, seminars and student presentations, brainstorming sessions, reality testing etc.

In an exploration of the possibility of developing a major in preventive conservation at the University of Delaware’s Art Conservation Programme, Wickens and Norris (2018) noted that from their group of preventive conservation and education experts consulted in developing the proposed curriculum, the group identified “significant soft skill development as a necessary and primary component of a master’s degree education in preventive conservation [...] given that the practice of preventive conservation relies heavily on the involvement and cooperation of multiple departments and individuals, including staff, volunteers and visitors” (Wickens and Norris, 2018:304). Wickens and Norris (2018:304) identified 40 soft skills essential for newly trained preventive conservators, outlined in table 1 below.

**Table 1 - soft skills identified as essential for newly trained preventive conservators, modified from Wickens and Norris (2018:304)**

**Communication**

- Ability to listen to, understand, speak with, and share information with other professionals
- Ability to speak the 'dialects' of others, particularly non-preservation/conservation professionals
- Ability to persuade
- Ability to advocate
- Ability to interview and draw out a closed person
- Ability to teach and instruct
- Ability to present data to a variety of stakeholders

**Teambuilding and leadership**

- Collaborative
- Involve the community we serve in our work
- Involve allied fields
- Build relationships
- Team worker
- Has respect for others
- Institutional commitment/values
- Big picture thinking
- Ability to think strategically
- Comfort with uncertainty
- Ability to 'drive the bus'

**Project and personal management**

- Ability to run an effective meeting
- Contract management, tendering skills
- Budget skills
- Familiarity with financial management Concepts
- Ability to diagnose, triage, prioritize and
- Implement

**Personal qualities**

- Humility
- Patience
- Fortitude
- Collegiality
- Adaptability
- Confidence
- Flexibility
- Positive attitude
- Common sense
- Empathy

**Problem-solving skills**

- Creativity
- Diplomacy
- Ability to troubleshoot
- Ability to negotiate
- Ability to be realistic
- Ability to compromise
- Critical thinking skills

In addition to the soft skills outlined in the preceding table, Wickens and Norris (2018) list a further 60 technical skills identified as essential for graduates of a master's degree in preventive conservation. These technical skills are outlined in table 2 below.

**Table 2. Technical skills and knowledge identified as essential for newly trained preventive conservators**

**Environmental management**

- Micro-environments
- Thermodynamics, fluid dynamics (air movement)
- Knowledge of building systems and operations
- Passive control techniques
- Hands-on experience in building and monitoring climate cases

**Survey**

- Broad facility evaluation
- Collection surveys

**Integrated pest management**

- Blocking - in storage, building, cases
- Monitoring
- Identifying - basic entomology
- Treating

**Emergency preparedness and response**

**Risk Assessment**

**Developing low-tech solutions**

**Scientific practice**

- Knowledge of scientific literature
- Able to assess and use scientific instrumentation
- Scientific data management
- Statistics
- Numeracy

**Research**

- Experimental design
- Design of monitoring programmes
- Data management and analysis
- Able to create custom databases (non-excel)

**Writing**

- Report writing
- Policy and procedures creation
- Documentation
- Grant writing
- Tendering/writing a request for a proposal
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Life cycle assessment
- Skills in reading and interpreting blueprints, CAD drawings, case build diagrams, exhibition design documents

**Knowledge of:**

**Digital literacy**

- Managing big/digital data
- Reformatting

**Exhibition issues**

- Hands-on experience in packing and moving objects
- Hands-on experience in mount-making
- Installation and courier experience
- Seismic mount experience

**Storage issues**

- Remote storage, design and use
- Storage housings
- Planning and managing storage upgrades

**Materials science and object behaviour**

- Knowledge of a broad range of materials and how they respond to RH and temp
- Watching for new technologies and materials, including methods to assess materials
- Deep understanding of conservation treatment realities
- Familiarity with large, functional objects

**Collection management theory and practice**

- Collection use and access
- Deaccession/disposal

**Non-profit business structure**

**Health and safety**

**Ethical codes**

In addition to testing theoretical applications, reasoning and decision-making, the actual treated object is also assessed, along with its associated documentation, as this provides evidence that the student has attained the required manual dexterity to handle and treat objects independently and successfully while at the same time this feedback allows the student to re-evaluate decisions and perhaps discuss what other alternatives could have presented a better outcome. There is always limited time for hands-on practice and amassing ‘sufficient’ experience through reality testing. As a result, nearly all conservation training programmes rely on internships as a degree requirement. These internships vary in length, as does the internship location, although most institutions offering academic conservation programmes usually have a partnership with a museum, such as the University of Delaware and the Winterthur Museum, New York University and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The internships allow students to “continue learning treatment practice under expert supervision in a real-world situation that also provides a different viewpoint from the labs in which they have received their initial instruction”, which is an essential component of building up soft skills, as the students are forced to navigate between differing opinions and viewpoints (including their own) (Banks, 1981: 199; Smith, 2020).

#### **4.9. Conclusion**

As repeatedly emphasised in this discussion, curriculum matters, but more than this: it is a process that does not end at the end of the design and development of the curriculum framework. Instead, curriculum is a process that comprises many phases, including design and development, how the curriculum is implemented, the associated knowledge and skills are transferred to students, and how the curriculum is adapted to align with changes in the local curriculum context. This ‘official’ curriculum is complemented by an ‘unofficial curriculum’ comprising the social, political and cultural contexts where this official curriculum is presented and received. In developing a new programme, particularly a programme in Tangible Heritage in South Africa, these contexts need to be acknowledged and be a point of focus for the curriculum to be locally appropriate and relevant. The establishment of this programme is essentially a knowledge project shaped by global insights while retaining a grounded and southern focus, recognising that although the approach to conservation may originate in the west, it is thought about, theorised and adapted to the South. Heritage conservation teaching and training takes many forms, from introductory summer schools to formal pre-programme opportunities, apprenticeship style training, and formal academic undergraduate training.

Although the style and length of study vary, it is generally accepted that the terminal degree for heritage conservation is a university master's degree or equivalent (5 years post-school). The difficulty in standardising the duration and programming across curricula lies in the unusual placement of heritage conservation at the nexus of the arts and science, its multi-disciplinary approaches, and balancing technical practical skills with analytical and critical thinking. The discussion has also highlighted the importance of 'soft skills' is repeatedly emphasised as a vital component of conservation teaching and learning. In the chapter that follows, I turn attention to the specifics of making a curriculum in conservation at the University of Pretoria.

## CHAPTER 5

### *The design and construction of a master's degree curriculum in Tangible Heritage Conservation*

*What we achieve through practice is a precious kind of understanding, something not easily gained through theoretical study nor by analysis in the laboratory. It makes a strong argument for the incorporation of more practical treatments in the education of conservators.*

*(Scheper, 2017:114)*

As outlined in Chapter 3 of this thesis, there have been several attempts at training opportunities in museum studies in South Africa since 1963, when SAMA launched its technical certificate. However, since that period, most of the training available for conservation was preventive and carried out as part of general museum studies courses. The exception was a few more technical conservation (preventive AND interventive) specific training courses, which were limited to SAMA's Technical Certificate (1963-?), the National Diploma in Museum Techniques run at the Cape Technikon (1978-1990) which the National Diploma then replaced in Museum Technology at the Technikon RSA (1990-2001), and modular courses at the SAInst (1994 - 2015), replaced in 2017 by a Post Graduate Technical Diploma in Conservation (2017-present) at the newly renamed South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation.

With the background mapping of the conservation landscape in Chapter 3, the present chapter is also descriptive and turns the attention to a documentary analysis focused on the archive of the development, design and content of the post-graduate curriculum framework, which includes comment, reflection and analysis of the level at which the presentation of teaching and training has been pitched at the University of Pretoria and provide a motivation.

This chapter also critically assesses how the construction of such a curriculum compares to a selection of similar programmes globally and locally how it engages pertinent concerns related to curriculum transformation within the South African context. This discussion cannot be undertaken in isolation from other long-term projects and developments (re-development of the museum studies programme, the growth of conservation of the UP Art and Heritage Collections, and the establishment of the Javett-UP) at the University of Pretoria will be

reviewed demonstrating how the University of Pretoria has been emphasising growing its sphere of influence in the arts for some time.

### **5.1. Sowing seeds, building on existing competencies**

The discussion on developing the UP degree in conservation cannot proceed without examining why the university wants to launch such a degree. In 2015 the University of Pretoria was one of 3 institutions in South Africa to offer a qualification in museum studies and the UWC and UCT's honours in curatorship. At that stage, the University of Pretoria offered a Post-graduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies and an Honours in Museum and Heritage Studies (hereafter MKD), which had been running since 1976 and 2004, respectively (UP Archives, MKD timeline). As indicated in earlier chapters, the MKD programme was a general museology course with presentations in lecture mode offered every two weeks on various museological aspects. Included in the programme was an introduction to conservation (preventive) focussed on different types of materials (organic, inorganic, synthetic and composite materials) present in museum collections and their various sensitivities to so-called 'agents of deterioration'<sup>141</sup> and how to minimise the effects of these agents on museum collections through preventive conservation measures.

In addition to its public museums, the University of Pretoria has since 2008 a fully functioning conservation laboratory (Barrier, 2008:19), staffed with a full-time conservator. In my capacity as conservator for the UP Museums, my role was to see to the daily running of the conservation facility, renamed the UP Museum Objects Conservation Laboratory, and attend to the preventive conservation needs of the 30 University collections in storage, on display in museum spaces, as well as throughout the university's seven campuses, including the outdoor sculpture collection (Hoffman, 2020). In addition to collection surveys, condition assessments and preventive recommendations for curatorial planning, my role was to assist with rewriting conservation policy documents<sup>142</sup> for the museums and growing the understanding of the

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<sup>141</sup> Agents of Deterioration are primary threats to cultural heritage materials that can engender change of appearance or structure by precipitating or accelerating natural processes of deterioration. These include light (ultra-violet and infra-red); incorrect temperature and humidity levels and fluctuations; water; pests (vermin, insects, fungi and moulds); fire; physical forces (impact, shock, vibration, abrasion, pressure and fatigue); security threats (thieves and vandals); pollutants and contaminants (gases and liquids); and dissociation (loss of information related to cultural material, collections, etc.) (See Canadian Conservation Institute (2017) Agents of deterioration. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/conservation-institute/services/agents-deterioration.html>).

<sup>142</sup> Conservation Policy of the University of Pretoria Museums, first drafted 2009 by Sian Tiley-Nel (then Curator of the Mapungubwe Museum and now Head UP Museums) and Isabelle McGinn (Objects Conservator)



objects in the collections. As the UP Museums' conservator, I also undertook interventive conservation treatments on ceramics, glass, stone, metal, plaster, wood, and textile objects and oversaw that conservation treatment on paper and painted objects was recorded and added the museum databases.

Thus, all the support structures for a proposal that the University implement teaching and training in conservation were already in place as far back as 2008 with course offerings in related fields including the arts, archaeology and museum studies<sup>143</sup>; extensive collections and public museums that were already used to support teaching and training; and a fully functioning conservation facility with a full-time conservator and external contract conservators.

In addition, in 2001, when Professor Antony Melck was appointed as Advisor to the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, he became responsible for overarching university planning and was also appointed chair of the University's Art Committee<sup>144</sup>. The Art Committee's role goes beyond growing the University's many art and heritage collections and acquire artworks, but extends to managing these diverse collections spread over seven campuses, and ensuring the artworks and collections are cared for, housed and exhibited appropriately through the work of the University of Pretoria Museums.

The approval for a university-based Art Centre came late in 2005 when the Executive Committee of UP in principle accepted a proposal that planning for a new building should start. It was realised from the outset that external funding would have to be found. This was followed

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and approved by the Museum Committee 2011. Revised in 2014 and renamed the Museum Conservation Policy and Guidelines for Collections Care. The policy outlined conservation guidelines for the UP Museums and collections on loan, exhibition, in transit, research and storage (UP Museums, 2011).

<sup>143</sup> Related courses in the Humanities include amongst others: Fine Arts (UG & PG) training professional artists by promoting aesthetic awareness and the broadening of visual, critical and creative thinking. The programme also incorporates art management, art communication and marketing, digital training and the use of a wide range of artists materials, media and techniques in painting, sculpture, graphic printmaking, drawing and new media. Heritage and Cultural Tourism (UG & PG) graduates can follow careers as tour guides, tour operators (entrepreneurs), heritage resource managers, and publicity agents. Archaeology and Anthropology (UG & PG) including coursework, field and laboratory work. Heritage, Museums and Preservation studies (PG) including both practical and theoretical aspects of museum development, museum and heritage management, collections management and preventive conservation.

<sup>144</sup> The University of Pretoria's Art Committee was initially established in 1957 as the Committee for Exhibitions and Collections and reconstituted in 1979 under its present name. The Art Committee is a sub-committee of the University of Pretoria's Heritage Committee whose purpose is to ensure that the University of Pretoria's collections and archives including archaeological, architectural (built environment), educational, botanical (faunal and floral), scientific, medical, artistic, herbaria, numismatic, philatelic, geological, cultural, historical, including digital collections of value, as well as tangible and intangible heritage are preserved for posterity and "reflect the history, heritage and standing of the University as an educational and cultural institution" (University of Pretoria, 2021:2)

by a meeting on 3 March 2006, convened by Prof Melck with the heads of the Departments of Visual Arts (Prof Marion Sauthoff) and Architecture (Prof Ora Joubert), to discuss the situation and to prepare a needs analysis for the Executive Director: Facilities (Prof Antonie de Klerk), a brief for an architect, and a fundraising brochure. This meeting agreed (as currently implemented) that the space adjacent to Lynnwood Road, between the Visual Arts and Architecture Buildings, would be suitable for the new gallery (complete with these buildings' physical linkage to and use of the requisite new facilities). The new gallery would also connect well to both the South Campus and the historical buildings to the north and would be suited for housing student, contemporary, rotating (external) and corporate (University) collections (Prinsloo, 2019:[sp]).

In October 2009, the University's Executive reviewed the identified needs and reconfirmed establishing an Arts Centre. However, external developments were only positively achieved during 2011. By that time, many Executive changes had taken place in senior management at the University, with Prof Cheryl de la Rey becoming the new Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Jeanne van Eeden, the head of Visual Arts and Prof Karel Bakker of Architecture. Thus, 15 June 2011 could stand as the day on which the future partnership was brokered. So it was when Prof Melck met with Dr Conrad Strauss and Mr Stephan Welz, both renowned in South African art circles, on their referral to the former by Dr André Breedt. The two external persons to the university agreed that the climate was "favourable for establishing a new art gallery", acquiring substantial donations (covering construction, running costs, and artworks), and considering UP as recipient as a well-managed and stable institution, besides its appropriate location in the capital city, the extent of its art collections, and its visual arts department's active existence. They also indicated the next logical steps of making available appropriate land and establishing an independent legal trust governed by trustees to take ownership of the collection/s and run the facility (Prinsloo, 2019:[sp]).

A few months later, the final development began in 2011 when Mr Welz invited Prof Melck to meet with Mr Michael Javett<sup>145</sup> in Rosebank, Johannesburg. Mr Welz had been Mr Javett's

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<sup>145</sup> Mr Michael Javett is a retired businessman who initially studied at the University of the Witwatersrand before being employed at the Webber Wentzel law firm. He then joined the Allen & Overy law firm in London, followed by joining Samuel Hill as a merchant banker. In 2006 he returned to South Africa to engage in philanthropic pursuits and was instrumental in the establishment of the Sunshine Foundation Trust, a charitable organisation that primarily supported educational organisations, focussing on skills and vocational training; early childhood development and cultural activities. The Javett Foundation, established in 2013 grew from the Sunshine Foundation (Javett Foundation website, 2020:[sp]).

advisor on art purchases for the latter's personal collection. The Javett family has an impressive collection of significant 20<sup>th</sup> century South African artists and a tradition carried on by Michael Javett (Javett Foundation website, 2020:[sp]). By 2012, this collection had become sizeable, and its future was explored. The idea being that these critical artworks would be available to the broader public and enhance education in the arts. The placement of these seminal art pieces in an art centre attached to an academic institution would attend to both desires, and the matter of possible funding, as lead donor, for the new art gallery envisaged at the University of Pretoria was raised. This was pursued further early in 2012 when Mr Javett referred Prof Melck to his lawyer, Mr Ed Southey, to prepare first drafts of a donation agreement and trust deed to underpin the venture. It was also then that Prof Melck requested Prof Karel Bakker to suggest an architect to assist with cost estimates, the result being immediately and unhesitatingly suggesting that Prof Melck speak to Mr Pieter Mathews, who agreed to the task, as also endorsed after a subsequent meeting between Mr Mathews, Mr Welz and Mr Javett.

On 2 October 2012, Mr Javett met Prof de la Rey, further cementing donation commitments pending University Council support and approval (Prinsloo, 2019:[sp]). According to Professor Norman Duncan, Vice-Principal: Academic, University of Pretoria, "by the end of 2012, the University of Pretoria mentioned to the then Deputy-President of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Phil Lewis, that it was in the process of building a new art gallery in conjunction with a donor who had indicated his willingness to make a substantial contribution to the costs of the project. Phil Lewis then suggested that the team responsible for planning the project should visit various galleries and museums in the United States. Furthermore, he kindly offered to facilitate meetings with several key institutions in and around New York. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is at the origin of numerous endeavours to develop, advance, and transform heritage conservation throughout the world (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 2020). A brief examination of their website and annual reports showcase, for example, development programmes at Hong Kong University<sup>146</sup>, Queens University<sup>147</sup>, The Smithsonian

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<sup>146</sup> University of Hong Kong, *Conservation Studies Planning* (2016).

<sup>147</sup> Queens University at Kingston, Canada, *Indigenous Conservation Curriculum* (2017).

Institution<sup>148</sup>, The University of California, Los Angeles<sup>149</sup> and the Stichting het Rijksmuseum<sup>150</sup> to name a few.

Prof de la Rey secured a grant and travel assistance from the Mellon Foundation, New York, for this study tour, and from 20 to 31 March 2013, a delegation consisting of Mr Stephan Welz (art auctioneer and founder of Stephan Welz & Co. and its Managing Director), Mr Peter Mathews (Mathews & Associates Architects), Prof Norman Duncan (Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, 2012-2014) and Prof Antony Melck (Advisor to the Vice Principal and Chancellor, 2001 - 2012)<sup>151</sup> undertook this visit (Prinsloo, 2019:[sp]). Institutions visited included The Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), The Metropolitan Museum of Art<sup>152</sup>, The Whitney Museum of Art, The Guggenheim Museum, The Zimmerli Art Museum (Rutgers University), The Princeton University Art Museum, The Yale University Art Gallery, The Yale Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, The Baltimore Museum of Art, The Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, The Barnes Foundation and The New York University's Grey Art Gallery. According to Professor Duncan (2020:3), two main areas of focus were highlighted during these site visits: the importance of preventive conservation best practice, including adequate storage, as the most significant portion of collections, are usually not on display. "Factors that must be considered include the space needed; light, humidity and temperature requirements, the materials that may come into contact with the artefacts or specimens, access by students and researchers etc." The second area of focus to think about is the continued conservation of these collections. It was emphasised that "each institution should have access to conservation resources, even if not on a full-time in-house basis" (Duncan, 2020:3). It was suggested that the University consider developing courses and offer a qualification in art conservation. Professor Duncan refers explicitly to "our interlocutors at the

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<sup>148</sup> The Smithsonian Institution Washington D.C, *Art Conservation Diversity Pathways* (2019).

<sup>149</sup> University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) *Art Conservation Diversity Pathways* (2019).

<sup>150</sup> Stigting het Rijksmuseum *Strategic Framework for Heritage Conservation Science* (2019).

<sup>151</sup> See University of South Africa Institutional Archives (2020). Professor Antony Patrick Melck Papers, 1988-2001. UNISA Archive Inventories. Compiled and updated by: Rossouw, Trix (2004); Van Niekerk, Herma (2011); Coetzee, Marié A (2013). [O] Available from: <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/13050/Melck%20anthony%20inventory.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> (Accessed 21 September 2020).

<sup>152</sup> The visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art included meetings with the conservator Rachel Mustalish and Ian Alteveer, the Assistant Curator in the Department of Modern and Contemporary Art.

Metropolitan Museum in New York had intimated that they would be open to collaborating with us in such a venture (through, for example, training staff, assistance with curriculum development and internships)” (Duncan, 2020:3). As no academic conservation training was available in the country, it was an opportunity to place the University of Pretoria as a unique hub for such expertise, as Professor Duncan (2020:4) explains, “particularly in view of the fact that it is inevitable that galleries and museums will attain increasing importance in South African society.”

On 11 April 2013, Professor Duncan and Professor Melk submitted their report to the Executive Committee at UP on lessons learnt from the institutions’ managements. The outcome of these interactions was that Council on 26 June 2013 authorised Prof de la Rey to enter into a legal arrangement about developing the art centre and building. The Council thus de facto approved that the University could prepare to implement the proposal to establish a foundation and construct the gallery building. An Agreement of Trust was signed on 13 June 2014 between the University of Pretoria as Founder and the Trustees for the new Arts Centre Foundation (ACF). The stipulations that provided for the University to make available the land for the building on the Main and South Campuses, including additional funding for underground parking on the South Campus, allowed Mr Javett to effect his intended donation of funding and loan of artworks, and the Javett-UP Art Centre was formally launched on 24 September 2019 (Prinsloo, 2019:[sp]).

Reflecting on the possibility of developing conservation as an avenue for study at the University of Pretoria, the Mellon Foundation was approached to fund the University of Pretoria’s hosting of an Art Conservation Workshop in 2015 (Badat, pers. comm. 27 November 2018). To better understand the existing conservation landscape in South Africa, a brief questionnaire was circulated (See Appendix 1 – Mellon Foundation Survey) to selected national, regional, private and public institutions or people involved in heritage education, curation, and conservation. Participants in this initial survey were identified by the University of Pretoria, based on personal and professional networks and knowledge of that Institution as having collections and or skills in conservation. Curators, conservators, administrators and academics from 16 institutions were involved in this initial survey<sup>153</sup>. A prior survey, titled

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<sup>153</sup> Respondents included: the Wits Art Museum and the Rock Art Research Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand; the University of Pretoria Museums, the University of Bloemfontein; the Galleries of the University of the Free State; The Centre for Curating the Archive at the Michaelis School of Fine Art, and the

*Conservation People in the Field* circulated by the National Arts Council (NAC) circulated two years earlier (2013), may have helped identify those institutions and persons involved in conservation.

Questions in the 2015 Mellon survey were set out for collections managers and curators, and administrators. Although there was no dedicated section for conservators to answer, some did. This omission could be identified as a gap in the initial data collection and was pursued as part of the present research and included in chapter 3. Questions in the original survey revolved around the size and scope of the collections under the care of the institution questioned, how these collections were maintained (preventive conservation), whether (interventive) conservation was carried out in-house or externally, and the qualifications and training of staff involved in the conservation of collections. Additional questions posed included whether institutions had dedicated conservation budgets and if they offered any training in heritage studies and related fields. Although by no means complete, the survey allowed for an initial image of the state of preventive and interventive conservation in South Africa. Importantly it exposed some of the challenges and highlighted areas of greatest need, including constrained financial resources, limited expertise and poor succession planning. Above all, responses confirmed that further engagement was required, which took place later that year with the Art Conservation workshop held at the University of Pretoria.

## **5.2. The Art Conservation Workshop at the University of Pretoria**

As indicated earlier in the introduction to this thesis, in March 2015, the University of Pretoria hosted the art conservation workshop funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The meeting included thirty-six selected local<sup>154</sup> and international<sup>155</sup> academics, museum

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Special Collections of the University of Cape Town; Iziko Museums; Stellenbosch University; Rhodes University's Cory Library; the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal; Durban University of Technology; the Durban Art Gallery; The National Library of South Africa; the South African Preservation and Conservation Group; and the South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation.

<sup>154</sup> Stellenbosch University; the University of the Witwatersrand; the University of Pretoria; University of the free-State; the University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal and Durban University of Technology; the University of Cape Town; University of the Western Cape; Rhodes University; the South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation; Iziko Museums; the Durban Art Gallery; The Apartheid Museum; The National Library of South Africa; The National Archives of South Africa; The South African Preservation and Conservation Group; the National Department of Arts and Culture; Lucy Blumenthal fine art conservator in private practice; Sandra Markgraaf paintings conservator in private practice.

<sup>155</sup> The Courtauld Institute of Art; the University of Delaware; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Harvard University; Yale University; University of California, Los Angeles; the Stichting Restauratie Atelier Limburg; The Mellon Foundation.

professionals and conservator-restorers. The first three days of March 2015 were dedicated to presentations on various conservation programmes overseas, their format and content, with further discussions centred on four key questions: is there a need and potential for university-based training in conservation in South Africa? What components should such a programme have, and what competencies would it foster? Who could plan, launch, test and develop such a programme? And finally, should alternatives to a formal academic programme be considered in the meantime, or in addition to formal academic training (Westermann, 2015:2)?

Each South African participant presented their institution and motivated how they were involved in conservation activities. These ranged from sizeable preventive conservation projects revolving around re-organising or improving existing storage conditions of collections; reacting to disasters such as mould outbreaks which then engendered preventive and interventive conservation projects; few institutions locally have in-house conservation facilities and staff and rely on external conservators as the needs arise and financial resources can be gathered for specific projects.

The international participants, in turn, presented their institutions and the training they offered, outlining entrance requirements and application numbers and demographics as opposed to final intake numbers and demographics. The various curricula were outlined as well as other teaching and training projects they were involved in globally. These presentations outlined several requirements for successful teaching and training projects, namely strong advocacy for conservation to educate both the public, management and governments to get their support and buy-in; need sustained leadership; focus on connecting preservation initiatives; build on partnerships and professional networks for support and mentoring; internships/residences for students to apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

Following three days of discussions, the participants agreed that there is an urgent need for art conservation in South Africa to be “consolidated, strengthened and promoted” and that a Master’s programme in art conservation can serve as an ideal vehicle for this endeavour. Although the term ‘art conservation’ was used by the international participants attending the workshop, the use of this term was repeatedly raised as a point of concern for their South African counterparts, who saw it as exclusionary of the “wide range of images and material products of a culture that have been produced, imported, and circulated in South Africa over the past millennia” (Westermann, 2015:1). As Mariet Westermann (former Vice-President of



the AW Mellon Foundation for programmes and research, June 2010 – July 2019) points out in her closing remarks (2015:2), “conservators today around the world tend to be agnostic about this apparent problem. Conservators do not separate art and craft, art and ethnography in tired and rightly discredited ways. Instead, they will work on any work of material culture that stakeholders believe is important to preserve, and that needs care, material research, or attention.” Westermann (2015:2) further suggested that “for this initiative in formation, could we think of art conservation in South Africa as a discipline dedicated to artefacts, objects of material culture, that harbour within them evidence of the knowledge, interests, aspirations, beliefs, and social and ritual practices of the many peoples who originated here, have come from here over time, have stayed or have left, and whose heirs now need to make this democratic society together?” The focus of the degree on ‘art’ conservation was a rallying point for repeated discussions, and ultimately the term ‘art’ was dropped in favour of ‘tangible heritage’, which was seen as more appropriate.

After the Art Conservation Workshop, the University of Pretoria submitted a grant application to the Mellon Foundation for initial funding as part of a development grant, which it received. The funds received as part of the development grant to carry out a more in-depth needs analysis throughout South Africa with local site visits and stakeholder meetings within South Africa, but as the programme was envisaged to service the continent potentially, a look at South Africa’s close neighbours was also envisaged. The development planning grant would also make funds available for network building beyond the continent, allow the University to conduct pilot projects and workshops, as well as support to develop the curriculum (Project proposal: Development of a collaborative and Multidisciplinary Master’s Programme in Tangible Heritage Conservation for South Africa).

Both a University of Pretoria internal working group and an external specialist advisory group were set up (see Appendix 5). The University group consisted of members of the Humanities Dean’s Office from which the project was run, and where the academic programme would be located, the Department of Visual Arts, the Department of UP Arts (where the UP Museums and Conservation laboratory staff were located), the UP Archives, the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology and the future inaugural director of what was to become the Javett Art Centre at the University of Pretoria (Javett-UP). The primary task of the internal group would be to oversee the development of the master’s programme.

The primary task of the external specialist group was to serve as a reference group to guide the internal group and ensure that the Master's programme is developed according to international standards. The external specialist group included representatives from the government departments of Arts and Culture, the Department of Science and Technology, the course coordinator for the Postgraduate Diploma in Museum and Heritage Studies, The National Library of South Africa in Pretoria, the University of the Witwatersrand's Art Museum and Rock Art Research Institute, the University of Cape Town's Centre for Humanities Research and Centre for Curating the Archive, The Durban University of Technology, Iziko Museums and Ditsong Museums of South Africa. This group's remit also focused on advising on the programme's suitability for the local context and the heritage sector. However, as most were not conservators or worked directly with conservators, it was decided to include two international participants from the 2015 Art Conservation workshop to advise further.

### **5.3. From a Postgraduate Diploma to Honours, Museum Studies at the University of Pretoria**

When the post-graduate diploma course was first developed, its strength lay in its blend of theoretical and practical classes offered over weekends and part-time. Several museum professionals presented the course, which ensured graduates were in harmony with sectorial needs. However, over time, the sector changed, and staff mobility meant that new appointments were made to the teaching team, generally though most were still involved in the heritage sector, if not within museums. Apart from a few guest lecturers within the University, the appointment of many of the teaching staff was voluntary and not contractual. Over time, responsibilities from their primary occupation kept many lecturers from continuing to present on the course. Staff retention was further complicated by the requirement for diversity in the teaching cohort, which was problematic due to a lack of interest and no financial incentives (Mlambo, 2014).

From 2014 onwards, several internal discussions were held at the University of Pretoria about the future of the post-graduate programme in museum studies as the then coordinator wanted to leave and the department where the course was located felt that they no longer had the in-house expertise to present the course themselves. What was needed was a permanently appointed course coordinator that could redesign the course and take on the bulk of the teaching.

The initial discussions were to discuss the transfer of Museum Studies to a more suitable academic home. The newly formed Department of UP Arts seemed like the logical academic home as it contained the UP Museums unit where some personnel were already involved with lecturing on the museum studies course and having graduated from it in the past. However, although the proposal of moving the Museum Studies programmes to the home of the UP Museums seemed like a logical step, the proposal by Professor Mlambo (Senate proposal S54/15), then head of the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, was denied by the Principal and Senate on the basis that the Department of UP Arts was not an academic department but a support service unit.

By 2015 a position in Museum Studies was created in the Department of Visual Arts, and in 2017, Dr Siona O’Connell, a visual studies and African studies scholar from UCT’s Centre for Curating the Archive, was appointed to overhaul the Museum Studies course and manage it. At that point, the Museums Studies courses consisted of the Post-graduate Diploma as well as the Honours. The Museum Studies Post-graduate Diploma was terminated and revamped into a full-honours programme. As I had been lecturing in the diploma course since 2015, I assisted Dr O’Connell with redeveloping the programme. This was the perfect opportunity to improve the honours with a strong emphasis on conservation as a core museum function, to form the primary access into the master’s degree in Tangible Heritage Conservation.

Renamed the BSocSci Hons in Heritage, Museum and Preservation Studies, the programme was based on the old PG diploma and integrates curation, heritage management and museum skills with a strong preventive conservation focus. Based on observations during the site visits and regional meetings, I felt strongly that all heritage professionals, irrespective of rank or title, should have a solid grounding in preventive conservation and its importance for the continued well-being of collections in their care to make more informed decisions to safeguard objects and collections during handling, storage, transport and display. This, then in a sense, is a return to the original *ICOM Common Basic Syllabus for Professional Museum Training* outlined in Chapter 2. The idea is not to train technical staff, but to encourage all potential museum and gallery staff to take a vested interest in the care of their collections, as the core element to appropriate management of heritage, to fulfil other museum functions of making collections accessible for research and exhibitions, and critical engagement between institutions, and the publics they serve to understand better and reflect epistemologies and genealogies accurately (University of Pretoria, 2018:[sp]). The course goes beyond the confines of the museum and recognises broader critical issues in the field of heritage studies, such as “heritage theory,

policy and practice through an engagement with a series of public spaces and heritage sites, including sites of burial, consumption and the South African city” (University of Pretoria, 2018: [sp]). The idea of the first half of the course is to look at the accepted museological discourse in all its complexities and interrogate museums' current role and purpose in their current form. Grounded in a solid southern African focus and using case studies that cut across the grain, the course challenges students to question whether museums can be reimagined, how this could be achieved and if such a prospect is realistic for our country in the contemporary context.

The course is managed by two permanently employed academic staff who take on the bulk of the teaching, thus ensuring consistency of standard, supplemented by occasional subject specialists as guest lecturers. The honours programme is fully integrated into the UP landscape, and teaching is carried out by staff from the UP Museums, the UP Archives, Special Collections, and occasionally returning alumni. The programme is supplemented by guest lecturers where necessary for particular specialist topics. The programme was launched in 2018 with five students, ten in 2019 and five in 2020.

#### **5.4. Keeping it local, site visits and regional meetings**

The development of the master's degree in Tangible Heritage Conservation was envisaged within a spoke-and-wheel teaching and training delivery model. The inter-institutional collaborations formed the backbone of the initiative (University of Pretoria, 2015). The master's degree at the University of Pretoria would be central to the model, and shorter courses offered at partner institutions could potentially serve as entry points to the programme. To achieve this goal, the University of Pretoria would have to maintain and strengthen these inter-institutional collaborations through various meetings across the country. As a result, UP embarked on extensive consultations with a diverse selection of critical internal and external stakeholders from government departments, parastatals, academic institutions and conservators in private practice to ensure that the sector's needs are met, both in South Africa as well as into the broader continent.

The development phase of the programme included a needs analysis taking the shape of 4 regional stakeholder meetings during 2016, in Pretoria (7 March 2016), Durban (1 April 2016), Cape Town (26 May 2016) and Kimberley (8 June 2016). These regional meetings were accompanied by site visits to “targeted institutions such as universities, laboratories, museums,

archives, libraries and other relevant local, provincial, national, private and public sector facilities, both locally and internationally” (Mellon draft proposal, 2015:4).

The purpose of the site visits was to get a sense of who was involved with conservation, in what way and at what level to see where partnerships could be developed and strengthened with institutions that “have the capacity to contribute directly to the proposed Master’s programme either through the use of their facilities and specialist expertise or the presentation of foundational courses or training that can provide entry into the proposed Master’s programme” (University of Pretoria, 2015:4). Christopher Till<sup>156</sup>, the founding curatorial director of the Javett-UP, employed at the University of Pretoria from 2016, took the lead on all visits and stakeholder meetings, with a research assistant as a centralised point of contact. Wherever possible, the UP delegation included other members of the internal working committee to lend a fresh and objective outlook on conservation and its many issues and challenges.

### **5.5. International site visits**

Part of the Mellon funded planning grant facilitated site visits, and regional meetings continued internationally, most notably with South Africa’s immediate neighbours. The ultimate intention and goal of the programme were to extend into Africa, not just to offer training to potential students, but also to connect practitioners and academics on the continent for student and staff exchanges and build a network of professionals with the common goal of increasing the conservation of Africa’s heritage in Africa; a goal which has increased in urgency and importance since the repeated calls for restitution and the release of the Sarr-Savoy<sup>157</sup> report in

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<sup>156</sup> Christopher Till is the founding director of the Javett-UP, but is also the director of Johannesburg’s Apartheid Museum and the principal driver behind the Nelson Mandela Capture Site in Howick, KwaZulu-Natal. Till was educated at Hilton College and Rhodes University, where he obtained a master’s degree in fine art. He began his career at the National Gallery of Zimbabwe in 1977, and has since held a variety of other museum (Curator of the Gold of Africa Museum, Cape Town) and leadership positions, among them in the National Arts Festival, SAMA and the International Council of Museums Fine Art Committee (ICOM) (Panyane, 2020: [sp]).

<sup>157</sup> In response to the presence of collections of African artefacts in French museums, the French President Emmanuel Macron surmised the colonisation of Africa as a crime against humanity (Pilling, 2018). He visited a number of African countries with a view to propose a new "Euro-African initiative" against "criminal organisations and people trafficking networks" in the region (Codrea-Rado, 2017). Speaking in Burkina Faso, Macron delivered a public apology for France’s colonisation of Africa, recognising that it had led to injustice and discrimination. He also acknowledged that much of Africa’s heritage had been looted and relocated in French museums, “African heritage,” Macron said, “must be highlighted in Paris, but also in Dakar, in Lagos, and in Cotonou,” (Codrea-Rado, 2017). Macron vowed that the return of African artefacts will become “a top priority” for France (Codrea-Rado, 2017) and commissioned French art historian Bénédicte Savoy and the Senegalese writer Felwine Sarr to carry out an audit of all African artefacts in French museums. The Sarr-Savoy Report covers

France. The development of large national museums such as the Museum of Black Civilizations in Dakar, Senegal, will likewise lend weight to the increased calls for restitution as one of the main arguments against restitution was Africa's inability to care for its heritage (Katz, 2018:[sp]; Searcey & Nayeri, 2019:[sp]). The need for such collaborations become especially relevant when reviewing the First Phase of the Sarr-Savoy Report's restitution process commencing (November 2018-2019). The report indicates that the "countries seeking reclamations need to consider that the infrastructure for housing them are ready and prepared to receive them" (Sarr & Savoy, 2018:63), and across Africa, researchers and various experts are preparing to receive and conserve their cultural heritage (Haynes, 2020:[sp]). In Senegal, the Museum of Black Civilisations opened in 2018 and the following year welcomed the sword and scabbard of Omar Saïdou Tall, a 19th Century Islamic, anti-colonial leader and the founder of the Toucouleur whose items were seized in 1893 when the French defeated his son in Mali (see: Senegal: France Returns El Hadj Omar Tall's Sword to Senegal, 2020). Likewise, in Nigeria, the Benin Royal Museum is intended to open in 2021 to exhibit some of the famed Benin Bronzes<sup>158</sup> (A New Museum to Bring the Benin Bronzes Home, 2020), and in Ghana, a newly established committee to advise the government on amongst other issues, research on Ghanaian objects in international museum collections, and new architectural projects (McGivern, 2020).

Thus, international site visits started by contacting colleagues in museums, galleries, and archives interested in conservation and asking them to invite their own contacts who may be interested in the University's proposed programme. As a result, site visits and regional meetings were held in Windhoek (Namibia) and Harare (Zimbabwe), where seven additional institutions were visited. At the regional meetings in Windhoek, thirty people attended (draw from) the National Gallery of Namibia, the Arts Association Heritage Trust, the Goethe Institute, the University of Namibia, the City of Windhoek, the Oranjemund Shipwreck Museum and the University of Science and Technology of Namibia amongst others; with a further seven in Harare from the University of Zimbabwe, the National Gallery, the National

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the two-thirds of Africa's prominent heritage objects in French museums, focussing on items that were pillaged by soldiers, administrators or scientific explorers during France's colonial period between the 19th century and the 1960s (Sarr & Savoy, 2018). The report is complimented with guidelines for the objects' restitution to the originator nation-states' museum (Katz, 2018:[sp]).

<sup>158</sup> The Benin Bronzes include a vast cache of bronze plaques which adorned the royal city of Benin in 1897 when they were looted by British troops during a punitive raid. Over one thousand of these plaques are distributed in museums across the world including the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (see Hicks, 2020).

Monuments and Museums of Zimbabwe, and the National Archives. Unfortunately, it was not possible to include Botswana despite having known contacts there. Mozambique was also identified for a site visit, but contacts were unresponsive at the time.

Although there was a concerted effort to reach out across Africa, and academic colleagues tasked with making contact, the idea of connecting practitioners in Africa has until now still not fully materialised, although connections have been strengthened with Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia with students having enquired about the Master's programme, even before its inaugural intake. The University's involvement since 2015 in the Global Consortium for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage<sup>159</sup> (GCPCH) and the hosting of the Culture in Crisis<sup>160</sup> conference at the University of Pretoria (October 2018) has gone a long way towards growing the network of conservation professionals on the African continent and connecting them. The University of Pretoria is expected to host the 5<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Global Consortium for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage in 2021, and it is hoped that holding this event on African soil will further strengthen a burgeoning African network.

Site visits to the United States were also included to strengthen existing ties and assess the facilities required for conservation and the future setup requirements for the University of Pretoria's training space. Due to time constraints, the site visits were limited to the eastern coast with visits to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Photograph Conservation Department, part of the Sherman Fairchild Centre for Works on Paper and Photograph Conservation; Yale University's Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage; Harvard University's Strauss Centre for Conservation and Technical Studies; and the University of Delaware's Department of Art Conservation.

These international site visits were concluded in January 2018 with a trip to India to visit Mr Anupam Sah (Head of Art Conservation, Research and Training – CSMVS Museum Art

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<sup>159</sup> According to the Global Consortium's website (<https://gcpch.org/about-us>) Yale President Peter Salovey declared at the eighth United National Global Colloquium of University Presidents that "cultural heritage is essentially what defines our humanity." "In the concluding 'New Haven Declaration', scholars from participating institutions recommended their universities engage in a collaborative pursuit of three long-term goals in the academic key areas of education, research and advocacy for the preservation of cultural heritage. This declaration set the foundation for the formation of the Global Consortium for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage."

<sup>160</sup> Culture in Crisis is an initiative of the Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum in London started in 2014 and designed to bring people from around the world together to share knowledge and ideas on the protection of cultural heritage by raising public awareness and highlighting cross-disciplinary research (Culture in crisis webpage, 2020:[sp]).



Conservation Centre), who had facilitated the roundtable discussions and the design of the curriculum framework in Pretoria. Mr Sah is in the process of developing numerous conservation training courses through the philanthropic Tata Trust. Site visits around Mumbai revealed some of the large scale, sustainable and community-oriented conservation programmes led by Sah, including the Liminus II (Mumbai, 2011c2013) project, which saw more than 3000 ethnographic objects from all over India being conserved and installed as a 2km long exhibition at the Mumbai International Airport, as part of the ‘Jaya He’ Museum; and the Raghurajpur Project (Conservation as a Lever for Development), the Orissa Murals Revivals Project (Orissa, 2003 Liminus II 2004) the aim of which was to revive the dying mural painting techniques of Orissa whilst simultaneously networking with other development schemes to improve the socio-economic condition of the rural communities, creating a living museum of the site, as well as its traditions and ritual practices. The south to south connection between India and South Africa is particularly interesting as both countries are significant, geographically and ecologically diverse with comparable climatic conditions and similar challenging environmental conditions for preservation; both countries have similar challenges of both colonial and local materials in their collections, and both are emerging economies with minimal resources.

### **5.6. Putting pen to paper, designing a first draft**

As outlined in Chapter 4, a curriculum planning process has several key elements or steps to be followed. The first is to define the rationale or purpose of the curriculum, followed by identifying and unpacking the course and content objectives. Next, this is examined within the situational constraints, and the logistics of presenting the course are investigated. Only then can the attention turn to the syllabus outline and content and the selection of reference materials to support learning. Entry requirements and exit requirements, assessments of students and course evaluation conclude the curriculum planning process. Attending to all of these steps thoroughly during the planning phase should ensure students’ successful transfer of knowledge and skills.

A more simplified framework is proposed by Tyler (2013:59), who suggests four fundamental questions need to be answered when developing any curriculum and plan of instruction. Although Tyler’s model itemises the four main components of the curriculum into purposes, experiences, methods and evaluation in a logical and sequential approach, Lau (2001:32)

criticises this model as being heavily “industrialised” as it was developed in response to the industrialisation of society, which she describes as “the process of harnessing inanimate power to machines attended by workers in a factory.” Lau (2001:33) further notes that the four components of the curriculum planning process echo the managerial functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling as described by Drucker (1974). This resemblance is because both systems are “embedded in the same social environment and share a common modernist ideology of a rational conception of the world, where favourable operations must be preceded by distinct plans and objectives” (Lau, 2001:33). As Lau further elaborates

the overall planning exercise rests in selecting purpose, and the following learning experiences will be restricted by the predetermined purposes [...] the determination of purposes does not cater to any interaction among planners and learners. This makes it a problematic approach.

This is particularly true as part of the decolonial turn is to value and include the student as participant in his/her learning experiences. With its logical progression, Tyler's model can also be limiting in its approach in that it can be seen to be driven by predetermined goals, impelled by causation logic where a specific event leads to another. As opposed to effectuation logic, the danger is that in the former, the end goal, and all steps and experiences required to achieve it, are meticulously thought out and predetermined, leaving no room (or very little) for deviation and change. Whilst it is still finding its proverbial ‘feet’, a new programme must be flexible and responsive. The development of a curriculum using effectuation logic, with its sustained incremental experiences engaging with the available resources and realities, including the availability of materials, financial resources, time and human resources to teach (as conservation is such a specialist field), would seem to be more apt, leaving the end goal more fluid. Tyler’s model does, however, provide a starting point for thinking about and discussing the process of developing a new curriculum by engaging four questions, which include: “1. What is the desired educational purposes of the curriculum? 2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes? 3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized? 4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?” These questions underline the relevance of designing a curriculum that points to the interrelated issues about the process, the body of knowledge in the transmission of information. The kind of product to be achieved in terms of the student’s engagement and, more importantly, praxis, engaging ideas and learning in practical terms, remains central. As Roemich and Weintraub (2010:[sp]) explain:

[w]hile conservators of art and archaeology are traditionally charged with the examination, material analysis, preservation and treatment of cultural and artistic heritage, today they must also be prepared to engage with specialists in other disciplines on sustainable solutions for a wide variety of situations ranging from energy usage in built museums to preserving historic houses to managing archaeological sites. In order to succeed, conservators must be thoroughly versed in the concepts and practices of conservation but also be able to understand complex interdisciplinary decision making.

#### **5.6.1. Curriculum objectives: what educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes**

In summary, then, the programme includes 1) a background in chemistry and material science; in order to 2) attend to the preventive care of collections, and 3) sufficient practical experience in order to carry out ‘first aid’ treatments to stabilise a variety of objects and material types, whilst 4) being able to advocate for conservation effectively and communicate with custodians (including conservation colleagues, museum curators gallery owners, artists, source communities and the public) as to the necessity for selected treatments (or against treatments) in line with ethical guidelines, often accepting that decision-making may be a challenging and negotiated process.

Conservation knowledge is based on the twelve competencies listed in chapter 2, and practice relates to being able to physically carry out the practical aspects of those competencies, bearing in mind that the development of a ‘critical eye’, colour matching, as well as the precision and manual ability to carry out specific tasks is linked as much to aptitude as to practice. Here supervised laboratory sessions, rote repetition of specific treatments, and the internship will increase practical hours spent at the bench.

Learning experiences required to achieve such a diverse range of knowledge and skills include:

- Acquiring theoretical subject knowledge, including principles, laws, theories, experiments and evidence supporting generalizations such as ideas, facts and terms.
- Developing critical thinking skills including problem-solving, deductive reasoning, logical reasoning, using real-world scenarios and case studies

- Developing interest through exposure to a range of heritage materials and allowing student's interests to lead interactions
- Developing a critical eye through exposure to a diversity of material types, exposure to a variety of damage and deterioration
- Developing manual skills through rote repetition, as well as exposure to a wide variety of damaged and deteriorated materials that require intervention
- Developing social attitudes through assimilation from the environment, varied emotional experiences (including traumatic experiences), teamwork, consultation with clients, role-playing and case study scenarios, and working with real objects

These learning experiences naturally combine theoretical approaches and supervised practical laboratory sessions, with diminished supervision as students progress in their knowledge, ability, confidence, and independence.

Amplified by the student protests of 2015, the University of Pretoria has actively supporting blended modes of learning and block teaching with their emphasis on studying 'The UP Way', a combination of preparation before class, engaging in class with formative assessments and consolidation after class with summative assessments (UP website). The curriculum is tightly packed, condensed block teaching, although appealing, has been challenging to envisage, although some of the modules lend themselves well to 'export' for short course presentations, particularly when looking at the THC 804 module, which has many smaller units based on different materials (See Appendix 6).

Where advances in technology and connectivity have resulted in e-learning (or distance learning) being implemented in many universities worldwide, hybrid learning, or blended learning, is where some portion of traditional contact time is replaced with online instruction (Olapiriyakul & Scher, 2006:287-288). A hybrid learning approach with a blend of online delivery, videos, remote and recorded presentations from experts based in other parts of the world could all feature prominently in the THC curriculum. This mode of teaching and learning gains importance, both locally as the South African context is geographically spread out and distant from conservation centres and if the programme's goal is to stretch out into the continent. This type of hybridity maximise the student's exposure to the complexities of heritage conservation, which are often so contextually dependant, and gives them a diversity of 'experiences' they would not necessarily be exposed to in the classroom—in fact, implemented since the first year (2019) several guest lectures were carried out digitally with

presenters in Cape Town, Germany and the US. In hindsight, this was perhaps good preparation for the remote presentations, which became a daily feature of year two (2020) with the coronavirus outbreak, which led to the global pandemic, and various levels of lockdown both nationally and internationally. The programme was switched entirely online within a week, amid the chemistry module. Although practical chemistry experimentation had to be halted as students could not carry this out independently on such short notice (lack of availability of materials, which could not easily be shipped), teaching and assessments carried on, albeit in a different, more theoretical format supplemented with video footage of the experiments they would have carried out in class. Similarly, for the THC 803 module dealing with analytical techniques, it was simply not possible to have the students access the analytical equipment during the hard lockdown, and this set of experiences remained theoretically supplemented with video footage and had to be worked into year 3 (2021).

### **5.6.2. Rationale and objectives—desired educational purposes of the curriculum**

A starting point to the design of the curriculum was to review other programmes internationally to determine and benchmark how courses were structured, what format they took, what was the duration of the training and the balance between theoretical presentations, demonstrations and practical sessions where students could apply what they learnt that also develops their manual skills.

Referring to Chapter 4, most of the global training is presented at the undergraduate or postgraduate level, with either an MA or MSc as the terminal degree for practice. Therefore, it was decided early on that the academic programme in conservation at the University of Pretoria would be presented at a master's level, despite no training in conservation available in South Africa presented at an undergraduate or even honours level. This decision at an executive level could potentially be quite problematic as there is no direct 'pipeline' for students to be introduced to and enter the field, except at least the University's programme in museum studies mentioned previously in chapter 5.2.

Another point, which was not up for discussion, was the location of the programme. As McGinn (2017:6) outlined, "the proposed master's will be housed in the Faculty of Humanities, and although science forms a necessary component of the programme, the final qualification will be a Master of Arts". As explored in chapter 4 of this research, the placement and alignment of conservation programmes within the arts, or the sciences, has always been a cause

of disagreement as the field of conservation is multi-disciplinary in its approaches, content, and application. Both options exist for placement within the sciences or the humanities, dependant on the host institution; therefore, some conservation programmes are placed within the arts and others aligned to the sciences. Since the publication of the McGinn (2017) article, the programme has been developed as an MSocSci, a Master of Social Science, aligning with other programmes in the Faculty of Humanities. A discipline with a similar dilemma is archaeology, which at the University of Pretoria is likewise located in the Humanities, despite its scientific approach, scientific inquiry, and analytical techniques. Locating such disciplines in the Humanities does, however, widen the scope of students possibly entering these fields, and

many of the potential feeder courses into the programme are housed in the Humanities with students expected to come from Architecture, Anthropology, Archaeology, Tourism Studies, Museum and Heritage Studies, Visual Arts, as these are the disciplines most closely linked to the production, research and interpretation of Tangible Heritage. There has recently been some interest from the sciences, and [...] this is expected to grow in the future and possibly result in cross-pollination of students with science backgrounds entering the proposed MA in THC (McGinn, 2016b: 6).

Other courses in South Africa, which have a similar challenge concerning location, include UCT's MPhil in the Conservation of the Built Environment, housed in the School of Architecture in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment (UCT School of Architecture website, 2020). Similarly, the Postgraduate Diploma in Technical Conservation Studies at the South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation (see chapter 3, point 3.6.5), which is aligned with the Physical Sciences under which was classified under the Classification of Educational Subject Matter (CESM) as first-order Physical Science, followed by second-order Physical Science classification (Dreyer & Botha, 2017:14). Furthermore, the Institute, itself involved with conservation of the built environment, views the place of conservation as one of three distinct branches of Heritage Science, with heritage management the second and finally interpretation the third, "with an element of access integrated within each of these branches" (Dreyer & Botha, 2017:17). The Institute further suggest that Heritage Management and Heritage Interpretation are offspring of the Arts and Humanities, whilst conservation with its focus on material science emerges from and therefore finds its home in the natural sciences (Dreyer & Botha, 2017:17). The Institute, therefore, similarly to other programmes such as the University of Delaware's science-intensive master's programme,

which requires a full year of chemistry before enrolment (University of Delaware, 2020:[sp])). Although the South African Institute (SAInst) has applied the completion of a *Bridging to Chemistry for Conservators Course* as one of their prerequisites for entrance to their programme, it was felt very strongly that this type of requirement is currently not a viable option for the proposed MA (Master's at the University of Pretoria). As was suggested during the roundtable deliberations, this notion that “only those with science can do conservation” is one of the reasons that art conservation did not permeate in the 1990s in India (Sah, Quoted in McGinn, 2016a:[sp]). Even the Institute recognises that the requirement for chemistry is a daunting ‘hurdle’ with just under half of their candidates not completing the chemistry bridging course (Botha, A:2020:[sp]). However, it is recognised that the programme will have to include an understanding of the principles of material science, chemistry and physics, particularly if the university wishes to train *interventive/remedial* conservators (conservators who carry out treatments on objects). Therefore to remain more accessible to candidates from several diverse backgrounds, the master's degree would be lodged within the Humanities, initially within the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies where the museum studies programmes were located. In 2019, both the programmes in museum studies and Tangible Heritage Conservation were moved to the newly established School of the Arts<sup>161</sup>, thus consolidating the art and heritage-related activities and programmes of the University of Pretoria into a single cohesive unit.

As identified after the 2015 Art Conservation Workshop (March 2015), the rationale for the programme is to promote the conservation of Tangible Cultural Heritage (TCH) resources by developing a collaborative and multidisciplinary master's programme in Tangible Heritage Conservation. This provision of postgraduate training and education is required to

“address the urgent need for quality higher education training in the conservation management of moveable and immovable cultural heritage in South and Southern Africa” (University of Pretoria, 2015:i). As a master's degree is globally agreed to be the terminal degree for conservation, the UP focussed on presenting heritage

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<sup>161</sup> The School of the Arts was established in 2019 and regroups Classical Music, Classical Voice and Opera, Jazz, and Drama in a Department of Performing Arts; and the Fine Arts, Information Design, Visual Studies, Digital Culture and Media and Arts therapies in the Department of Visual Arts. In Addition, the School has three independent streams of academic programmes namely, the Arts of Africa, Interdisciplinary and Museum Studies, and Tangible Heritage Conservation. Aside from its academic programmes, the School is also home to the Tuks Camerata choir, the UP Ovuwa Cultural Ensemble and the UP Symphony Orchestra; and organises the Intercape Lunch Hour Concerts, the annual Kopanong Students Arts Festival and the UP Music Festival (School of the Arts website, 2020).



conservation as a field of study on the master's level to align with other programmes globally. The envisioned academic programme would serve to build the research capacity of a new generation of conservators and could aid in diversifying the demographics in the current conservation profession (University of Pretoria, 2015:i-ii).

The course objectives refer to the behaviours, actions, values and skills the course hopes to instil in students, as stated in the proposal to the Mellon Foundation, “The programme aims to prepare students to take up leading roles as professional conservators and conservation managers in the museum and heritage management environment” (University of Pretoria, 2015:i-ii). The ultimate goal of the UP programme based on the needs analysis is thus to equip graduates with sufficient understanding of materials that make up heritage objects, their interpretation, understanding and their sensitivities towards environmental conditions, and their mechanisms of age and decay to advise best and rectify these conditions to promote increased preservation. The programme has a strong preventive conservation focus to prevent damage and deterioration in the first instance instead of purely technical training of bench conservators to rectify damage once it has occurred. This is particularly appropriate to the South African context, where the provision of expensive in-house conservation services is not available to most institutions, and the centralised provincial museum services of the 1980s have largely disappeared. Institutions need personnel well-versed in preventive conservation that can attend to the preservation needs of a broad spectrum of heritage objects to improve the general longevity of collections and minimise potential new damage and decay. However, as there is generally a dearth of conservators in the country, it would also be necessary to prepare the students to identify areas of concern within collections by carrying out collection surveys and attending to ‘first aid’ interventions to stabilise them<sup>162</sup>, as such the programme needed to offer more than education and training in preventive conservation. Based on insights from our intensive consultations and an iterative process to designing a curriculum, there are specific essential skills that the degree hopes to foster, both in terms of knowledge as well as practice, but also with regards to soft skills that have become increasingly important in the changing

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<sup>162</sup> Stabilisation involves treatments (remedial/interventive conservation) aimed at slowing or halting existing deterioration processes and preventing additional damage. Stabilisation treatments can include the consolidation of lifting and flaking paint on a surface by placing a small amount of dilute adhesive (consolidant) under each flake. Yellowed acidic paper can be de-acidified by immersion in water to remove deterioration products embedded in the paper's fibres; or stabilisation may involve manipulating the environmental conditions, placing in stable mounts and secondary enclosures. Generally the conservation process ends when the object has been stabilised, unless aesthetic or functional considerations require restoration (See Caple 2000 and 2012).

conservation landscape and approach. Golfomitsou, Katrakazis and Heritage (2017:2) suggest of conservation science, “research in mainstream science is becoming increasingly more collaborative, international and problem-orientated [...]with expectations for more inclusive and accountable research activities that can lead to greater value-added for society [...] Based on the premise that open and collaborative knowledge systems are more resilient and impactful.” This emphasis on collaboration and transdisciplinary projects highlights the need for students to hone their ‘soft skills’. More recently, within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, students have had to learn to work remotely, building a certain level of independence, resilience, and flexibility; all of which are important attributes when working in an unstable heritage field, where heritage is threatened, contested, and will remain this way for some time.

### **5.6.3. Syllabus: How can these educational experiences be effectively organised?**

Effective organisation can only be achieved with a thorough understanding of the goals that the training hopes to achieve; as Tyler (2013:60) points out,

[t]hese educational objectives become the criteria by which materials are selected, content is outlined, instructional procedures are developed, and tests and examinations are prepared. All aspects of the educational programme are meant to accomplish basic educational purposes.

It is helpful to start with the desired outcomes or competencies a programme hopes to foster to guide the structure. Starting with the essential core competencies of the conservator (see chapter 2.4) as an outline of the goals and objectives the Pretoria programme hopes to achieve, as Tyler (2013:60) provided a valuable starting point and as were used as the basis for developing the curriculum structure and framework, and subject areas to be covered. Discussions on developing the structure and content focused on a two-day roundtable meeting in Pretoria that brought together members of the University’s internal working group, some members of the external advisory group, supplemented by selected conservators in various specialisms<sup>163</sup> or staff intimately acquainted with conservation. These practitioners were mainly involved during site visits, regional meetings, and stakeholder meetings during the

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<sup>163</sup> Specialisms represented included preventive conservation as well as paintings conservation, paper conservation, ceramics conservation, metals conservation, stone and mortar.

development phases. Some were reconvened for the roundtable event. Diverse areas of expertise were thus represented at the roundtable event to discuss the actual curriculum design and planning, including the built environment, archives, libraries and museums; paper, book and photograph conservation; the conservation of artworks on paper; paintings conservation on canvas, board and wood supports; ceramics glass and stone conservation; and metals conservation. The discussions were facilitated by Mr Anupam Sah<sup>164</sup>, an expert in conservation from Mumbai, India, recommended by the Mellon Foundation.

Initial discussions on day 1 (20 June 2016) of the roundtable focused on what the curriculum framework might look like, at what level the programme should be targeted, and the balance between preservation and conservation. As indicated in chapter 2, conservation teaching and training have moved away from apprenticeship teaching and training to academic training through universities or other recognised institutions. The training programmes range in duration from two to seven years and are offered at the undergraduate or post-graduate level and vary in terms of the subject areas and specialisations offered. However, the common point to all of these degrees is the competencies to be fostered in students by the time they graduate and enter the profession. These range from being well versed in the following: 1) conservation terminology; 2) conservation history, ethics and philosophy; 3) values and significance; 4) history of technology and cultural heritage; 5) access and use of cultural heritage; 6) health and safety policies and regulations; 7) scientific principles and methods; 8) processes of deterioration and change; 9) preventive care; 10) examination methods; 11) documentation; and 12) treatment methods. Most programmes achieve this level through a 2-3 year programme, usually at the master's level. The workshop participants accepted two years as the minimum time required to assimilate the knowledge and practice required to be acceptable to the University and comply with the allotted completion time for a government subsidy for public higher education institutions. The twelve competencies listed above were then utilised as a point of departure to organise the curriculum and focus the specific outcomes of the various modules.

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<sup>164</sup> With a background in Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics, Mr Sah completed an MA in the Conservation of Works of Art at The National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology in New Delhi (1992), followed by further studies at the Università Internazionale dell'Arte in Florence, Italy, where he completed two specialisations in the conservation of paintings on canvas and panel, as well as the conservation of polychrome wood sculpture. Mr Sah is now the Consulting Head Art Conservation, Research and Training at the Chitrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Museum in Mumbai, India. He is also Director of the not-for-profit Anupam Heritage lab and founder Secretary for the Himalayan Society for Heritage and Art Conservation.

Thus, the curriculum framework was designed to focus on theory in year 1, followed by a focus on application and research in year 2. The next step was to determine how each of the particular segments of knowledge and competencies listed above could be arranged in a meaningful way, and the twelve core competencies were grouped into modules. An introductory module, THC 801, would review conservation terminology, conservation history, ethics and philosophy, values and significance, and basic preventive conservation practice. This would lay the foundation for why conservation must be grounded in understanding basic chemistry and material science in THC 802 by looking at scientific principles and methods and understanding the natural processes that cause a change in artefacts but can also be detrimental to human health. THC 803, which looks at examination methods, documentation, and research design, would allow students to approach objects scientifically and understand what analytical tools are available to look deeper and better understand the deterioration processes in objects. Processes of deterioration and change and their mitigation will then be covered in greater detail as THC 804 looks at various material types in small sub-units, whilst in-depth remedial treatment is covered in THC 806, THC 807 and THC 808.

The content of each of these modules was then populated by an additional round of consultations (mainly carried out electronically with targeted participants) and by reviewing what was being covered in programmes internationally.

Below is the outline of the various modules in year 1, drawn from the 2021 Faculty yearbook (Available in Appendix 6):

**THC 801 (year 1)** is an introductory module that grounds the students in the concepts of heritage and the evolution of heritage and conservation. This module lays the foundation for understanding the many challenges of conserving heritage in different environments and foregrounds the importance of ethical conduct, consultation and shared decision-making, and the conservator's role and responsibility. This is particularly important when dealing with culturally sensitive material, heritage outside one's own culture, and traumatic or offensive heritage. As tangible heritage cannot be separated from intangible values and significance, this module focuses on understanding the significance, value and use of cultural heritage and how this changes worldwide, with calls for universality being highly problematic. These modern thoughts and considerations have been the result of a change in conservation praxis, and so the module looks at the development of conservation and how ethics, theory, and practice have changed since its initial development.

**THC 802 (year 1)** provides the students with the necessary chemistry and material science concepts to understand the material components of heritage objects and how they age, deteriorate, and decay. The module is designed for students with no prior exposure to the sciences and focuses on understanding major conservation issues such as material types, environment, cleaning and deterioration.

**THC 803 (year 1)** introduces students to the possibilities of conservation research, looking at both research methods, tools & equipment and how their use can assist in understanding a particular material, the manufacture and assembly of objects; as well as how to approach research design and research methodology in conservation. This module includes theoretical and practical components, which focus on the documentation of artefacts, photography, the use of various analytical techniques, the preparation of research projects, writing project proposals and academic writing for publication.

**THC 804 (year 1)** is a theoretical and practical module that exposes the students to the diversity of materials encountered in cultural heritage material. Using knowledge and understanding of chemistry and materials science explored in THC802 and using a range of visual examination and analytical techniques covered in THC 803, students are guided in a more in-depth examination of objects, identifying materials, and learning about the technology and manufacture of cultural material. Students will approach the conservation process holistically from appropriate handling, storage and exhibition guidelines specific to each material type, identifying change and its causes, and minimising this change through appropriate mounting, enclosures, storage, and exhibition. Additionally, students will be introduced to essential remedial treatments to stabilise cultural material to prolong its useable life.

Very few programmes generally focus on ‘objects conservation’ where the emphasis is on mixed media objects and thus dealing with various materials. Most programmes require students to specialise in one conservation area because of the amount of knowledge vital to perform well in any specialism. However, it is also true that most programmes do have an introductory module dealing with the breadth of exposure to several materials (paper, wood, textile etc.) on a superficial level to equip students with the ability to give general collections care and advice. During the various site visits and stakeholder meetings, this dual approach was widely accepted as necessary in the South African context where graduates would be confronted with a vast array of objects and materials to care for; therefore, it was repeatedly

suggested that an ‘objects conservation’ module be offered to equip students within this reality (McGinn, 2016a: [sp]; AGL McGinn, 2016c: [sp]).

Professional development opportunities are limited in South Africa (Smuts, 2014; McGinn, 2017; Vollgraaff, 2015); graduates will largely need to increase their knowledge and technical skills independently. To do this, they will need to be able to carry out desktop research, have the necessary scientific background to evaluate publications, apply the research to the South African context and its collections, and generate new knowledge related to the field of heritage conservation in South Africa, either independently or in collaboration with experts in allied fields both locally and internationally. To deepen the understanding of applied remedial conservation, graduates of the UP programme will also have to have in-depth knowledge of a particular area of specialism. This would allow students to conduct research in a particular field, apply their understanding of the ethical guidelines and principles guiding conservation practice, and hone the manual skills necessary to apply remedial conservation treatments. For students to become proficient with a wide range of remedial treatments and achieve a depth of understanding, the programme would have to be a minimum of three years in length, which would not be feasible in South Africa. Thus, although a deep level of understanding is not possible within the allotted two years, there should be sufficient time for hands-on practice for students to become proficient in several remedial treatments to stabilise heritage objects. Full aesthetic restoration treatments or more advanced treatments could then be carried out collaboratively or under consultation with more experienced conservators in private practice, or referred to them entirely as is routinely the case in the US where “a preventive conservator employed by a smaller institution could focus on holistic collections care, leaving interventive work to outside contractors” (Norris & Wickens, 2018:303).

**THC 806, 807 and 808 (year 1)** are the elective specialisation modules that acquaint students with the introductory principles of remedial conservation for paper-based and archival materials, polychrome surfaces, and archaeological collections. Material covered includes identifying appropriate treatment options and evaluating these within collaborative decision-making processes for the appropriate cleaning, stabilisation and conservation of artefacts.

As indicated by the site visits and meetings in the initial scoping survey, many collections in various South African institutions are in disarray and infrastructure housing. Some of these are themselves in a state of decay. All types of heritage objects and collections are at risk of damage and deterioration; selecting and prioritising one type of heritage above another as an area of

focus for the programme was daunting. In addition, the reality is that anyone employed in collecting institutions in South Africa is generally expected to attend to the needs of various materials in the collections beyond their area of expertise, hence the need for a generalist module. In an area of specialisation, the same generalist thinking would apply, and an area of specialisation would need to be very broad to accommodate the South African context. Additionally, specialisms were selected to apply to local collections and where some measure of expertise was available for teaching, training and supervision.

So, for example, rather than paintings conservation as an area of specialisation, it was suggested that the module be more encompassing of other types of ‘polychrome surfaces’. According to ICOM-CC, polychromy typically covers sculptural and painted three-dimensional objects (wood and plaster), including decorative architectural surfaces. A module on polychrome surfaces (THC 807) would regroup any painted surface from paintings on canvas and board to painted sculpture and paint applied on other substrates, including cloth, ceramics, metals, glass etc. The unifying characteristics would be on the layered structure of the object consisting of a substrate or support, a preparatory layer or ground, a decorative layer, and a finishing layer. This allows then some measure of training and understanding in the approach to treatment not just of paintings on traditional supports such as board, canvas or wooden panels but also of artworks such as those of Noria Mabasa<sup>165</sup> (1938–), who painted on three-dimensional ceramic substrates post-firing, or Esther Mahlangu<sup>166</sup> (1935–) who applied her bold Ndebele designs on canvas, walls, and even cars. The techniques and skills obtained then become more widely applicable to artworks and heritage objects created in Africa, including masks, sculptures, drums etc.

An additional motivation for the specialisation in polychrome surfaces is the relative lack of complete records and understanding of many of South Africa’s artists, particularly the so-called

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<sup>165</sup> Noria Mmabasa (1938–), a Venda ceramicist and self-taught sculptor of figures and portraits. She initially worked in wood, later she started modelling clay figures both of which she would finish with paint application. Her artworks appear in the Pretoria Art Museum, SA National Gallery in Cape Town, the University of Fort Hare, University of the western Cape and University of the Witwatersrand art collections (Ogilvie, 1988:398)

<sup>166</sup> Esther Nikwambi Mahlangu (1935–), a self-taught artist who as an Ndebele woman followed tradition of decorating the homestead with colourful wall painting. Summer rains would wash down the natural pigments, necessitating annual redecoration each winter (De Jager & Loots, 2003:20). Mahlangu achieved international renown when she was invited to participate in an art exhibition at the Pompidou art centre in Paris, France in the late 1980s, where she painted a replica of her colourful homestead. In 1991, Mahlangu was invited to paint a prototype of the new BMW 525i model, for BMW’s Art Car Collection, which includes cars designed by Andy Warhol, Frank Stella and Roy Lichtenstein (De Jager & Loots, 2003:20).



black modernists (1960-1990) such as George Pemba<sup>167</sup> (1912-2001), Welcome Koboka<sup>168</sup> (1941-1999), Dumile Feni<sup>169</sup> (1942-1991), and Lucky Sibiyi<sup>170</sup> (1942-1999) to name just four of 21 identified artists (de Kamper, 2020:[sp]). The works of these artists have risen in prominence and have become unwitting targets of unscrupulous forgers as a result of the unknown extent of their oeuvre, as there is very little published source material on these artists (de Kamper, 2020:[sp]). As a result, their legacy is suffering, and according to de Kamper (2020:[sp]), they are the victims of “double exploitation”, having been sidelined from collections and the official art historical record due to their race, and now due to questions of authenticity.

Several practising painting conservators spread throughout the country (Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, to name a few), there is already a local human resource base whose expertise could be tapped for teaching, training, internship possibilities and supervision of projects. This local expertise could then be supplemented, where necessary, by bringing in foreign experts as guest lecturers either through remote digital lectures for theoretical classes or by physically bringing them out to South Africa for focussed workshops open to both the registered students and practising conservators as there are no training opportunities for paintings conservation in South Africa.

Apart from paintings and polychrome surfaces, the next specialisation area, which received attention, is paper conservation (THC 806). As Minicka (2019: 47) rightly states, “the ubiquity of paper can lend it a degree of invisibility”, and although works of art on paper are considered in terms of collections care; manuscripts, historical documents, records, ephemera and the like

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<sup>167</sup> George Pemba (1912–2001), born George Mnyalaza Milwa Pemba in Port Elizabeth. He was a painter of figures, portraits and both urban and rural genre scenes, working in watercolour, chalk and oil paint. George Pemba had some artistic training at the University of Fort Hare and Rhodes University and was awarded an honorary Master of Arts degree from the University of Fort Hare in 1979 (Ogilvie, 1988:511-512).

<sup>168</sup> Welcome Mandla Koboka (1941–1999) studied at the Jubilee Centre in Johannesburg under both Cecil Skotnes and Ephraim Ngatane. He is a painter of figures in oil, watercolour, ink and charcoal (Ogilvie, 1988:342).

<sup>169</sup> Zwelidumile Jeremiah Mgxaji, better known as Dumile Feni (1942–1991) had no formal art training but was briefly apprenticed to the Block & Leo Wald Sculpture, Pottery and Plastics Foundry in Jeppe, Johannesburg. He also received guidance from Bill Ainslie and Ephraim Ngatane who suggested that he go to the Jubilee Art Centre where he met Cecil Skotnes. Dumile depicted life and events he observed around him, and had “the ability and vision to transform the particular into the universal.” He was primarily a graphic artist, usually drawing in monochrome, but was also a gifted sculptor and his artworks have a rhythmic, linear and sculptural quality (Proud & Becker, 2006:176).

<sup>170</sup> Lucky Madlo Sibiyi (1942–1999) was a well-rounded artist experimenting with different media including painting (oil and powdered pigment on carved wooden panels, paper or canvas), sculpture (wood, bone and metal), and printmaking (serigraphs and woodcuts). He received some guidance from Cecil Skotnes and Bill Ainslie, but was mostly self-taught (Ogilvie, 1988:604-605).

are generally not given the same attention in most institutions whose primary holdings do not consist of paper-based collections. In addition, paper collections tend to be vast, such as the Western Cape Archives and Records Service in Cape Town, the second largest in the country, which holds an estimated 45 linear kilometres of shelved records (Minicka, 2019: 47). Initially, archives in South Africa

were shaped as an instrument of colonial regulation, and more recently by the prevailing apartheid ideology and its supporting bureaucratic culture. Under colonial and apartheid rule, public archives had a narrow mandate in respect of public records and the guiding apartheid-era policies saw a very uneven collection of non-public (or non-governmental) records (Archival Platform 2015:19-25 see Minicka, 2019: 47).

The over-arching goal of archives is to serve as a repository for records that have “outlived their day-to-day office-based usefulness” and yet are seen to retain ‘enduring value’ for future generations. It is widely recognised that archives hold a wealth of genealogical information for popular family history research (Hamilton, 2017) as well as more academic research (Derrida, 1996; Derrida, 2002; Hamilton, 2002; Hamilton & Skotnes, 2015; Buthelezi, 2012), particularly valuable as part of the ‘archival turn’ for post-colonial societies looking for the reinterpretation of “historical events, social enquiry on slavery, racism, inequality, colonisation, dispossession and settlement, among others” (Minicka, 2019: 47). At a more practical level, research on the records held in archives can assist in resolving complex legal issues regarding the provenance and custodianship of collections (De Kamper, 2018; Tiley-Nel, 2018), land ownership, dispossession and restitution, as well as chieftainship claims (Hamilton, 2017).

For paper-based collections, a pool of local practising bookbinders and paper conservators spread throughout the country to assist in lecturing and supervising students. The SAInst does present training in paper conservation as part of its post-graduate technical diploma. However, paper-based collections, including books, manuscripts, maps, archival records, and administrative records, are usually measured in running meters in archives and libraries. As a result of the scale of these collections, there is a great demand for the preservation and conservation of paper-based materials. In addition, the University, similarly to the polychrome module, would extend the definition of paper conservation to include paper and archival materials such as books, photographs and works of art on paper, such that a student who has

attended the training at the Institute, could further his/her studies at the University and enlarge his/her knowledge of paper conservation further.

The final area of specialisation identified as a priority area is archaeological collections (THC 808). With South Africa's rich archaeological past, several vast collections of archaeological material have been amassed (and continue to grow), consisting of stone implements, boulders with rock art, ceramic vessels and metal artefacts, to name a few. Archaeological artefacts are particularly fragile as they initially decay post-burial until they acclimatise to their new environmental conditions inland or aquatic burials. Excavation or retrieval once again exposes them to potential damage through increased handling and exposes them to vastly different environmental conditions than what they have become used to, which can cause rapid deterioration (Cronyn, 1990; Pollard & Heron, 1996). Therefore, conservation of archaeological materials should ideally begin in the field, with careful retrieval and lifting. As Cronyn (1990:43) describes, "considerable information may lie in the deposit layer attached to an artefact", including food debris, fibres, corrosion products etc., and it is sometimes difficult to "judge where the soil ends and the object begins". Therefore, to minimise the potential loss of this information, generally, a layer of deposit should be allowed to remain on the object, yet few archaeological expeditions enlist the service of an archaeological conservator to advise in this process. The first treatment carried out in the field usually removes surface dirt in situ for photography, and the archaeologists usually overclean the excavation pit to ensure clear images (Cronyn, 1990:43). Decoration, paint, fine details of manufacture or use and residues could easily be removed by inadvertent scraping, rubbing, harsh brushing or even water immersion. Yet this was standard practice for a long time, and archaeologists have been known to apply treatments to clean and prepare artefacts such as soaking objects in water and scrubbing with a stiff bristle brush, which can cause both physical damage (abrasion and scratches), as well as chemical damage (hydration and solubilisation of salts, hydrolysis of artefacts and corrosion of metals). Soaking in acid baths to remove calcareous layers or glueing potsherds to reconstruct vessels with whatever adhesive is at hand including inappropriate, and often irreversible adhesives is also standard practice (Kötken, 2003:224). Objects can exhibit different physical evidence for use-wear, damage, and deterioration, giving clues about past use (Rice, 1987). The conservation of archaeological collections is thus best carried out post-excavation in the lab, with trained personnel, yet it is rare for archaeologists and conservators to work together (Sigurðardóttir, 2003:221; Tiley-Nel & Antonites, 2015:7). This is especially so in South Africa as there are no archaeological conservators and no conservation training for

archaeology students. Materials analysis is gaining ground in archaeology studies. It is recognised that artefacts retrieved from archaeological contexts and archaeological collections often contain materials and artefacts with high research potential in their evidence of use and wear. However, the fragility of these marks and residues, which can be easily removed with careless or inappropriate treatments, is rarely considered. Many of these artefacts in archaeological collections today have in addition been previously treated and ‘altered’ to prepare objects for use, whether this is for research purposes with the cleaning of fragments for reassembly to determine shape and typology; or exhibition which would entail cleaning, reassembly, filling and aesthetic integration. All materials age and decay, and past restoration and repair materials are no exception. Furthermore, materials treated in the past will likely need to be retreated as adhesives harden and become brittle, shrink and pull away from the original material, or soften and slump over time causing further damage (Buys & Oakley, 1996:74).

As mentioned previously, the need is great in all manner of materials in collections. Not mentioned above are the needs of organic materials, which tend to deteriorate much faster than other materials. Although textiles, wood and furniture, and the myriad of organic materials that make up composite objects (particularly in ethnographic collections) were considered and deliberated as an additional need. The range of materials is so vast, and treatments complex that it was identified as a point of growth for the programme in future years, and perhaps not the adventure to embark on as a maiden voyage into establishing conservation as a discipline at UP. Natural history specimens, despite having been mentioned, have likewise not been considered for an initial iteration of the programme as this is linked to taxidermy, of which there are many skilled specialists in South Africa; or in the case of fossils linked to archaeology and therefore would be dealt with under archaeological collections. The THC 806, 807 and 808 modules allow the student to familiarise themselves with a particular material type as an area of specialisation, which can then be further developed during the internship in THC 805.

**THC 805 (year 2)** “Practice forms an integral part of interventive conservation to apply theoretical knowledge on treatment evaluation and development, decision-making and to hone bench skills. This is a compulsory module in year 2 of the master’s. However, the focus should be on interventive/remedial conservation training in the field of specialisation. This may also apply to general preventive conservation practice or heritage management with a strong conservation focus, as it is recognised that not all students desire to be interventive conservators and some may be more theoretically oriented. Training is carried out under supervision within a museum collection or in private practice with an approved conservator-restorer and contains

the practical component of the mini-dissertation.” Students are free to decide where they would like to have their internship, allowing international students to go home and link up remotely for regular feedback sessions. As internship opportunities are scarce and usually not advertised externally to the institution, it was vitally important for the programme that the networking and relationships built during the project's development phase lead to concrete agreements for student placements.

**THC 800 (year 2)** In addition to a practical assessment as part of the internship, students are to submit a mini-dissertation of 20 000– 30 000 words on an approved conservation-based topic. Here, the subject is based on the student's interest and available expertise within the teaching staff, supported by co-supervisors where possible. Furthermore, the initial relationships and formal agreements developed during the development grant will gain importance.

In addition to the technical knowledge and skills outlined above, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of imparting soft skills in higher education (Cornali, 2018; Joseph et al., 2010; Schulz, 2008). The recognition of the importance of soft skills to support technical skills has also found its way in the field of conservation with Wickens and Norris, 2018), as noted in chapter 4. The need to develop soft skills in higher education has been highlighted recently due to the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020, which led to all universities worldwide shutting down due to national shutdowns and calls to stay home. Conservation programmes were put on hold as academics scrambled to continue online. This led to the development of the AcCESS (Academic Conservation Education Sharing Site) platform by a small group of academics in conservation programmes in Europe, and the US sought a way of sharing thoughts, ideas and resources on how to migrate their conservation teaching online in a meaningful way (Stols-Witlox et al. 2020:39). A recent ICCROM webinar on *Heritage Conservation Learning in the Covid World: challenges and opportunities* (22 September 2020) again highlighted the many challenges of translating an academic conservation programme with a high practical component into a virtual and remote learning world. Although much of the theory can be taught online, there are sensory aspects of working with objects that require a physical presence to observe and understand the tactile, auditory, olfactory and visual subtleties of materials, their assembly, deterioration, and change during treatment. For example glass emits a strong vinegar smell as it deteriorates, invidible cracks and weaknesses in a ceramic are often detected through resonance differences when the object is tapped lightly, and fading of parts of an artefact are often only discovered when handling the object and lifting

components that would otherwise have been saved from exposure to light by folds, creases or component parts such as lids.

### **5.6.3.1. Selection of teaching material**

The selection of relevant literature (books, articles, websites, blogs) and other content used as reference material for the course was initially determined by asking participants to suggest material they found relevant or valuable in their own practice, whether this was within conservation or not. Consulting on suggested reading lists also made provision for the identification of frequently cited texts, cross-disciplinary reference materials and a great diversity in both subject matter and authors, which assisted in having a more globally representative reference list and not just a Eurocentric one, although available literature is restricted from certain parts of the world (see Chapter 4).

As the most up-to-date conservation reference materials are available electronically, seed funding for a reference section focuses on seminal texts on various topics, including various material types, site management, building conservation, chemistry, and ethics. This was generously supplemented by donating several books from local practitioners and Yale University's Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage.

With the sudden move to online teaching due to the national shutdown caused by the coronavirus outbreak, teaching material had to be selected to supplement lectures and, to a certain extent, replace contact sessions, which could not occur. Many discipline-specific videos were sourced online to prepare lectures or review after class to better understand concepts and procedures. As daunting a task as this may have seemed, there is a lot of high-quality content freely available online. The sources for online material varied greatly, from lectures from Khan Academy<sup>171</sup> to videos by museum practitioners and conservators requested directly from them to YouTube and Vimeo content.

### **5.6.3.2. Access and entrance requirements**

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it is expected that the MSocSci will attract students from the Humanities, from the arts, history, and archaeology, but also potentially from chemistry

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<sup>171</sup> Khan Academy, was created in 2008 by Salman Khan as an American-based non-profit educational organization. The aim was to create an online repository of tools for teachers, parents and learners to support student education. This is done through freely accessible content in the form of short video lessons on a variety of topics (maths, science, economics, computing, life skills, languages, arts and humanities).

and the sciences. However, it is expected that the BSocSci Heritage, Museum and Preservation Studies will form the main pipeline for access to the master's degree.

Most programmes abroad focus on the breadth of exposure in year 1 and depth of exposure with specialisation in year 2, usually with intensive and immersive practical sessions such as internships or summer/winter school within the year and between years, with many programmes dedicating a full final year for this purpose. These programmes usually have strict pre-programme admission requirements including several credits in various subjects including art and cultural history, history/archaeology/anthropology, studio arts and chemistry; as well as including several hundred practical hours of documented conservation experience under the supervision of a conservator and be well acquainted with collection care activities carried out in museums, libraries, archives or private practice studios. In addition to these prerequisites, entrance interviews are highly competitive and include interviews and written examinations. These stringent entrance requirements cannot be applied in South Africa, as they would be too restrictive and limit access to the programme. Likewise, although it would be desirable to have interview-based tests of candidates to gauge their hand-eye coordination, manual dexterity, colour recognition etc. (and this is standard practice for most conservation courses), as is the presentation of a portfolio of work to illustrate artistic and technical abilities (as architecture or visual arts candidates do), having entrance examinations and portfolio presentations as requirements would limit the number of potential applicants to the THC master's degree. In addition, although one peer reviewer commented,

I would strongly encourage you to develop a committee drawn from the university, the museum community, working conservators, to serve on the admissions committee. This will encourage interest in and support for the programme (McGinn, 2016f: [sp]).

Setting up an admissions committee to interview and review the work of potential candidates was deemed too complicated in the South African context, and we were advised to instead focus on a pre-programme internship to gauge the aptitude of candidates and prepare them to enter the programme. However, there are simply too few opportunities for potential students to be exposed to the field, and intensive pre-programme internship opportunities are non-existent or not advertised. Where the candidates are known in advance, there has been an attempt to encourage them to come and volunteer at the UP Museums before the start of the academic year to get them familiar with working with collections.



#### **5.6.4. Assessment: How can we determine whether the goals are being achieved?**

The last question that several critical theorists suggest should inform curriculum development, such as Tyler (2013:59), is the question of assessment and evaluation. The assessment looks at whether the desired goals are being attained and is perhaps one of the most critical elements of curriculum design, as this is where practitioners and the curriculum designers can evaluate whether the presentation of the material and transmission of ideas have been understood, assimilated and whether students can demonstrate and apply what they have learnt. Assessments importantly also highlight strengths in the curriculum, or conversely areas where there are gaps or that were less well understood and may require redesign or a different approach. Assessments should ideally balance formative and summative assessments, and well-designed assessments enable students to apply the intellectual knowledge and practical skills they have learnt and indicate their level of competency (see chapter 4). Furthermore, as described in chapter 4, the balance between theory and practice is central to conservation training. Conservators are expected to have attained a certain level of expertise in carrying out conservation treatments on objects after analysing, documenting, and researching treatment options based on their theoretical knowledge of that particular object, similar objects, and its component materials. This technical expertise needs to be assessed in the same manner as the theory gained, and a continuous assessment approach was deemed most appropriate for the conservation course; as it would allow early detection of problematic areas, in all areas of the course, from the science and chemistry intensive modules to the hands-on treatment segments, thereby enabling the lecturer to intervene to address particular challenges in the learning project. Assessment would also have to take on various forms to target the development of various skills from quizzes to oral presentations and class discussions, written assignments, object documentation and descriptions, treatment proposals and the actual carrying out of treatments, with the inclusion of all of the associated documentation in a portfolio.

#### **5.7. Initial peer review**

The initial development of the master's proposed curriculum was designed as a two-year full-time programme; however, it was questioned whether the content could be redesigned to fit a one year programme. To do this, preventive conservation was removed from the master's, enlarged and inserted into the honours programme. Upon completing the redevelopment of the honours in museum studies and the master's in conservation's draft curricula, these were submitted to colleagues from a couple of established conservation programmes in the US

involved in the 2015 Art Conservation Workshop. Out of the ten potential peer reviewers' contacted, only half responded, and although the number of reviewers was small, comments revealed the same concerns across the board. The purpose of this initial peer review before the launch of the programme was to hopefully flag any potential weak areas in the proposed curriculum with the understanding that it was too early to benchmark the programme at this point and any premature evaluation may be negatively biased (McGinn, 2016f: [sp]).

At this point, the honours programme presented itself with a strong preventive conservation focus in the second semester, and the master's degree was presented as a one-year full time lectured master's degree with seven units including conservation principles (4 credits); science fundamentals (20 credits); research in conservation (16 credits); structure, properties of materials and mechanisms of decay (20 credits); introductory principles of remedial conservation (30 credits), and a mini-dissertation (90 credits) for a total of 180 credits to align with University requirements for a master's level course (McGinn, 2016e: [sp]). "The suggested split of preservation in the honours, and conservation in the master's degree was well received, as any museologist trained in this course will have a working knowledge on how to care for the collections under their custodianship, whether they are curators, managers, technicians or later enrol for conservation training" (McGinn, 2016f: [sp]). In general, the responses were positive and revealed the making of quite a robust programme involving both the honours and the master's, although there is a strong focus on collections management and preventive conservation. However, concerns were raised about how this programme was advertised as a master's in conservation, where conventional use of the term conservation tends to be limited to practitioners with treatment as a core competency. Peer reviewers highlighted that the programme appeared very thin regarding allocating sufficient time for practice and problem-solving. A suggestion was made for a 6-12 month internship that could remedy this situation, allowing students to gain experience and competency in *conservation*. Based on the initial peer review, the master's programme was adjusted and presented to Senate for approval in the first half of 2017, to begin with, its first intake in 2019, whilst the honour's programme began in 2018, introducing to this initial cohort the concepts of preservation, conservation and the possibility of advancing to the master's the following year.

## 5.8. The final product

After the initial peer review outlined above, the programme was re-drafted to extend full-time over two years. Theory-focussed lecture components were reduced in favour of increased practical hours in all modules, as one of the main criticisms in the peer review process was a concern over the short amount of time for practical hands-on training. As outlined in chapter 4, many conservators in academic practice criticise the imbalance between theory and practice in conservation training programmes, stating that hands-on practice is insufficient and valuable hand skills and knowledge are being lost as a result of practical sessions serving mainly as demonstrations and teaching aids in decision-making (Marincola, 2003; Seymour, 2014; Ashley-Smith, 2016).

As indicated earlier, a master's degree in conservation is seen globally as the terminal degree for conservation training and entering the profession as a qualified conservator-restorer after five years of training (including undergraduate and graduate study). The master's degree in Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria is thus on par with other courses accepting the master's degree as a suitable terminal qualification for a conservator-restorer. The two year period of study is in line with most conservation master's degrees globally, however as there is no undergraduate programme to serve as a foundation to comprehensively impart all the skills and knowledge expected of a conservator-restorer entering the profession, this two-year period may still be somewhat insufficient, and there will need to be a strong emphasis placed on lifelong learning, and offering short courses that can contribute to continued professional development; as well as pre-programme workshops to cater for students that have no background in preventive conservation as covered in some museological courses, such as at UP and UCT which both cover the basics of preventive conservation.

Below is a brief outline of the programme ratified by the University's Senate Executive Committee in 2018. Year one commences with an introductory module where ethics and the development of conservation thinking and theory would be explored, namely THC801 (6 credits); a basic course on chemistry for conservators THC802 (18 credits); an introduction and exploration of various approaches to research in conservation and the types of analytical tools used to carry out conservation research in THC 803 (18 credits); THC804 would introduce students to the variety of materials, manufacturing processes and their preservation and conservation for stabilization (18 credits); followed by a specialization module (30 credits). As per DHET (in other words, statutory) requirements for a master's degree, year two comprises

of a 300-600 hour internship (30 credits); and a research component in the form of a mini-dissertation (60 credits).

Once the programme was developed and ratified, advertisements were circulated for a senior professor who could steer the programme as Chair of Conservation. The Chair's role would be to give the programme direction and steer it through its necessary transformations and adaptations and take on a considerable amount of teaching and supervision of students. As such, candidates with an in-depth understanding of conservation and/or conservation science would be preferentially selected, although applications were as expected received from allied fields. Despite a lengthy advertisement and several names of retired professors and lecturers suggested through the Mellon Foundation, the University's participation in the Global Consortium and disseminating the position on various international platforms, a relatively small number of applications were received. Finally I turn to some tentative conclusions.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

*The continued presence of cultural heritage gives us hope, while its conservation bears testimony to our resilience.*

This thesis has focused on the historical and conceptual architecture that shaped the construction of a Master's Degree Curriculum in Tangible Heritage Conservation in a particular socio-historical context and at a particular time in the country's history. Working with documentary investigation (archival records), interviews, and case study analysis provided a descriptive, historical and analytical engagement informing the ecosystem of a unique conservation programme in a Southern context.

This concluding chapter reviews the research covered within the first five chapters, summarising the main concepts surrounding conservation and cultural heritage, which must first be seen beyond the confines of institutional boundaries. This chapter also contains a brief reflection on the actual implementation of the programme and some tentative experiences with the first two student cohorts.

As outlined in chapters 1 and 2, conservation as a profession has undergone a paradigm shift from a focus on materiality as emphasised in the 1964 Venice Charter (Jokilehto, 1998: 230) to a values-based approach as exemplified in the 1999 Burra Charter. In the former, the significance of heritage is inherent in the original fabric, and thus conservation focuses on minimal intervention and the authenticity of original material as a non-renewable resource that must be preserved unchanged for future generations. This relatively static and rigid approach is expert-driven, the community is disregarded, and community use of their heritage is strictly controlled and limited, creating a further disconnect between people, places and things, as well as a disconnect between past, present, and subsequently, unintentionally, creates a break in continuity between past and future (Poulios, 2014:19). In the latter, which developed from post-processual archaeology,<sup>172</sup> there is an increased focus on the values communities and

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<sup>172</sup> As described by Poulios (2014:19) post-processual archaeology “is a form of archaeological theory that is related to the broader development of postmodernism, which encouraged conservation professional to become

society ascribes to heritage. Heritage is not ‘self-evident’ as Poullos (2014:21) describes, rather the notion of heritage as an extrinsic and social process, and its identification lies in the subjective values stakeholders ascribe to a place, building, object, event, or song that identify it as heritage (Poullos, 2014:21). Therefore in a values-based approach, “the main aim of conservation is not the preservation of heritage itself, but the protection of the values imputed to it by the stakeholder groups” (Poullos, 2014:21), although the object still features strongly as the vessel or carrier for these intangible values and knowledge. In values-based conservation, there is a concerted effort to include stakeholders. The most significant contribution of this type of approach is knowledge exchange between the various stakeholder groups, including the conservation professionals. Furthermore, “the approach embraces the indigenous/non-Western communities’ (spiritual, and religious) associations with the sites, their management systems and maintenance practices” (Poullos, 2014:22). This type of thinking is in line with curriculum transformation and decolonisation that would attempt to be more inclusive and locally focussed that recognises the value in pluriversal knowledge (central to drawing in diverse voices in the construction and shaping of ideas and learning).

As museums and other cultural repositories “serve to remind us of who we are and what our place is in the world” (Davis, 2007:53), they “are places where societies reassure themselves of their social and cultural practices. They help to create the canon to be transmitted to next generations, give an official “curriculum vitae” of a state, a town, or a region.” (Phillipps, 2011:252), and they do this in part through the exhibition and interpretation of cultural material. Cultural heritage is therefore in retrospect loosely defined as people, places and things that have historical, artistic, aesthetic, political, religious, social, spiritual, scientific and natural values that contribute to giving meaning to the lives of people that they are connected to (Aslan & Ardemagni, 2006: 15). Cultural heritage thus exists beyond institutional limitations and includes both tangible and non-tangible aspects of many cultures. Cultural heritage inspires us and fills us with a sense of wonder because of its aesthetic, spiritual appeal to connect with something rare and valuable. Heritage also transports us in time, allowing us to imagine what life was like for the ‘other’ and connect us collectively through time and space. Introspectively heritage provides the potential for increased well-being by acting as mnemonic devices to trigger memory and assist with healing, dealing with death, loss and mourning, and helping to restore dignity, respect and a sense of identity (Chatterjee, 2009: 165). Finally, making cultural

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more engaged in a world beyond academia and to recognise other values, voices and perspectives in the practice and interpretation of archaeology” (see Hodder, 1991 and Demas, 2002: 50; 34-35).

heritage available beyond one's culture assist in building cultural literacy, which assists in "understanding both one's own and other cultures [and] can help a person relate to their surroundings, relate to their own culture, relate to other cultures and gain a broader worldview" (Östermiz, 2020:819). Thus the conservation of cultural material speaks to our humanity and matters on several levels, particularly as it has a finite life; it changes over time through natural ageing and deterioration processes and exposure to environmental factors. Increasing urbanisation, vandalism, war and climactic change, poor handling practices, accidental damage, and neglect all have detrimental effects on our heritage, the survival of which depends on the availability of educated and trained conservation professionals.

Chapter 3 discussed the need for local training in the African and South African context, where conservation has existed since the inception of museums on the continent. There have been numerous attempts at developing training opportunities in museum studies, where preventive and remedial conservation formed part of collections management training. These courses were presented as part of part-time or full-time academic museum studies programmes or independent courses, leading to a plethora of short courses, workshops and train-the-trainer workshops. However, very few of these have stood the test of time as financial constraints and lack of support from the museum sector forced institutions to close these unsustainable courses. This could partly result from a non-existent accreditation system, reflected in job advertisements that do not demand an academic qualification in museum and heritage studies as a post requirement. Additionally, the lack of dedicated conservation posts, the continued classification of conservation as a technical service and poor career advancement prospects within the museum sector are not particularly attractive compared to the length, complexity and high cost of training required.

Chapter 4 demonstrated the complexities associated with the concept and praxis of the curriculum. As motivated, curriculum is a process that comprises many phases, including planning, design and development, implementation and assessment. Equally important to the official and overt, intended curriculum, it is vital to keep in mind the implicit 'hidden' curriculum which may be perceived differently from the original intent. Any programme that engages heritage conservation needs to be particularly sensitive to the potential of the hidden curriculum, particularly within the context of decoloniality and deconstruction of power relations and the project of learning and knowledge building. Conservation is far from a neutral, objective activity. The mere act of selecting what heritage is selected for conservation can also



be considered a political project and based on perpetuating dominant perspectives, narratives, and beliefs.

In Chapter 5, I outlined the planning and development of the curriculum in Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria in line with accepted international standards of a master's degree as the terminal degree for the profession. As there is no preparatory undergraduate or postgraduate degree that can lead into the master's in South Africa, entry requirements were left very broad to attract a diversity of students from a variety of different backgrounds in the arts and sciences, to encourage both diversity as well as the natural trans-disciplinarity of the field. Although such diversity allows for more creative problem solving, the lack of undergraduate training puts extra pressure on the curriculum with the risk of overloading the curriculum in theoretical modules and leaving limited time for practical bench hours. Although the role of the graduates, at least initially, will likely be focussed on implementing sound preventive conservation measures; attending to immediate 'first aid' treatments to stabilise artefacts, identify those objects which require more complex treatment and refer these to more experienced conservators in private practice, thus strengthening these mentorship links and opportunities to build a capable next generation of conservators; and finally raising awareness for the need for, and importance of enhanced and appropriate collections care and conservation.

Interspersed throughout this thesis argument is the implicit thread of my personal journey as a conservator on a personal journey of discovery. As indicated in this thesis, the development of an effective curriculum is a multi-step, ongoing and cyclical process, and the development of the Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria, which is the subject of this thesis, has been a lengthy process carried out from 2015-2018 for implementation in 2019. As the objects conservator employed at the UP Museums when the project was initiated, I participated in the initial surveys and became involved as part of the curriculum development team. Like many of my colleagues, I worked in isolation, as there are so few practitioners in South Africa and no professional body or networking possibilities for conservator-restorers. This can be a particularly challenging aspect of working in conservation locally, especially when entering the field as a novice conservator. Again, when faced with complex conservation projects, there is limited possibility for brainstorming through a problem. Participation in the project has allowed me to network and get to know colleagues in conservation in the GLAM sector (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) and the many private practitioners, past

and present, who have run their own studios for many years. Through their generosity in sharing their experiences, their advice and involvement have assisted in designing, directing and establishing art conservation as an academic discipline at the University of Pretoria. The meetings, site visits and numerous conversations facilitated by the awarding of the Mellon Development Grant have allowed me to understand better some of the complexities and challenges that are specific to our southern African context and the research, along with my interest which has expanded substantially beyond the initial needs analysis and (hopefully) the programme has benefitted from their experience and my own as I have grown as a practitioner, but also as an academic and educator. As suggested in the title, *More than Staples and Glue* is about more than just the techniques and materials of conservation; it concerns safeguarding heritage and passing on knowledge. The thesis contributes to the body of knowledge on curriculum construction, emphasising conservation curricula, its teaching and learning, documents, and at another level serves as an archival record of the development of the Master's in Tangible Heritage Conservation at the University of Pretoria. The title is also suggestive of interconnecting parts, and my own journey likewise has been about (re)connecting fragments, histories, anecdotes, personal journeys, knowledge and skills which reside in and influence people while articulating a particular knowledge project centralised in the making of a specialised curriculum.

### **Hindsight 2020: The first intake, adaptations and streamlining**

January 2019 saw the first cohort and intake of students into the programme under a newly appointed programme coordinator in Maggi Loubser<sup>173</sup> instead of a Chair of Conservation. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, along with Ms Loubser, Emilia Zambri (Fine Arts Honours and Paper Conservator), Mabafokeng Hoeane (Honours in History), Salome le Roux (Master's in Visual

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<sup>173</sup> Maggi Loubser is a Chemist with a specialisation as X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) Spectroscopy. Starting out at the Atomic Energy Corporation of South Africa in 1988, she joined the University of Pretoria's Geology Department to develop the X-ray laboratory into a state of the art facility. In 2008, she joined PPC cement as Group Chief Chemist responsible for mentoring and coaching of chemists, leading the PPC Research and Development team since 2014. Since 2005, Ms Loubser has presented at the annual XRF Short Course at Western University in Canada. In 2013, two past attendees from one of these courses (one from the Getty Conservation Institute, and the other from Yale's Institute for the Preservation of Cultural heritage) approached Ms Loubser to be part of an "XRF Bootcamp for Conservators". The first 'bootcamp' was held at Yale University (2013) and was so successful that it was repeated in Yale in 2013, at the Getty Conservation Institute in 2014, and in Maastricht in 2016. The originators of the 'boot camp', Anikó Bezur, Lynn Lee, Maggi Loubser, and Karen Trentelman, have subsequently released a XRF training work book specifically aimed at conservators. Maggi Loubser was thus the ideal candidate to spearhead the programme to develop a strong conservation science focus.

Studies), and I all embarked on a new adventure. Of the five students who applied, only three enrolled, the other two not meeting the entrance requirements. However, having only three students allowed the course coordinators and presenters to remain agile and flexible, balancing the needs of the students with that of the academic material to be covered.

One of the main challenges to the first intake was not having a physical home from which to base operations, as the intended laboratory in the newly constructed Javett-UP building was not yet complete, and balancing the space requirements of the UP Museums for the use of their conservation laboratory with the needs of the programme proved complicated as we found out when the students who had shown interest in the programme started to work in the collections to meet the pre-programme requirements. Although alternate venues were sought and the programme relocated to the UP Archives' exhibition space (temporarily vacated) to allow for practical sessions during the second half of 2019, this further cemented the need for the MSocSci Tangible Heritage Conservation to have access to an ample and dedicated space for treatments, objects resting between treatments, the storage of conservation materials, equipment and tools; as well as office and lecturing space. An off-campus site in the Anton van Wouw House<sup>174</sup> in the nearby suburb of Brooklyn, Pretoria was further identified as a potential home for the programme until the completion and furnishing of the Javett-UP space. As indicated in the thesis, the Javett-UP, managed by the Arts Centre Foundation (ACF), was established on 20 June 2014 as a non-profit organisation. Its focus is on promoting the visual arts by establishing and maintaining a centre for the arts, contributing to research, and educating individuals in visual and cultural-historical art. As such, it was always envisaged that the Javett-UP support the research, teaching and learning resources of the University's School of the Arts, and vice versa, and linking with the broader art fraternity and communities connecting 'town and gown'. In a recent joint bid to UNESCO, the Master's in Tangible Heritage Conservation is described as both "an educational platform and research base which could offer training to both art and museum professionals, art educators, local communities and indigenous crafters, not as a top-down strategy, but a collaborative platform for knowledge exchange and creation, informed by indigenous knowledge systems, artist interviews and complemented by conservation and material sciences." With limited opportunities for

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<sup>174</sup> Anton van Wouw (27 December 1862, Driebergen - 30 July 1945, Pretoria) was a Dutch born sculpture, widely regarded as the father of naturalistic and Euro-centric sculptural tradition in South Africa. In his early years he worked mostly on architectural embellishments but won a major commission in 1895 to model and cast the Paul Kruger Monument for Church Square in Pretoria. Other state and public commissions include the Women's Memorial in Bloemfontein and the *Woman and Children* grouping at the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria.

knowledge exchange and training in collections care and conservation, there is a great need for the programme to collaborate with museums, galleries, artists and conservators across Southern Africa, and this could be initiated through “Internships for young graduates to enable them to get workplace experience, and at the same time share their newly gained knowledge, but also inviting established and experienced practitioners to share their knowledge with a wider audience” achieving a higher awareness and penetration of art into society (Loubser, 2020:[sp]). In addition, transdisciplinary research and collaborative initiatives can be developed for both conservation and research projects leading to a knowledge repository with access to an increased diversity of participants (Loubser, 2020:[sp]).

The lab space set aside in the Javett-UP building is ideally situated in the precinct of the main campus of the University of Pretoria, allowing for ease of movement to the remainder of the campus and its various facilities, including the Javett itself, the UP museums, the sculpture route, but also the necessary support facilities such as the Merensky Library, the chemistry and engineering faculties where the THC programme has guest lecturers, but can also make use of equipment. Also, being located in the Javett-UP building, THC has visibility in terms of public accessibility, a critical point in advocating for the need for conservation and public outreach, in addition to proximity to collections for research and study, but also for colleagues to make use of the programme’s knowledge and skills for questions of collections care and conservation. In the meantime, the programme moved to the Anton van Wouw House in late 2019, thus starting the new year with a new intake and new premises which allowed consolidation of offices, teaching space, conservation lab and storage in one, which would, however, not be possible within the limited space in the Javett-UP, particularly as the Javett space would be a shared location rotated between several academic endeavours, as well as the museum itself.

On the other hand, the new off-campus premises allowed for expansion with a dedicated analytical space for photography and a dedicated second-year studio, allowing both intake years to be in the same venue and interact. The extra space available also allowed the programme to accept objects for conservation-restoration from the general public and other institutions. This allows for a small income stream to supplement the purchase of conservation materials and exposes students to a greater variety of materials beyond the focus of the UP Collections. Additionally, it introduces the students to the real-world experience of the business side of conservation which develops other soft skills in the students, such as public relations in

dealing with clients, balancing needs and costs of conservation projects within strict budgetary guidelines, and brings to the fore issues of sustainability in practice by careful and considered use of scarce resources, exploring and researching alternatives where necessary. As outlined in chapter 4, the development of ‘soft skills’ is an integral part of the identity of the conservator as we work in an interdisciplinary environment, dealing with a multitude of stakeholders from different communities in a negotiated arena of participatory decision-making.

The second intake in 2020 included five students, four of which had completed the Honours in Heritage, Museum and Preservation Studies the previous year, as well as a UP alum who had completed her master’s degree in visual studies. The 2020 programme content was adapted based on student feedback from the previous year and included a short introduction or revision of the honours content, despite most of the students having done the honours programme. This introduction, combined with the THC 801 module, allowed for a more in-depth look at understanding conservation ethics in practice, as this was revealed to be an area of weakness when the students started with hands-on treatments and decision-making in their specialist module in the second half of 2020. Additional time was also spent on documentation and description of objects and condition assessments and an increase in hours spent carrying out practical sessions and treatments, wherever this was possible due to the Covid-19 lockdown regulations and the University’s cautious approach to contact teaching.

Heading into 2021 with double the amount of students and continued possibilities for various levels of lockdowns restricting movement, access to collection materials and the lab space; we have focussed on increased hybridity in presentation, choosing to place theoretical modules online with online lectures and supplementing these with contact classes for revision and hands-on sessions in workshop-style presentations.

As repeatedly stated in this thesis, curriculum is a process that requires constant review and renewal to remain current and up to date. If anything, the making of a curriculum implies that it is unfinished business in the knowledge project. The THC programme in its inaugural form already requires change a year after its introduction, as we see what works and what doesn’t work. The current iteration of the master’s syllabus is heavily loaded with what is considered ‘basic’ skills and knowledge in conservation that would find a more appropriate space within an honours degree or even a three-year undergraduate degree. This overloading is inevitable, as there is currently no dedicated pre-master programme in conservation. It may be worthwhile in future to investigate the possibility of a transdisciplinary undergraduate programme in the

arts & humanities which could appeal to a broader diversity of students and include an emphasis on heritage studies, similar to the visual culture studies, and would include elements of archaeology, anthropology, art history or visual studies. Likewise, reflecting on the current conservation landscape as outlined in chapter 3, local conservation needs (chapter 5.6.3.1.) and the reality of sustainability in a post covid environment, the course format needs to be revised. The specialist modules initially developed to allow greater depth of understanding of paper-based, polychrome and archaeological collections are not currently feasible for South Africa, It is thus envisaged to replace the specialist modules with increased time spent on the generalist module (THC804), which looks at a range of different materials. The reasoning behind this is two-fold, firstly despite a particular enthusiasm and readiness to present on the programme during its developmental stage, it has proven challenging to bring in the expertise required from local contexts, and thus have had to rely more on international collaboration than initially thought; and secondly, it has been challenging to present the specialist modules with the desired depth and expertise required within the time allotted<sup>175</sup> as there is no foundational knowledge to work from.

With some reflection and hindsight, I feel that it may be a wiser option to focus on the generalist training of our graduates so that they can deal with the bulk of preventive conservation measures and immediate ‘first aid’ treatments, whilst taking advantage that there are currently still active conservators in South Africa that can tackle more complex or sensitive objects and treatments. Perhaps this would also encourage willing senior conservators to mentor newly-graduated conservators, enhancing their understanding and skill through an informal apprenticeship post-graduation, which gives conservators in practice the professional recognition of their expertise and helps to build the ‘tiered conservation system’ mentioned by Westermann, allowing for some sort of progression for the younger cohort. As time goes by and expertise is lost, but the field grows and develops with each cohort, there may come a time where there will be a need to reintroduce specialist modules for continuing professional development of our past cohorts in addition to new graduates.

In addition, despite all the trauma that has accompanied the covid-19 global pandemic, it has had a silver lining for the programme in Tangible Heritage Conservation. As programmes have had to switch to online training, there is now an increased willingness to collaborate on an international digital platform. Bringing in guest lecturers and overseas experts for theoretical

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<sup>175</sup> The specialist modules are weighted to 30 credits or 300 notional hours.

lectures, live online demos, conservation lab tours and guided hands on practice is not as uncommon as before and perhaps the future of the programme lies in a more hybrid delivery.

### **Concluding remarks**

I have tried to explore the local conservation landscape through the preceding pages to demonstrate the need for academic training in South Africa. The response to the programme in its developmental stages was overwhelmingly positive and generally enthusiastic. With the THC programme in its third intake, the impact of the programme can already be seen, not only is interest growing along with increasing student numbers (3 in 2019, 5 in 2020, and 10 in 2021), the programme is drawing students from beyond South Africa's borders (Lesotho, Namibia, Zimbabwe). Although initially designed by looking north to other conservation master's degrees, their format and content, the University of Pretoria's programme in Tangible Heritage Conservation is starting to take on its own unique identity as it responds to the local context. The creation of this particular curriculum and training of graduates as a case study in curriculum development provides essential research contributions towards the knowledge project both generally in terms of academia and the humanities, but also within the broader field of heritage conservation, heritage education and conservation-restoration education that is a slowly expanding field.

There is little published material on conservation in South Africa, and very few individual museum archival records are available electronically. Thus, a better understanding of conservation practice in South Africa would require on-site research in each institution's archives (if available) by reviewing minutes of meetings, annual reports, special reports such as collection surveys etc. Hopefully the present research gives an introductory glance at the field from which further research can be based.

One of the most significant limitations to the study was not being able to access this type of archival material and relying on oral history accounts and interviews. The COVID-19 pandemic and its restrictions on access also meant that records in an otherwise easily accessible, locally based, large national museum were likewise limited. When the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History in Pretoria could be accessed, it was discovered that access to documentation of conservation practice, including treatment proposals and reports, was not readily available. It appears that each collection curator is responsible for their records, and many keep the records of their collections in their offices and not in the archives and



records department (DNMCH curator, pers.comm., 2020). In addition, when looking for files, it emerged that retiring staff members may have taken their research files with them (DNMCH curator, pers.comm., 2020), and so museum conservation records are simply not available (if they ever existed). These types of records are vital to give an overview of the change in practice. At DNCHM, there appear to be few available reports carried out in the late 1980s and early 90s. This is not an unusual situation and has been noted in previous studies (Hoeane, 2020; Motsamayi, 2018; Motsamayi, 2020). This suggests there is much additional work to be done in understanding the history of conservation in South Africa, and more importantly change in practice as the field evolves.

This thesis has provided an initial foray in documenting the history and development of conservation in South Africa. Ethnographic research in the private sector and in-depth archival research in museums, libraries, and archives could yield further information that deepens our understanding of conservation practice in South Africa, including who the practitioners were and the specificities of treatments used by various practitioners. As many previously treated objects and artworks find themselves entering or moving between collections and requiring re-treatment, such background knowledge would assist in understanding the life of the object and its treatment history. This additional information supports decision-making in selecting treatment options and deciding what ought to be retained as archival documents in themselves. The concept of conservation treatments as an archive is particularly significant in retaining traditional repairs on indigenous artefacts as they indicate that particular objects are valued beyond mere functional importance. This ‘archive of repair’ becomes particularly significant in Africa where much cultural material was selected and prepared for export, where only the best and undamaged ‘specimens’ were chosen; often deconstructing objects, removing fragile, insect prone and cumbersome cloth, feathers, grass detailing and costumes, and retaining only the durable carved wood to acquire for collections and resale. This curated selection of African material culture can be said to have perpetuated a particular bias in the Western world, of African artefacts as static objects rather than prized living artefacts which were cared for and valued, and consequently repaired, as is the case with many masks, figures, ceramic and other vessels featured in the *Wounded Objects* exhibition mentioned in chapter 2.1. The laced wooden milk gourds of the Balema and Tutsi of North Rwanda are one such example, where the milk gourds are highly prized not only because the milk they carry is a staple component of the local diet, but the vessels also “retain the memory of the ancient herds” (Gossiaux, 2007). As with many indigenous objects, poor documentation during collection and

accessioning results in misunderstanding and misclassification. This, in turn, results in a negation of the cultural and spiritual significance values that originator communities placed on these objects, being overlooked or neglected by curators and collectors. Such research is vital to processes of decolonising museum collections while valuing indigenous knowledge systems within the curriculum.

Hoeane (2020) explored this concept with ceramic vessels *Dinkho tsa Badimo*, classified as cookware. In fact, in Sotho-Tswana culture, they are regarded as sacred vessels used for ritual offerings to the ancestors. This kind of misclassification has curatorial implications on a practical level, as sacred materials require culturally appropriate and sensitive protocols regarding access, handling, storage, and use for public consumption, including research and exhibition. The fact that a student from the inaugural cohort of the Tangible Heritage Conservation programme selected this as her research topic attests to the innovation and specific sensitivity of the programme to focus on core questions and issues in the socio-cultural and socio-historical context within which the curriculum was developed. And it is through “applying such novel frameworks [...] that institutional hierarchies are subverted, and these records become rich material for evidencing deeply embedded racist ideologies – a process that subsequently extends to other collections in the institution, and ones further afield.”<sup>176</sup> (Reviewer, 2020).

An additional aspect of decolonising institutional collections concerns the possible restitution and repatriation of cultural material. Although reasonably commonplace in the United States and Canada, the call from originator communities for human remains and associated cultural material (grave goods and spiritual objects) have come to redefine how and why ‘objects’ are conserved in those respective countries. Restitution and repatriation are not yet mainstream practice in South Africa; however, I foresee that this will change in future. The repatriation of human remains has precedent in South Africa (Steyn & Nienaber, 2005; Legassik & Rassool, 2000; Nemaheni, 2002; Nienaber et al., 2008), most notably with the return of the remains of Sara ‘Saartjie’ Baartman<sup>177</sup>. The repatriation of human remains presents many challenges, such

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<sup>176</sup> This is a direct quotation from an examination report and in light of university regulations the identity of the examiner is not revealed.

<sup>177</sup> Sara ‘Saartjie’ Baartman (1770’s – 1815) was a Khoikhoi woman from the Cambdeboo valley in the eastern part of the then British Cape Colony. She was taken to England in 1810 by her employer, Hendrik Cesars (a free black man of slave descent) and William Dunlop an English Doctor who worked at the Cape Slave Lodge. Saartjie was displayed as a freak-show attraction in England and Ireland for four years before she was taken to Paris and eventually sold off to an animal trainer in France, S. Reaux, who raped and impregnated her. Known more commonly as the *Hottentot Venus*, she died in poverty in France in 1815. After her death, she was dissected and her brain, skeleton and genitalia preserved and exhibited in the *Musée de l’Homme* (Museum of Man) in Paris.

as with the reburial of the Mapungubwe archaeological remains<sup>178</sup> (Nienaber et al., 2008; Schoeman & Pikirayi, 2011), where competing claims from various communities encumbered the process. In the case of the repatriation of Cornelius Kok II<sup>179</sup>, the process was halted entirely, and the reburial of his remains is still pending. More recently (Weldon, 2021), SAHRA has circulated a notification to change the Gazette Notice 431 of 13052 in line with the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999, section 32). The notification concerns the withdrawal of a human skull from the Genadenadal Mission Museum's Specifically Declared Collection. The Genadenadal Mission Museum has deaccessioned the human skull as it is now deemed unethical to keep human remains as part of human collections.

Although there have been successful calls for the repatriation and interment of human remains from within and without South Africa as outlined above, there are as yet no successful cases for the return of associated grave goods or other heritage objects to their originator communities (in South Africa). Steyn and Nienaber (2005:159-160) suggest that this is a lasting result of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Eurocentric views alienating South Africans from their heritage and cultural possessions. These views were perpetuated with the Apartheid system, where most South Africans were denied political and economic rights and the right of ownership of their heritage. Denied entry into museums, most South Africans of colour were often unaware of the cultural possessions held by museums and other institutions, as is the case in Hoeane's (2021) research outlined above. Deprived of choice and voice for so long explains why there have been so few requests for repatriation of heritage objects to their communities. Although I believe that museums and other institutions will be faced with such requests in the coming years, particularly as the consequences of the Sarr-Savoy report<sup>180</sup> materialise, and an

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Her remains were returned to South Africa in 2002 and she was symbolically buried in the Eastern Cape on 9 August (Women's Day) of that same year. (Crais & Scully, 2009; Qureshi, 2004).

<sup>178</sup> Mapungubwe is an Iron Age Site (c.1075-1220 AD) located in the Limpopo-Shashe Confluence Area in the Limpopo Province of northern South Africa where an ancient trade kingdom existed. The archaeological site was extensively excavated since its discovery in the 1930's and a number of archaeological material including human remains, ceramics, metal and gold artefacts were retrieved leading to the site's designation as National heritage in the 1980s and inscribed on the World Heritage list in 2003.

<sup>179</sup> Cornelius Kok II (1778-1858) was a leader of the Griqua people who died in Campbell in the northern Cape and was buried in a small historic cemetery about four kilometres northwest of the town. This cemetery was excavated by P.V. Tobias from 1961-1971 and his remains along with those of several others were housed at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg (Morris, 1997:108-109), until their return in 1996 which was halted because of disputes between various Griqua groups claiming descent. The remains were thus kept at the University of the Witwatersrand (Waldman,2007: 45-48).

<sup>180</sup> In 2017, newly elected French president Emmanuel Macron ordered the Senegalese writer Felwine Sarr and art historian Bénédicte Savoy to compile an inventory of African heritage objects held in National collections

increasing number of international restitution requests are honoured. During a 2016 roundtable discussion focussing on developing the content of the THC curriculum, one participant indicated that it was the South African Department of Arts and Culture's desire to repatriate cultural material from collections in the United Kingdom (McGinn, 2016a:[sp]). However, relatively poor accurate provenance information will complicate the possibility of museums and other institutions to navigate these requests successfully. The return of organic-based indigenous materials such as wood, feathers, skin, hide, and fur presents additional challenges. In order to prevent pest infestation, institutions often treated these materials with pesticides, many of which were particularly toxic in past decades. If restitution claims become the norm with indigenous communities in Africa, this is a potentially very significant avenue for research to ensure that material to be returned can be done so safely, without jeopardising the health and well-being of communities as a result of pesticide residues. This is a large area for research in the US and Canada but has until now been a relatively unexplored field of research locally. This research is being undertaken by a Zimbabwean student from the Midlands State University on collections in the Zimbabwean through collaborative supervision between the University of Pretoria's Department of Historical and Heritage Studies and the Tangible Heritage Conservation programme National Museum. The insights and perspectives in this research are sure to shed valuable insight into the general state of preservation of collections, highlight past preservation practices at Southern African Museums, indicate the value and utility of an academic curriculum in Tangible Heritage conservation, and perhaps influence how ongoing pest management is practised within modern health and safety requirements. In the final analysis, as I have shown, *More than staples and glue: conservation, heritage and the making of a curriculum* is about both the evolution and history of conservation, inasmuch as it is about ongoing intellectual and practical engagement about a discipline, tool and craft that requires ongoing rethinking.

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that had been forcibly taken by soldiers, administrators or as part of 'scientific' expeditions in the nation's colonies from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the 1960s. Additionally the report suggests guidelines for restitution to source communities, which the French president would like to see underway if not completed by 2022.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – Mellon Foundation 2014 electronic survey questionnaire

The following questionnaire was developed and circulated by the Mellon Foundation in 2014 in preparation for the convening of the 2015 Art Conservation Workshop at the University of Pretoria. This same questionnaire was again circulated to institutions/personnel not initially considered in 2015, during the site visits as part of the Mellon awarded development grant (2016-2017)

#### **Name of Institution**

#### **Position of respondent (Director, curator, conservator etc)**

#### For collections managers/conservators:

1. Please describe briefly the size and scope of your collections: types of objects and materials, range of cultures and periods of origin for the objects.
2. If you have facilities dedicated to conservation treatment, please describe size and scope.
3. Please comment on preventive conservation provisions in your collection.
4. Do you have a regular program and/or budget for conservation treatment of collection items?
5. How are conservation needs met? Do you have a conservator or conservation team on staff? Does your institution work with off-site conservators, and how are they identified?
6. If you have conservation staff in your institution, please indicate how and where they received their training.
7. Do you see a need for expansion of access to conservation expertise and treatment, either in-house or through contract services, or are your needs for conservation met with current arrangements?
8. If you see obstacles to expanding conservation capacity in your institution or the country, please describe them.
9. If there were an academic training program for conservators in South Africa, would your institution have the capacity and/or interest to offer internships to advanced students and graduates of the program?

#### For university administrators:

10. Do you have academic programs in art history, fine arts, archaeology, curatorial studies, archival management, library collection management, or heritage

preservation? Please provide materials or website links that convey the scope and size of any programs.

11. Has your institution considered creating programs in these areas, or a training program for conservators? If so, what were the obstacles and opportunities, or what might they be?

For Conservators:

12. [For conservators] Can you describe the existing professional community or network of conservators in South Africa or the region?

## Appendix 2 – Introductory email and letter of informed consent



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Humanities  
Department of Historical and  
Heritage Studies

### Letter of Informed Consent

I, Isabelle McGinn (student number: 02615584) am currently enrolled for a PhD in Museum and Heritage Studies in the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies at the University of Pretoria. My thesis is titled: *More than Staples and Glue: conservation, heritage and the making of a curriculum*.

The research for this study is based on data gathered during the Mellon funded grant awarded to the University to develop a curriculum in Tangible Heritage Conservation, a project which ran from 2015-2018. The data gathered during this time included recorded interviews and meetings, informal interviews and site visits for which you gave your consent at the time. The doctoral research will include archival research which may contain some of the material previously recorded in 2015-2017. Please indicate if you do not wish to be acknowledged as a source.

Additional field research which will take the form of open-ended interviews with individuals with first-hand or expert knowledge of information relevant to my thesis may also be required and I would like the opportunity to continue communicating with or interview you again if required. This will form part of my primary research as oral evidence and complies with the accepted standards within the discipline of history.

Unless otherwise requested, your contribution will be acknowledged according to the footnoting system prescribed by the Department of Historical and Heritage Studies. If specifically requested, participants may request to remain anonymous. Audio material generated from the interviews as well as written transcripts and reports will be stored in electronic format for a period of 15 years in compliance with the policy of the University of Pretoria. This material may also be used for other research by the candidate. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may choose to withdraw at any stage whereupon your material will not be used. I look forward to receiving your positive response via email authorization or rejection.

Yours sincerely,



27 August 2018

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## **Appendix 3 - Questionnaires and interviews of local practitioners past and present**

### **Experience**

1. What is the conservation experience of the interviewee?
2. Is this general experience in preventive conservation and collections care for a variety of materials, or specialist interventive/remedial conservation treatments?
3. Has the interviewee submitted a CV?
4. What are the materials you have worked on throughout your career?
5. Did this include interventive/remedial conservation, and to what level?

### **Background & Training**

6. How did you get into conservation, academic study or apprenticeship? Where, when and with whom.
7. What type of treatments were you carrying out during training?
8. Who were these treatments for, private clients or institutional clients?
9. Where were these treatments carried out? In a museum/gallery conservation lab, in a home studio?
10. If you were associated with a museum conservation lab for training, where, when and how was the lab set up? What equipment did it have? How many people worked there, in what areas of specialisation and at what level of training? Could you refer me to those past colleagues? What type of work was carried out?

### **Work experience**

11. After training, where did you work?
12. How many colleagues did you have and what setup was there? Could you refer me to those past colleagues?
13. What type of treatments did you carry out and what materials did you work on?
14. Did you find your training appropriate / insufficient to start as a conservation professional?
15. What were your biggest challenges as a starting conservator?
16. How long did you work in the field of heritage conservation, are you still working?
17. What have been your biggest challenges as a conservation professional in South Africa?
18. Why did you stop working in conservation?

### **Continued professional development**

19. Have you kept up with regular continued professional development?
20. Where and how did you do this?
21. Who presented this training and was it useful?



22. If you could not keep up with continued development, why not?
23. Did you present any courses in conservation preventive, or remedial?
24. What were the themes or materials?
25. Who was the audience, were there many attendees?
26. Were you involved with the Technikon courses or SAMA School of Conservation?
27. If yes, from when to when, how did you get involved and why did you leave?
28. If yes to question 26, what were the themes or materials you covered?

### **Advocacy**

29. Do you feel that people in general know what a conservator/conservation is or have you experienced that they are more familiar with the term restorer/restoration?
30. How would you define what a conservator is and does, a restorer, a conservation technician?
31. Based on the above, how would you describe yourself and why?
32. Based on the above, how would you describe other practitioners and why?
33. Do you feel people generally understand what it is that you do or do you have to 'educate' them as to what is possible/not possible in terms of conservation and their expectations?
34. Have you done much outreach/public education drives? If yes, how were they received?
35. Do you feel that advocacy for conservation is an area where we need to focus on in order to grow the profession? How could this be achieved?
36. Do you feel that we need to professionalise conservation in South Africa? How could this be achieved

#### **Appendix 4 – List of conservation training programmes**

Programmes included in this list are those identified as part of a desktop study and through various online surveys and questionnaires. Programmes listed include those that specifically mention preservation, conservation or restoration in their course descriptions and do not include museum studies programmes unless these have an active conservation focus. Here the list is not limited to university degrees and includes polytechnics, schools and summer programmes, but excludes research and training projects such as those run by ICCROM, ICOMOS as well as workshops run on specialist topics by various institutions such as the Getty Conservation Institute, the Japan Centre for International Cooperation in Conservation. One exception is the Hirayama Programme for Japanese Painting Conservation which was established as a joint programme between the Freer and Sackler Galleries and Hirayama Ikuo's World Cultural Heritage Foundation. The Hirayama programme has an endowment for regular teaching and training activities in both the US and Japan to train staff of American museums who are custodians of East Asian painting collections and no specialist in this field, to train western conservators in the methods and principles of Japanese painting conservation, and through lectures and workshops raise awareness for and understanding of Asian art history.

There may be other programmes not listed here that have limited online presence and were inadvertently omitted.

Country	Institution	Date established	Programme	Duration	Specialism
<b>Australia &amp; New Zealand</b>					
Australia	University of Canberra	1982	Bachelor of Arts Cultural Heritage conservation		
Australia	University of Melbourne		Postgraduate diploma online training courses, Master of Arts Cultural materials conservation Master's by dissertation PhD	2-4 years	
Australia	Sydney		Master's in Heritage Conservation		
<b>Asia</b>					
China	Shanghai University		Master of Arts Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies		
	Tsinghua University		PhD of Architectural Heritage Conservation		
	National Yunlin University of Science and Technology (Yuntech)		Bachelor of Arts Conservation	3 years	Conservation-Restoration and Conservation Science; Built Heritage Preservation and Community Revitalisation; Sustainable Cultural Heritage Management; and Theory of Cultural Administration
			Master of Arts Conservation	2 years	Conservation-Restoration and Conservation Science; Built Heritage Preservation and Community Revitalisation; Sustainable Cultural Heritage

					Management; and Theory of Cultural Administration
	Nanyi University, Graduate Institute of Conservation of Cultural Relics and Museology		Antiquities maintenance steam		Museology, architectural conservation, paper, manuscripts, photographs, Chinese paintings, murals, easel paintings, Ceramics and Stone,
Hong Kong	Hong Kong University	2012	Bachelor of Arts Conservation	4 years	Architectural conservation
			Post-Graduate Diploma Conservation (leads to Master of Science Conservation)	1 year full-time / 2 years part-time	Architectural conservation
			Master of Science Conservation	1 year full-time / 2 years part-time	
Thailand	Silpakoen University International College		Bachelor of Fine Arts Paintings Conservation		Paintings conservation
Japan	Tokyo University of the Arts		Master of Arts in Conservation		Japanese painting Oil painting Sculpture Crafts Buildings and Districts
			Master of Arts Preventive Conservation		Preventive conservation
			Master of Science Conservation Science		Conservation Science
			PhD		
Japan	Independent Administrative Institution National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo, Centre for Conservation Science and Restoration Techniques in collaboration with Tokyo University of the Arts	1995	Graduate programme		Preventive conservation Restoration of cultural material

India	UNESCO C2C for World Heritage Management and Training in Asia in collaboration with Saurashtra University	2019	Master's Course in Heritage Conservation and Management	2 years	Heritage management
India	Aayojan School of Architecture (Jaipur, Rajasthan)		Master of Arts Architectural Conservation	2 years	
India	Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology University (Ahmedabad, Gujarat)		Master of Arts Architecture: Conservation	2 years	
India	Kamla Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute of Architecture and Environmental Studies (Mumbai, Maharashtra)		Master of Arts Architecture (Urban Conservation)		
India	School of Planning and Architecture (Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh)		Master of Arts Architecture (Conservation)		
India	School of Planning and Architecture (Delhi, New Delhi)		Master of Arts Architectural Conservation		
India	Singhad College of Architecture (Pune, Maharashtra)		Master of Arts Architecture (Architectural Conservation)		
India	University of Pune (Pune, Maharashtra)		Master of Arts Architecture (Architectural Conservation)		

India	Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya with Mumbai University (Mumbai, Maharashtra)	Post Graduate Diploma in Museology and Conservation		
India	Delhi Institute of Heritage Research and Management (Delhi, New Delhi)	Master in Conservation, Preservation and Heritage Management		
India	MMR – Heritage Conservation Society (Mumbai, Maharashtra)	Capacity Development Programme in Built Heritage Studies and Conservation		
India	National Museum Institute (Delhi, New Delhi)	Master of Arts in conservation		
India	National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural Property (Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh)	Certificate Course on Conservation of Cultural Property		
India	University of Rajasthan (Jaipur, Rajasthan)	Master of Arts in Museology and Conservation		
India	Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology (Bangalore, Karnataka)	Master of Planning in Urban Design, Sustainability, and Conservation		
<b>Europe</b>				
Denmark	The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts School of Conservation	Bachelor of Arts Master		
Finland	EVTEK Institute of Art and Design	Bachelor of Arts (Hons)	4 years	Easel paintings Paper

					Textiles Furniture Cultural historic objects Cultural historic interiors
Norway	University of Oslo		Bachelor of Arts (Hons)	4 years	Easel paintings / Cultural historic objects
Sweden	Götheberg University		Bachelor of Arts Conservation of Cultural Heritage	3 years	Built environment / Cultural historic objects
			Master of Science in Conservation of Cultural Heritage Objects	2 years	Rotating specializations
Austria	Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien, Meisterschule für Restaurierung und Konservierung				
Austria	University of Applied Arts, Vienna		Master	5 years	
Belgium	L'Ecole supérieure des Arts Saint Luc de Liège	1980	Bachelor of Arts	3 years	
			Master PhD	1 or 2 years	
Belgium	Hogeschool Antwerpen Royal Academy of Fine Arts	1988			Built environment
	Raymond Lemaire Centre for Conservation				
Netherlands	Stigting Restauratie Atelier Limburg				Easel paintings Polychrome sculpture Paper Contemporary art



				Historic interiors
University of Amsterdam				
Croatia	Art Academy in Split	Master of Science in conservation-restauration	5 years	Easel paintings & wood Stone Wall paintings and mosaics
Croatia	Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts, Zagreb University	Bachelor's degree + diploma in restauration	4 years	
		Master of Science	2 years	
		Master of Arts	3 years	
		PhD		
France	Institut National du Patrimoine	Master conservation-restauration des biens culturels (MCRBC)  Master professional conservation preventive du patrimoine	5 years leading up to MCRBC	
Germany	Institut für Erhaltung von Archive und Bibliotheksgut – State Archives' Administration of Baden-Wurttemberg Institute of Preservation of Archival and Library Material			
Germany	Fachhochschule Köln			Paintings and sculpture Murals and preservation of stone Wood object/furniture Book and paper conservation Textiles and leather objects
Germany	Fachhochschule Potsdam			Wooden objects Wandmalereien and historical architecture

				Preservation of stone Metal objects
Germany	Fachhochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft	Diploma Restauratorin		Archaeological cultural property Technical cultural property Photo, film, data, media Excavation technology
Germany	Fachhochschule Erfurt Fachbereich Konservierung und Restaurierung	Diploma restorer		
Germany	Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Stuttgart		Master of Arts	Paintings and polychrome wooden sculpture  Archaeological, ethnological and craft objects Graphic, archival and library materials New media and digital information
Germany	Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaft und Kunst	Diploma		Book and paper Calm wood objects and paintings Wood objects with improved surface Stone objects Wall painting/architecture surface
Germany	Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Dresden	Diploma restorer		Paintings and polychrome sculpture Mural decoration and wall paintings
Germany	Technische Universität München	Bachelor of Arts		
Greece	Technical Education Institute of Athens		4-6 years	Archaeological materials Works of art
	University of the Peloponnese	Master of Science Cultural Heritage Materials and Technology	18 months	

Hungary	Hungarian University of Fine Arts		5 years	Painting, wood and stone sculpture Applied Arts Objects Conservation: wooden objects and furniture, metal and goldsmith objects, paper and leather, textile and leather, siliceous objects	
Ireland	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	Bachelor of Science	3 years	Furniture Conservation and Restoration	
Scotland, UK	University of Glasgow	Master of Philosophy Textile conservation	2-4 years		
Scotland, UK	University of Strathclyde	Master of Science Architectural design for the conservation of the built heritage	1-2 years		
		Post-Graduate Diploma	9-18 months		
		Post-Graduate Certificate	5-9 months		
Scotland, UK	University of Edinburgh	Master of Science Architectural conservation	1 year		
Scotland, UK	University of Dundee	Master of Science spatial planning with urban conservation	1 year		
Wales, UK	Cardiff University	Master of Science Sustainable Building Conservation	1-2 years		
		Master of Philosophy conservation	1-2 years		
		PhD conservation	3-8 years		
		Master of Science conservation practice	1-3 years		
		Master of Science professional conservation	1-3 years		
England, UK	The Courtauld Institute of Art, London	1934	Master of Art Conservation of Wall painting	3 years	Conservation of wall painting

		Postgraduate Diploma Easel paintings	3 years	Conservation of easel paintings
		Master of Arts Buddhist art history and conservation	2 years	
England, UK	Northumbria University	Master of Art	2 years part-time or 1 year full-time	Preventive conservation (online)
			2 years	Conservation of Fine Art
England, UK	University of Lincoln	Master of Philosophy	18-24 months full-time	
			4 years part-time	
England, UK	University College London (UCL)	Master of Science	36 months part-time 24 months full-time	
		Master of Arts	1 year full-time	
			2 years part-time	
England, UK	Soas University of London	Master of Arts	1 year full-time or 2 years part-time	
England, UK	University of Kent	Master of Science	1-2 years	
England, UK	Oxford Brookes University	MSc Historic conservation	1-2 years	
		Postgraduate Diploma	1-2 years	
		Postgraduate Certificate	1-2 years	
England, UK	University of Portsmouth	Master of Arts conservation architecture	1-2 years	
England, UK	Durham University	Master of Arts	2-3 years	
		Conservation of Archaeological and museum objects (dissertation)		
		Master of Arts	2-3 years	

England, UK	University of Lincoln	Postgraduate Diploma Conservation Studies	1-2 years
England, UK	University of Bath	Master of Science Conservation of Historic Buildings	1 year
England, UK	Kingston University	Master of Science Historic Building Conservation	1-2 years
England, UK	University of York	Master of Arts stained glass conservation and heritage management	2 years
		Master of Arts conservation studies	1-3 years
England, UK	West Dean College of Arts and Conservation	Postgraduate Diploma Conservation of Metalwork	1 year
		Postgraduate Diploma Conservation of clocks and related objects	1 year
		Postgraduate Diploma Conservation of Furniture and related objects	1 year
		Postgraduate Diploma Conservation of Ceramics and related materials	1 year
		Postgraduate Diploma Conservation of Books and related materials	1 year
		Master of Arts collections care and conservation management	2 years part-time
England, UK	Birmingham City University	Master of Arts Conservation of the historic environment	2 years part-time
		Postgraduate Diploma Conservation of the historic environment	2 years part-time

			Master of Arts Conservation of the historic environment	1 year part-time	
England, UK	University of Central Lancashire		Master of Science Building conservation and adaptation	1-3 years	
			Postgraduate Diploma 6-12 months		
England, UK	University of Leicester		Master of Arts urban conservation	1-2 years	
			Master of Science urban conservation	1-2 years	
Italy	Accademia de Belle Arti di Venezia		Diploma		Easel paintings conservation
Italy	Fratelli Alinari S.P.A.		Continuing professional development	2 years	Photographic material
	Gli Istituti Santa Paola di Mantova		Certificate of Restoration Technician	3 years	Frescoes Easel paintings on canvas, panel and wooden sculptures
Italy	La Cantoria Restoration School				Ceramics, painting, wood, metal
Italy	Politecnico di Milano, The Graduate School in Architectural and Landscape Heritage (formerly School of Specialization in Restoration of Monuments)	1989	Postgraduate degree (not specified)	2 years	Architectural and Landscape Cultural Heritage

	L'Istituti Centrale per il Resauro, Rome	Diploma		<p>Mural paintings, paintings on panels, canvas, fabrics, leather, paper, polychrome wooden sculptures, architectonic surfaces and materials</p> <p>Metals, ceramic, glass, enamels, jewellery, ivory, bone, amber, and archaeological materials</p> <p>Mosaics, stone and stucco</p>
Italy	Oro e Colore	Certificate – conservator for a day workshops		<p>Gilding and restoration of gilded works of art</p> <p>Paintings</p>
Italy	University of Turin	Master of Arts degree in Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage	5 years	<p>Mural paintings, paintings on panels, canvas, fabrics, leather, paper, wood &amp; furniture, polychrome wooden sculptures, textiles</p> <p>Metals, ceramic, glass, enamels, jewellery, ivory, bone, amber, and archaeological materials</p>
Italy	San Gemini Preservation Studies Historic Preservation and Conservation Programs	Courses in Venetian Fresco Painting: Art and Conservation		Courses in Venetian Fresco Painting: Art and Conservation
<b>Canada &amp; the USA</b>				
Canada	Queens University	Master of Arts by dissertation		
	Simmons Graduate School of Library and Information Science	Master of Arts		Preservation management
USA	Buffalo State college	Master of Arts in Art Conservation with a certificate of advanced study in art conservation	3 years fulltime	<p>Ethnographic materials</p> <p>Archaeological materials</p> <p>Photographs</p> <p>Books</p>



	Columbia University	1964	Master of Science in Historic Preservation with a conservation concentration	2 years	Buildings
USA	New York University /Institute of Fine Arts		Master of Science in the conservation of historic and artistic works and MA in the history of art and archaeology	4 years	Modern and contemporary art Paintings Time-based media Objects Paper Photographs
	UCLA / Getty		Master of Arts in conservation of archaeological and ethnographic materials  PhD Conservation of material culture	3 years	Ethnographic and archaeological materials
	University of Pennsylvania		Master of Science in Historic Preservation Master of Science in Design with a concentration in Historic Preservation  Advanced certificate in Architectural Conservation	2 years 18 months	Architecture Architecture Architecture
	Winterthur/University of Delaware		Master of Science in Art Conservation	3 years	Furniture Library and archives Objects Paintings Paper Photographs Preventive conservation Textiles

		PhD in Art Conservation Research & Historic Preservation		3-4 years	
Rutgers University					
<b>Mexico</b>					
Mexico	The National School of Conservation, Restauration and Museology Manuel del Castillo Negrete	1961	Master of Science in conservation and restoration of cultural property		Archaeology  Architecture  photographs
<b>South America</b>					
Peru	Yachay Wasi Conservation Institute	1993	Bachelor of Arts	3 years	Conservation of Archaeological Objects with majors in metals, ceramics and textiles
				4 years	Conservation of paintings and sculptures
Brazil	Paraná University	1998	Certificate		Conservation of paper-based objects
	Federal University of Minas Gerais, Centre for Conservation and Restoration	1980	Postgraduate Certificate	2 years	Conservation of easel paintings, polychrome sculpture and paper
	Brazilian Association of Bookbinding and Restoration with the National Service for Industrial Education in São Paulo joint programme	1991	non-degree training program	480 hours	Preventive conservation and restoration of library and archival materials
Chile	Joint programme of the School of Fine Arts at the Catholic University of Santiago and the Centro Nacional de Restauracion	1984			
Columbia	National Centre for Conservation (Centro Nacional de Restauracion)	1980	Masters	5 years	
<b>Africa</b>					

Algeria	School for the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ENCRBC)	2008	Masters in Conservation of moveable heritage	2 years	Objects conservation
Egypt (Italy)	Helwan University, in partnership with Catania University		International Master in Conservation of Antique Photographs and Paper Heritage	2 years	Photographs and Paper
Ethiopia	Addis Ababa University		Undergraduate programme in archaeology and heritage management graduate profile		Conservation of antiquities & archival materials. Principles of Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites
Tunisia	Université de Tunis - ISMPT – Institut Supérieur des Métiers du Patrimoine		Bachelor of Arts Heritage science, traditional heritage and archaeology of Islam	3 years	
			Bachelor of Arts Conservation restoration of cultural property	3 years	Polychrome sculpture
	Université de la Manouba - Faculté des Lettres, des Arts et des Humanités		Bachelor of Arts Conservation-restoration of Easel paintings	3 years	Easel paintings
	Université de Sousse – ISBAS - Institut Supérieur des Beaux-Arts		Bachelor of Arts Conservation restoration of cultural property: pierre sculptée, mosaïque, surfaces décorées	3 years	Stone, mosaics and polychrome surfaces
	Université de Gabes – ISAMG – Institut Supérieur des Beaux Arts		Bachelor of Arts Architectural stone	3 years	Architectural, sculpted and painted stone
	Université de Sfax – Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines		Bachelor of Arts Conservation restoration of cultural property		Textiles

	Université de la Ezzitouna - Institut Supérieur de la Civilisation Islamique	Bachelor of Arts Conservation restoration of cultural property	3 years	Archival documents
Benin	Ecole du Patrimoine Africain with l'Université Abomey-Calavi	Bachelor of Arts Cultural Heritage Preservation and Management	3 years	options in museums, archives, and libraries
Cameroon	Universite de Douala Institute of Fine Arts	Bachelor of Arts Cultural Heritage Management and Conservation	3 years	Heritage and Museum Sciences
	Universite de Douala Institute of Fine Arts 2013	Masters in Heritage Management and Conservation	2 years	Site management and archaeological conservation
Kenya	University of Nairobi	No formal programme, however the Heritage Conservation and Human Rights Network (HCHRN) is based in the department of History and Archaeology of the University of Nairobi and may develop and coordinate research activities and workshops	-	-
Mozambique	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane	Undergraduate degree in Archaeology and cultural heritage management	-	Archaeology and cultural heritage management
Namibia	University of Namibia	Diploma in Records and Archives Management	2 years part-time or 3 years full-time	Includes Preservation and conservation in year 2, semester 2
	University of Namibia	Postgraduate diploma in Heritage Conservation and Management	1 year full-time or two years part-time	Curatorship, exhibition, scientific principles for conservation, heritage legal framework, heritage tourism, heritage site management, heritage entrepreneurship

Nigeria	Institute of Archaeology and Museum Studies				
Senegal	Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis		Bachelor of Arts		Métiers du Patrimoine (Heritage Careers/Trade); Gestion des Biens, des Sites et des Institutions du Patrimoine (Property, Site, and Heritage Institution Management)
South Africa	University of Cape Town		Honours degree (4 <sup>th</sup> year post school)	1 year2	Curatorship (includes preventive conservation)
			Professional Masters degree	2 years	Conservation of the Built Environment
	Sol Plaatjie University		Higher certificate in Heritage Studies	1 year	Preventive conservation
	University of Kwa-Zulu-Natal				
	University of Pretoria	2018	Honours Heritage, Museum and Preservation Studies	1 year	Museology & preventive conservation
		2019	Masters Social Sciences Tangible Heritage Conservation	2 years	Objects conservation (ceramics, glass, metals, paper, books, photographs) Paper and archival collections Polychrome surfaces Archaeological collections
	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation	2017	Postgraduate technical diploma in conservation	1 year	Paper Metals Ceramics Stone & built environment
Togo	Institut Regional d'Enseignement Superieur et de Recherche en Developpement Culturel (IRES-RDEC)	2016	Bachelor of Arts (licence professionnelle) Heritage and Tourism (online)		

Uganda	Makerere University		Bachelor of Arts Archaeology and Heritage Studies	3 years	Preventive conservation module on introduction to Heritage Conservation and Museum Studies
Zimbabwe	Midlands State University		Bachelor of Arts (hons) Archaeology, cultural heritage and museum studies	4 years	Preventive conservation,
			Master of Arts Cultural Heritage Studies	2 years	Management and conservation of archaeological sites
Namibia	University of Namibia		Postgraduate Diploma Heritage conservation and Management; Diploma Records and Archives management	1 year	Archival materials
<b>The Middle East</b>					
Qatar	UCL Qatar (closed all programmes in 2020)		Master of Science Conservation Studies	2 years	Archaeological sites and collections
			Master of Arts Archaeology of the Arab and Islamic World	2 years	
			Master of Arts in Museums and Gallery Practice	2 years	
			Continuing Professional Development short courses in Conservation, Archaeology and Museology		
Lebanon	Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, joint degree with the University of Urbino (Italy)	2018	Bachelor of Arts Conservation, restoration of cultural property and sacred art	3 years	StoneA232:F245, mosaics, frescoes, and decorated architectural features, painted artworks on fabrics and wooden support, paper, books, manuscripts and photographs
			Master of Arts Conservation, restoration of cultural property and sacred art		

PhD Conservation, restoration  
of cultural property and sacred  
art



## **Appendix 5 - University of Pretoria internal working group and external specialist advisory group**

### **Internal Working Group Members**

Norman Duncan	UP Vice-Principal: Academic
Vasu Reddy	UP Faculty of Humanities, Dean
Hennie Stander	UP Faculty of Humanities, Deputy Dean
Maxi Schoeman	UP Faculty of Humanities, Deputy Dean
Raimi Gbadamosi	UP Department of Visual Arts, Head
Jeanne van Eeden	UP Department of Visual Arts
Theo van Wyk	UP Arts, Head
Christopher Till	Apartheid Museum, Director
Sian Tiley-Nel	UP Arts, UP Museums Manager and Chief Curator
Isabelle McGinn	UP Arts, Museum Conservator
Sandra Markgraaf	Art Revive, Conservator
Karen Harris	UP Department of Historical and Heritage Studies
Ceri Ashley	UP Department of Anthropology and Archaeology
Arthur Barker	UP Department of Architecture
Corena Garnas	UP Humanities Office of the Dean

### **External Advisory Group, Gauteng**

Lucy Blumenthal	Professional Paintings Conservator, Private Practice
Douwe Drijfhout	Director of Preservation Services (NLSA)
Ishmael Mbhokodo	Director of Heritage Resources Management (COT)
Adv. Bantomu Diamond Mushwana	Ditsong Museums of South Africa, Chief Executive Officer
Stella Ndhrazi	National Heritage Council
Ntsizi November	ICOMOS South Africa President, Deputy Director: Environment Sector Conflict and Dispute Resolution
Mahunele Thotse	Department of Arts and Culture, Acting Director of Heritage Policy, Research and Development

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Lucy Blumenthal	Professional Paintings Conservator, Private Practice
Douwe Drijfhout	National Library of South Africa, Director of Preservation Services
Ishmael Mbhokodo	City of Tshwane, Director of Heritage Resources Management
Advocate Bantomu Diamond Mushwana	Ditsong Museums of South Africa, Chief Executive Officer
Stella Ndhrazi	National Heritage Council

Ntsizi November

ICOMOS South Africa President, Deputy Director:  
Environment Sector Conflict and Dispute Resolution  
Department of Arts and Culture, Acting Director of  
Heritage Policy, Research and Development

Mahunele Thotse

## Appendix 6 – THC course outline



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# University of Pretoria Yearbook 2018

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## MSocSci Tangible Heritage Conservation (Coursework) (01253115)

**Minimum duration of study** 2 years

**Total credits** 180

### Programme information

This programme is directed at a general education in preventive conservation/preservation and general collections-based management of tangible cultural heritage (TCH) resources, with a view to specialise in the management of TCH, preservation of TCH or conservation of TCH.

### Admission requirements

A limited number of places are available. Selection for the programme is on an individual basis and requires an interview preceded by the completion of a standardised bench test for technical ability and dexterity. For admission, students who have completed the honours programme in Heritage and Museum Studies with an average of at least 70% in the approved major will be selected preferentially. For applicants who did not complete the honours programme in Heritage and Museum Studies, the foundation museum skills module MKD 712 may be required as a prerequisite for final admission into the programme.

A 3-6 week documented and supervised pre-programme internship in a museum, gallery or formal collection is mandatory prior to enrolment and demonstrates mastery over basic preventive conservation theory and practice.

If the student's honours degree did not cover subjects in heritage management and preservation/ museum studies, they may be admitted conditionally, upon completion of the pre-programme internship and enrolment in the foundation skills module MKD 712 and the submission of a research proposal where the intended mini-dissertation topic is theoretical, or builds on acquired knowledge in a particular field (e.g. architecture or chemistry) and is not aimed at remedial conservation.

There is provision for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) and for this students are requested to submit a recent CV and a portfolio of documented conservation work experience to be presented at an interview prior to admission.

### Other programme-specific information

The programme is offered over two years of which the first year is presented on the Hatfield Campus. All modules must be passed to progress to the second year of the programme on the Hatfield Campus or carried out under supervision in a partner institution or under supervision in private practice.

Students are required to attend relevant departmental seminars as well as local conferences to present aspects of their research project. A poster presentation of their research report is strongly recommended.

Students must conduct 5-6 months of conservation or collections-based research by the end of the master's programme and demonstrate mastery over basic conservation techniques.

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## Curriculum: Year 1

**Minimum credits: 90**

Choose ONE elective - 30 credits

### Core modules

#### Conservation principles and strategies 801 (THC 801)

<b>Module credits</b>	6.00
<b>Prerequisites</b>	No prerequisites.
<b>Contact time</b>	1 practical per week, 2 lectures per week
<b>Language of tuition</b>	Module is presented in English
<b>Department</b>	Historical and Heritage Studies
<b>Period of presentation</b>	Semester 1

##### Module content

This introductory module reviews the significance, value and use of cultural heritage, as well as the roles and responsibilities of its custodians within relevant professional, ethical and legislative frameworks. This module has both theoretical and practical components where preservation and collections care principles and strategies will be examined, practised, reviewed, and discussed for appropriate decision-making. In addition, the module will consider the shifts, conflicts and tensions in the museum and will critically examine the frictions between the global and the local in an attempt to reimagine the institution in the contemporary moment.

#### Science fundamentals for conservation 802 (THC 802)

<b>Module credits</b>	18.00
<b>Prerequisites</b>	No prerequisites.
<b>Contact time</b>	1 practical per week, 2 lectures per week
<b>Language of tuition</b>	Module is presented in English
<b>Department</b>	Historical and Heritage Studies
<b>Period of presentation</b>	Semester 1

##### Module content

An introductory chemistry module specifically tailored at enabling students with no previous science background to gain a greater insight into the chemical processes present in the practices and techniques used in conservation. Module content focusses on major conservation issues including material types, environment, cleaning and deterioration.

#### Research theory and methodology in conservation 803 (THC 803)

<b>Module credits</b>	18.00
<b>Prerequisites</b>	No prerequisites.
<b>Contact time</b>	1 practical per week, 2 lectures per week

**Language of tuition** Module is presented in English

**Department** Historical and Heritage Studies

**Period of presentation** Semester 1

**Module content**

This module focusses on the research involved in conservation, aspects of collections-based research including documentation of artefacts, photography, the preparation of research projects, writing project proposals and academic writing for publication. This module has both theoretical and practical components where students will examine, document and carry out analyses on a variety of museum objects.

**Materials, mechanisms of decay and stabilisation of artefacts 804 (THC 804)**

**Module credits** 18.00

**Contact time** 1 practical per week, 2 lectures per week

**Language of tuition** Module is presented in English

**Department** Historical and Heritage Studies

**Period of presentation** Semester 1

**Module content**

This module explores the physical, mechanical and chemical properties of organic, inorganic and synthetic base materials. It explores the technology and manufacturing processes involved in creating or assembling a variety of heritage objects. Each material type is explored in dedicated block sessions where individual objects are discussed according to material types and properties, potential risks and weaknesses identified, and appropriate storage, exhibition and handling guidelines examined. This module has both theoretical and practical components where students will learn to differentiate between material types, isolating different component parts of composite objects and learning about examination, documentation and record keeping in conservation.

**Elective modules**

**Conservation: Paper-based and archival collections 806 (THC 806)**

**Module credits** 30.00

**Prerequisites** No prerequisites.

**Contact time** 2 lectures per week, 3 practicals per week

**Language of tuition** Module is presented in English

**Department** Historical and Heritage Studies

**Period of presentation** Semester 2

**Module content**

Students, guided by the programme coordinator are to choose an area of specialisation from those available at the University of Pretoria. The introductory principles of remedial conservation will be explored within the chosen area of specialisation, from treatment options and evaluation with final decision-making processes for appropriate treatment options for cleaning, stabilisation and conservation of artefacts.

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### Conservation: Polychrome surfaces 807 (THC 807)

<b>Module credits</b>	30.00
<b>Prerequisites</b>	No prerequisites.
<b>Contact time</b>	2 lectures per week, 3 practicals per week
<b>Language of tuition</b>	Module is presented in English
<b>Department</b>	Historical and Heritage Studies
<b>Period of presentation</b>	Semester 2

#### Module content

Students, guided by the programme coordinator are to choose an area of specialisation from those available at the University of Pretoria. The introductory principles of remedial conservation will be explored within the chosen area of specialisation, from treatment options and evaluation with final decision-making processes for appropriate treatment options for cleaning, stabilisation and conservation of artefacts.



## Appendix 7 – List of Conservator-restorers in South Africa

As explained in the research text, the term conservator-restorer is used very liberally in South Africa. As a result, the current list includes practitioners who have received training in conservation and apply it daily either for preventive conservation, remedial treatment of objects, or both. Practitioners that have received some level of training and do not put it into practice have been omitted, as have surely many practitioners who have received training and run their own small practice (either as a hobby or for additional income) as many of these are not visible outside of their regions in that they do not attend conferences/meetings, they are not affiliated with institutions and have little or no social media presence. \*A few names have been added to the list, including conservators who received training and practice outside of South Africa but continue to connect with the country as ex-pats or regularly come and carry out conservation work or offer training in South Africa. As these people have informed some of the discussions in this thesis and continue to shape and influence the field locally, they were included.

Information was largely derived from archival sources, interviews, questionnaires and the curriculum vitae of those interviewed, as submitted by them. Training received had to be selective in this particular list due to space limitations. Included are only those training opportunities, which form the core training of each individual (and only as related to the field of conservation). Relevant CPD, as highlighted by the practitioners during interviews, is also noted. Thus the actual amount or diversity of training received may not be reflected in the below table.

<b>Practitioner Name</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>Specialisation</b>	<b>Institution/Studio</b>	<b>Location</b>
Barnard, Celeste	2019 PgDip Technical Conservation Studies, The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation ( <a href="http://www.sainst.org">www.sainst.org</a> )	Objects conservator	Private practice	Cape Town
Bellingan-Scott, Ernest	BA(Hons) degree in Science and Conservation from the London Institute of Art, UK. Diploma in the Chemistry and History of Pigments from the University of Chicago, USA. ( <a href="http://www.bellingan.com">www.bellingan.com</a> )	Easel paintings, Artworks on paper, maps, wallpapers, photographs and archival documents.	Private practice, Bellingan-Scott Fine Art Restoration	Johannesburg
Blummenthal, L.	MA Conservation of Fine Art (Easel paintings), Northumbria (1999) (curriculum vitae)	Contemporary easel paintings	Private practice	Johannesburg

Botha, Hazel	<p>Apprenticeship in ceramics conservation Cape Town. Internship West Dean College, Chichester, UK. 2005 The Conservation and Repair of Architectural Metal Work, West Dean College, UK. CPD The conservation of Metals with Valentin Boissonas, Cape Town. Metals Conservation Summer Programme presented by Higgins Armory Museum and the Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, Massachusetts (USA). CPD Winterthur Institute &amp; Museum, Wilmington, USA.</p> <p>IAP Chemistry for Conservators, Analytical techniques for conservators, Teaching skills for conservators.</p> <p>2016 MA Conservation of Historic Objects, University of Lincoln, UK (curriculum vitae)</p>	Ceramics, Glass, Metals	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation	Joubertina, Eastern Cape
Brunke, Claudia	2019 PgDip Technical Conservation Studies, The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation ( <a href="http://www.sainst.org">www.sainst.org</a> )		Private practice	
Callaghan, Judith	Library of Parliament internship, Masters Westdene College UK (curriculum vitae)	Books	Brenthurst Library (resigned 2021 now in Cape Town and not practising)	Cape Town
Carelsen, Annemarie	Train-the-trainer (Preventive, Ceramics & Glass, Textiles, Metals, Furniture)	Preventive conservation	Ditsong National Cultural History Museum	Pretoria
Child, Nancy	1992 MA Art Conservation (Objects) (curriculum vitae)	Archaeological and Ethnographic materials	Private practice, Conservation in Action	Cape Town
Elten, Bettina	1983 Trained at the Istituto Centrale del Restauro, Rome, Italy; Founding member of Consorzio ARKE, Rome	Easel paintings, wall paintings & decorations, stone & stucco decoration, mosaics, ethnographic wooden objects	Private practice	Cape Town

Engelbrecht, Gerda	MA Conservation of Fine Art, University of Northumbria (curriculum vitae)	Works of art on paper	Private practice	Johannesburg
Fenn, Julia	1968 Institute of Archaeology, London, UK. (interview)	Archaeological and Ethnographic materials	Royal Ontario Museum: Retired	Canada
Fourie, Talita	Apprenticeship	Preventive conservation, textiles	The Post Office Museum	Pretoria
Greiner, Julia*	Level III, expert technician conservation-restoration of stone, ceramic and archaeological objects, Palazzo Spinelli- - Istituto per l'arte e il restauro. MSc Maritime Archaeology Conservation, University of Southampton. MProf Conservation-restoration of cultural property, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (curriculum vitae)	Archaeological collections, ceramics, stucco, stone, frescoes	Freelance conservator, currently head conservator-restorer for the Palais Princier restoration project, Nice.	Nice, France
Gouws, Julian	1975 started training under Clayton Holliday at the then King George VI Gallery in Port Elizabeth (now Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Museum, Gqeberha) 1976-1977 Completed History of Art I and II through UNISA 1978 awarded British Council Bursary to train for 6 months at Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery Conservation Department under Mr S Reese-Jones, Lord Dunluce, Head of Conservation at the Tate Gallery (London) and short visit to the National Gallery Conservation Department (London) (curriculum vitae)	Easel paintings & murals	Private practice, retired 2018	Johannesburg

Grundling, Retha	1990 BSc North-West University, Potchefstroom Visits to Paper labs at West Dean College, The British Museum, The Victoria & Albert Museum, Tate Britain and The British Library. COD training at IIC (International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works) 2016, Beijing (China) workshop on Non-destructive Analysis in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage (curriculum vitae)	Paper	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation	Joubertina, Eastern Cape
Hans, Ekkehard	Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and Masters in Conservation of Fine Art Objects, University of Applied Science and Arts in Hildesheim and Cologne, Germany (September 1995 to February 2002). Pre-programme apprenticeship September 1993 to September 1995 at Wheel-Cartwright. (curriculum vitae)	Easel painting, panel paintings	Private practice	Kroonstad
Harris, Neil	Self-taught, Train the Trainer (Textiles) and other short courses (interview)	Textiles	Durban Art Gallery: Retired	Durban
Hofmeyer, Belinda	South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation	Ceramics		
Holliday, Clayton	SAMA Museums Diploma. 1951-1952 Trained at the British Museum (Natural History), London. While in the UK attended short courses to fulfil requirements of the British Museums Association's Technical Certificate. 1965-1969 Bachelor of Arts Fine Arts degree, University of Natal (Sculpture, ceramics, ceramic technology, Art history majors) Trained Julian Gouws and Anthony Keough while based at the Kind George VI Gallery, Port	Easel paintings	King George VI Gallery, Port Elizabeth: Retired	Gqeberha

	Elizabeth (now Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Museum, Gqeberha) (SAMA. 2016. <i>The Museum Profession in South Africa, 1936–2016</i> . South African Museums Association. Cape Town. P:31, 37-38)			
Horst Rebok, Thomas	Informal training and apprenticeships in conservation, self-taught. (interview)	Paintings, African art, sculptures of different materials, & frames	Private practice	Western Cape
Hosford, June	1978-1980 Conservation Techniques I, II, III, as part of the National Diploma in Museum Technology, Cape Technikon; 1981 Internship Dept. of Conservation (Organic artefacts section), The British Museum, London, UK; 1990 Chemistry for Conservators, International Academic Projects; Train-the-trainer (Paper, furniture) (interview)	Preventive conservation, ethnographic collections	Iziko South African Museum: Retired	Cape Town
Hunt, Phillippa	1987-1989 MA Conservation of Fine Art, Newcastle-upon-Tyne in association with Gateshead College, UK.	Paper conservation	Durban Art Gallery: Retired	Durban
Jeffreys, Alan	Museum technology at Cape Technikon, 4 year apprenticeship at the Brenthurst Library. (interview)	Books and paper	Brenthurst library: Retired 2019	Johannesburg
Keough, Anthony	Apprenticeship under Clayton Holliday from 1981, and self-taught thereafter. (interview)	Easel paintings	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Art Museum: Retired 2021 now in private practice	Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth), Eastern Cape
Khan, Sameena	2020 PgDip Technical Conservation Studies, The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation. (www.sainst.org)		Private practice	Western Cape
Kim Gray Giancane	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation (Ceramics) (www.sainst.org)	The restoration studio: porcelain & ceramic repair	Private practice	

Kolieni, Fahranaz	2008 MA Conservation of Historical Objects, Art University of Isfahan (Iran) 2012 PhD Archaeology, University of Pretoria (curriculum vitae)	Metals	Freelance conservation scientist	Johannesburg
Liebenberg-Bakhuisen, Estelle	1998 apprenticeship training in paper and textile preservation while working at the Voortrekker Museum in Pietermaritzburg. Workshops through the Alan Paton Centre, University of KwaZulu-Natal. Centro del bel Libro, Switzerland short CPD courses 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016, and 2017 (curriculum vitae)	Paper and archival materials	Pietermaritzburg Archives: Retired 2018	Pietermaritzburg
Mangagialli, Tizzie	National Diploma in Museum Technology, Technikon SA, South Africa; Basic training in paper and book conservation. (curriculum vitae)	Wood, furniture, metals, paper & books	Private practice	Caledon, Western Cape
Man-Nel, Louise	BSc in textiles & science; BSc (Hons) Textile science, specialising in museum textiles; CPD private sector, in the Netherlands, Hungary, Sweden, and currently South Africa. (interview)	Preventive conservation, Textiles conservation (interventive)	Private practice	Cape Town
Maree, Johann	Training in paper & book conservation in Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, UK, & USA - all short courses and internships. (interview)	Paper, books	Own practice - Retired	Robertson
Markgraaf, Sandra	1991 paper conservation short course through the CSIR. 1991-1993 apprenticeship in paper and paintings conservation under Vasili Lianouridis. 1991 completed a PG Dip in Museology at the University of Pretoria.	Preventive conservation, Paper (interventive), Paintings conservation (interventive)	University of Pretoria Museums	Pretoria

	<p>1992 Diploma in paper restoration, Ditsong National Cultural History Museum, Pretoria.</p> <p>1996 completed a MA Museology at the University of Pretoria.</p> <p>(curriculum vitae)</p>			
McGinn, Isabelle	<p>The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation short courses (metals &amp; ceramics), train-the-trainer events (paper, ceramics &amp; glass, metals, textiles, furniture), Gawain weaver care and identification of photographs online course, Tizzie Mangigelli Furniture, Northern States Conservation Centre online (furniture, museum cleaning)</p> <p>(curriculum vitae)</p>	Preventive conservation, Ceramics, Glass, Wood	University of Pretoria	Pretoria
McLean, Louise	<p>SA Institute for Heritage Science &amp; Conservation (Ceramics, Paper)</p> <p>(www.sainst.org)</p>	fine art on paper & historical documents	Private practice L. Mc IEan Restoration of Artworks on Paper	Somerset West
Middeljans, Jan	<p>1989-1992 Restoration Workshop Spileo (private), 3 year certificate course in Paper, Parchment &amp; Book Restoration.</p> <p>1991-1992 One year certificate course in paper restoration with Vasilios Liouaridis at the National Open Air Museums (Ditsong National Cultural History Museum)</p> <p>1994-1998 National Diploma Museum Technology, Technikon South Africa.</p> <p>2007 Chemistry for Conservators, International Academic Projects London.</p> <p>(curriculum vitae)</p>	Easel paintings	Ditsong National Cultural History Museum: Retired 2019	Pretoria



Minicka, Mary	Guildford College of Technology (later renamed Guildford College of Higher and Further Education) internship at the Deutsches Historisches Museum (Berlin). 3-month internship at the Library of Congress, USA. Kodak photographic preservation course at the Kodak Institute in Rochester, New York, 2001. IFLA pre-conference event on Disaster Planning, 2003. Train-the-trainer (Preventive, Textiles, Paper) (curriculum vitae)	Preventive conservation Paper & books (interventive)	Head of Preservation at Western Cape Archives and Records Service	Cape Town
Mitchell, Richard	Informal training in conservation (interview)	Easel paintings, wooden sculptures, gilded frames. Books works on paper (watercolours, etchings, lithos, linocuts, drawings, maps & serigraphs), Specialises in longcase clock faces	Private practice	Cape Town
Motsi, Alexio	2015 MSc Archives and records management, University of Dundee. 1998 Internship on Advanced Rare Book Conservation , Library of Congress, Washington USA. 1990 Conservation of Archives and Books Certificate, Camberwell College of Arts. (curriculum vitae)	Paper and archival materials	National Archives & record services, Pretoria	Pretoria
Motte, Bradley	2019 Pg Dip Technical Conservation Studies, The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation. BSc and BSc(Hon) in Applied Nuclear Physics and Material Scientists (curriculum vitae)	Preventive conservation, Metals, Paper	Iziko Social History Museum	Cape Town
Murray, Pamela*	2007-2011 Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Fine Arts, University of the Witwatersrand 2015-2016 Chemistry for Conservators, IAP London	Archaeological objects, paper and archives	Archives conservator	Bath, UK

	2016-2018 Master of Science, Cardiff University			
Parry, Sian	1987-1989 MA Conservation of Fine Art, Newcastle-upon-Tyne in association with Gateshead College, UK. (Addleson J. 1996. The Durban Museums' Conservation Centre. <i>Museum Management and Curatorship</i> , 15(4):410–428.)	Paper conservator	Local History Museums: retired	Durban
Peters, Dale	1998 Oxidation at the wet/dry interface in library and archival collections in humid climatic conditions. Unpublished PhD thesis, Information Studies, UKZN.	Digital preservation Paper and archival materials	No longer involved in conservation	Cape Town
Judith Pringle	Honours History of Art, University of East Anglia. PGDip in Conservation of Paintings, Newcastle Gateshead Technical College Cert. Conservation British Museums Association (Lamprecht, A. 1991. Florie's Dream, a history of the Johannesburg Art Gallery. Unpublishes dissertation Diploma Museology, Dept. History and Cultural History, University of Pretoria. p. 99, 101)	Easel Paintings	No longer involved in conservation but was at the Johannesburg Art Gallery from October 1982	
Rhebok, Thomas	Informal training in conservation (interview)	Easel paintings, frames	Private practice	Western cape
Scheepers, Werner	1992 Ceramics restoration course by Belinda Wilkinson. 1998 The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation (Ceramics)	Ceramics	Private practice, The Restorer	Worcester, Western Cape

Seaford, Keith	Initial paper conservation training at the Conservation Unit, University of Cape Town; Certificate in Paper Conservation, Library of Congress, Washington DC, USA.	artworks on paper, books and photographic materials	DK Conservators	Cape Town
Siebert, Kim*	PREMA 1995 ICCROM Intl Univ. course Diploma in Conservation Management of African Museums. (interview)	Preventive Conservation and Conservator of Ethnographic Collections, contemporary mixed media art and installation pieces.	Collection & Conservation Manager, The Lin Liu Hsin Puppet Theatre Museum, Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.	Taipei, Taiwan
Smith, Dale	1981-1983 Diploma in the conservation of Paintings, Gateshead Technical College, UK.	Paintings conservation	Durban Art Gallery: relocated to Australia	Durban
Smith, Rowan	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation short courses (Ceramics).	Ceramics	Mountain Ash Studio	Cape Town
Smuts, Sigourney*	Master's degree in the Conservation of Fine Arts, Northumbria University. Short courses: Advanced Book Binding; Introduction to Book Repair; Advanced Book Repair, Afrikaner Library Trust, SA. (curriculum vitae)	Preventive, Paper, Artworks on Paper, Photographs (interventive)	Conservator at The Georgia Archives, Morrow, Georgia	Morrow, Georgia, United States
Spence, Peter	1983 Diploma and apprenticeship at the South East Conservation Centre in the United Kingdom.	Easel paintings	Private practice	Western Cape
Steenkamp, Helma	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation short courses (Ceramics).	Preventive conservation archival collections	University of Pretoria Museums	Pretoria
Sword, Anthony	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation short courses (Metals, Ceramics, Paper)	Ceramics, stone, glass, bone, ivory, metals and paper.	Private practice	Johannesburg

Theron, Sian	2008 PgDip Library and Information Science, UKZN 2019 PgDip Technical Conservation Studies, The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation. (curriculum vitae)	Paper and built environment conservation	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation	Joubertina, Eastern Cape
Tiley-Nel, Sian	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation short courses (Ceramics & Metals).	Preventive conservation, ceramics (interventive)	University of Pretoria Museums	Pretoria
Vajifdar, Monique	MA University of London, History and art conservation (1973-1981). (interview)	Paper	Private practice, 1985 - 2001 Retired	Pretoria
van den Berg, Decia	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation short courses (Ceramics).	Ceramics	Private practice, Den Berg Restorers	
van der Meulen, Emmeke	Seven-year Diploma in Antique Furniture Restoration & Conservation; Owned a Restoration School in Brussels for 12 years. Presented several short courses in South Africa. (interview)	Wood, furniture	Private practice, L'Atelier Studio Antiques (retired 2021)	Somerset East
Walker, Lisa	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation short courses (Ceramics).	Ceramics	Lisa Walker Ceramic studio and Gallery	Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth), Eastern Cape
Walker, Macrina	Apprenticeship trained in a monastic bookbinding studio in the Netherlands (www.annesibindings.com)	Books and Bookbinding	Annesi Bindings	Pietermaritzburg
Welsh, Grace	MA Conservation of Fine Art, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Polytechnic, UK. (interview)	Easel paintings	Private practice	Cape Town

Wieckert-Ludeman, Dieter	Initial paper conservation training at the Conservation Centre, Parliament of South Africa; Diploma in Paper Conservation, National Archives, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Certificate in Conservation of Photographic Materials, Centre for Photographic Conservation, London, UK.	artworks on paper, books and photographic materials	DK Conservators	Cape Town
Wilkinson, Belinda	The South African Institute for Heritage Science and Conservation short courses (Ceramics). Training in China Restoration, with Susan Noel, Norfolk, UK.	Ceramics	Private practice	Cape Town
Wimberley, Theresa				
Zambri, Emilia*	MSocSci Tangible Heritage Conservation, University of Pretoria.	Preventive Conservation, paper (interventive)	Conservation Assistant · Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences	Sydney, Australia
Zehnder, Angela	MA Conservation of Fine Art, University of Northumbria, Newcastle, UK. Train-the-trainer (Textiles). (curriculum vitae)	Easel paintings	Iziko South African National Gallery	Cape Town