

The gendered South African archivist: invisible voices through the twentieth century

by

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Abstract

This study explores the history and development of what would become the South African public archive through the twentieth century. The “invisible voices” in the title refer to women archivists in the South African public archive and the fact that they are for the most part invisible in the historical and archival record. The study endeavours to illuminate these key women and locate their voices, roles and contribution to the archive. The study firstly sketches the broad background of the origin and development of archives and then considers the history of archival development in the so-called “mother countries” of the South African archive, the Netherlands and Britain. The factors and circumstances which gave rise to the establishment of the archive in South Africa (SA) and its specific characteristics are also considered. Secondly, the study analyses the four pieces of archival legislation that were promulgated in the twentieth century as they provide a framework to establish the historical development of the public archive in SA. Finally, it concludes with an analysis of language used in the pieces of legislation as well as writings of prominent male archivists during this period to establish the use of gendered language. The objective was to establish if and how gendered language perpetuated women’s relegation and exclusion with specific reference to the archival profession. The findings of the study confirmed that the functionaries or role players in the archival domain since ancient times were predominantly male. The South African archival domain up to the latter part of the twentieth century reflects the same characteristic. The gendered language used in the pieces of archival legislation and writings displayed and established the male-structured and male-dominated nature of language as well as the archival profession. Although the space created by the language used in the legislation was predominantly “male only” and meant to exclude and relegate women to secondary spaces, the contribution of these three key women were pivotal to the development of the South African archive.

Key words: Archives; Women; Gender; South African history; Archival legislation; Gendered language; Archival history

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Abbreviations

AC	Archives Commission
ACTAG	Arts and Culture Task Group
ANC	African national Congress
CMMH	Commission for Museums, Monuments and Heraldry
GSSA	Genealogical Society of South Africa
HSSA	Historical Society of South Africa
NAC	National Archives Commission
NASA	National Archives of South Africa
NARSSA	National Archives and Records Service of South Africa
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NFVSA	National Film, Video and Sound Archive
PRO	Public Record Office
PSA	Public Servants Association of South Africa
PSC	Public Service Commission
SA	South Africa
SADF	South African Defense Force
SAS	State Archives Service
SASA	South African Society of Archivists
SWA	South West Africa
VAN	Vereniging van Archivarissen in Nederland
VNP	Vroue Nasionale Party
VOC	Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie
WCARS	Western Cape Archives and Record Service
ZAR	Zuid-Afrikaansche Republic

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In scholarship on archives and archival matters the concern is predominantly with the “what” or “how” of archives - theory and practise, education and training - or a more philosophical approach to archival science. When the archival realm is studied through a gendered lens it may be appropriate to rather ask “who” the role players were. A study of the historical development of the South African archive in terms of archival legislation involves identifying the functionaries (office holders) and their functions as determined by the legislation. However, there is no comprehensive overarching study on the historical development of the archive and archivists in South Africa (SA) with reference to women archivists in the public archive sphere. This study seeks to give a historical account of the development of the public archive in SA in the twentieth century with reference to the gendered South African archivist. The legislation created a space wherein archivists performed their functions and it is argued that this space was highly gendered. In addition, the study aims to identify the invisible voices in this period.

Although the demarcated period of the study is the twentieth century, the period since the first occupation of the Cape of Good Hope is considered. It is recognised that there did not exist any formal policy regarding archives as such during the time up to the twentieth century, but it is important to trace the roots of what would be later known as the South African public archive. The relationship between the so-called “mother countries” and their legacies, namely the Netherlands and Britain is also addressed.

The South African archive is quite young in comparison with other countries in the Western world and the first act of confirming the value of the Cape Colony’s archives came with the appointment of an Archives Commission (AC) in 1876 which was charged, amongst other things, to collect and index the Colonial archives of the Cape.¹ Despite the appointment of various other Archives Commissions,² which were

¹ J.H. Snyman, “Archives Commission 1876-1877 Early beginnings”, *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, pp. 16-19.

² Archives Commissions were appointed in 1909, 1918 and 1922. J.H. Esterhuyse, "Die Argiefkommissie (1909-1913)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 58-62; Editorial, "The Archives Commission: Fortieth Anniversary", *SA Archives Journal* 5, 1963, pp. 9-12

predominantly concerned with the archives of the Cape Colony, no comprehensive legislation existed as regards the archives of the rest of SA. The first ever archival legislation in SA was promulgated in 1922, forty-six years after the appointment of the first AC. The Act of 1922 was regarded as a landmark in archival development as it laid down the lines on which the public archive of SA would develop.³ The Act of 1953 replaced the Act of 1922 and was in effect for nine years before it was repealed in 1962⁴ when the last Archives Act under the apartheid government was promulgated. In 1996 the first Act under a new democratic dispensation was passed and is still in effect today.⁵

It is notable that the incumbents of the official positions as functionaries according to the archival legislation up and until the late twentieth century were predominantly male. Academics agree that women are largely invisible in historical memory⁶ and that they are obscured by the histories favoured and written by male historians and archivists of nation-states, institutions, politics, diplomacy and great military feats.⁷ History did not offer the same space for women, their lives and their experiences.⁸ It would appear that women archivists suffered a double neglect: they are invisible in some respects as women (gender) in the archive and invisible as professional archivists.

The title of the study derives from the above and describes the fact that women archivists were to a great extent invisible in the South African archive. Women were not just essentially invisible but they were, as pointed out by archival theorist Terry Cook, “relegated to being the silent and usually unrecognized supporters of male accomplishment”.⁹ Elsie Freeman Freivogel, an American archivist, alludes to this silence and relegation into subjectivity when she writes: “Whatever her profession, she is more likely to work with its housekeeping and service functions than to be in touch

³ J.H. Davies, “The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa”, *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 12.

⁴ *Government Gazette* No. 197, 9 March 1962, pp. 1-11.

⁵ National Archives and Record Service of South Africa, No. 43 of 1996 as amended. *Government Gazette* No. 22911, 7 December 2001, pp. 8-14.

⁶ See for example T. Cook, “The Archive(s) Is a Foreign Country: Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape”, *The American Archivist* 74(2), 2011, p. 608; E. Yale, “The history of archives: The state of the discipline”, *Book History* 18, 2015, pp. 348-350.

⁷ T. Cook, “Fashionable Nonsense or Professional Rebirth: Postmodernism and the Practice of Archives”, *Archivaria* 51, 2001, p. 27.

⁸ D. Gaitskell, “Introduction”, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 10(1), *Special Issue on Women in Southern Africa*, 1983, p. 5.

⁹ T. Cook, “The Archive(s) Is a Foreign Country: Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape”, *The American Archivist* 74(2), 2011, p. 608.

with its interagency or policy-making affairs... she sees an analogy between the internal, domestic nature of her job and the notion that women run the house and men run the world."¹⁰ Women's voices were not for the public sphere.¹¹

It was only in the latter part of the nineteenth century that girls' education became a more generally socially accepted option.¹² Opportunities in teaching, librarianship, journalism and clerical jobs opened up for women as it was believed to be natural and appropriate for women to take up these occupations. As a result, some of these occupations were "feminized".¹³ Through this opening up of education and employment opportunities women in SA also found employment in the archive. However, the professionalisation of the archival and historical domain led to the exclusion of women¹⁴ as they were only permitted to the lower ranks of the archive hierarchy and were not allowed to progress further,¹⁵ as higher positions were reserved for white males only.

Literature on the history of the South African archive leaves perhaps more questions about the history and the meaning of what archivists do, about their history and their institutions than answering them. In recent times numerous studies investigated certain important aspects of the archive.¹⁶ However, these studies usually focused on issues as regards the "what" and "how" of archival matters, all of which are issues of relevance and importance, but with brief reflections, at most, on the history and development of the archive. There is to some degree a "disjuncture of continuity between past, present and future"¹⁷ concerning the historical presentation and study

¹⁰ E.F. Freivogel, "Women in Archives: The status of women in the academic professions", *The American Archivist* 36(2), 1973, p. 186.

¹¹ E.J. Shepherd, 2017/n.d., <<https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk>>, access: 27 January 2020.

¹² T. Nesmith, "Archives from the Bottom Up: Social History and Archival Scholarship", *Archivaria* 14, 1982, p. 19.

¹³ T. Nesmith, "Archives from the Bottom Up: Social History and Archival Scholarship", *Archivaria* 14, 1982, p.19.

¹⁴ T. Nesmith, "Archives from the Bottom Up: Social History and Archival Scholarship", *Archivaria* 14, 1982, pp. 18-21.

¹⁵ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, pp. 51-53.

¹⁶ Aspects such as: the relation between archives and power (C. Hamilton (eds), *Refiguring the archive*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 2002.), transformation of the archive (V. Harris, "Redefining archives in South Africa: Public archives and society in transition, 1990-1996", *Archivaria* 42, 1996, pp. 6-27.), collective memory and the placement of archives in society (A. Josias, "Toward an understanding of archives as a feature of collective memory", *Archival Science* 11, 2011, pp. 95-112.), and record management aspects (I. Schellnack-Kelly, *The role of records management in governance-based evidence, service delivery and development in South African communities*. Unpublished DLitt et Phil in Information Science, Unisa, 2013.)

¹⁷ A. Josias, "Toward an understanding of archives as a feature of collective memory", *Archival Science* 11, 2011, p. 100.

of archivists in the South African archive. The value of archival history of the profession (of archivist) and institution is underestimated and may be defined as one reason the South African public archive finds itself ill-equipped in terms of, amongst others, addressing current professional issues and concerns, and understanding the life-cycle of archival institutions.¹⁸

1.2 Aim and contribution of the study

The general context of the study will be on the history of the archive in SA. The study aims to specifically analyse the various pieces of legislation promulgated in the twentieth century in order to outline the development of the archive. Furthermore, the study will endeavour to identify the invisible voices of the gendered South African archivist in the twentieth century. Lastly, the use of gendered language in these pieces of legislation will be considered and how it may have affected the status and position of women archivists.

The objective is to set the stage of the public archive in SA. The historical context of the archive, in other words the “mother countries” of the South African archive, namely the Netherlands and Britain, forms the backdrop. The legislation outlines the development and history of the archive during the twentieth century. In keeping with this narrative, the characters on the archival stage are the functionaries as they appear in the legislation and with the power they exercised over the archive. The records preserved in the public archive are not the concern of the study, but rather the space and roles created by the legislation are.

The reference to “invisible voices through the twentieth century” in the title refers specifically to women archivists and their voices, role, and contribution. It also refers to a specific time period in SA, the late nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth century, tracing a century and a quarter of archival history. As mentioned in the introduction, women were neglected and disregarded in historical memory and writing. Social historians describe their interest in ordinary people that are usually not accounted for in the historical literature as “history from the bottom up”.¹⁹ This created the space for the historically marginalised, those who were previously excluded and

¹⁸ See for example Richard Cox's evaluation of archival history. R.J. Cox, "On the value of archival history in the United States", *Libraries and culture* 23(2), 1988, pp. 135-151.

¹⁹ T. Nesmith, "Archives from the Bottom Up: Social History and Archival Scholarship", *Archivaria* 14, 1982, p. 7.

women formed a large part of this neglected space. South African historian Hermann Giliomee, conceded that in their research and writing, historians have generally missed much concerning women and their place in history.²⁰ Women have been disregarded, and in this particular instance, the history of women archivists within the broader context of archival history in SA has been overlooked. It is this void that the present study proposes to address.

The study primarily covers the twentieth century, but includes the earlier period from the late nineteenth century. There are two reasons for this delimitation. One is found in the fact that the beginning of an organised and structured archives service, in what was later to become SA, was established in the Cape Colony during the late nineteenth century. As mentioned, the archive in SA formally commenced with the appointment of the AC in 1876. With the submission of its report in 1877, the Commission set the tone for the collection, classification, indexing and cataloguing of the Cape Colonial archives, and effectively for the rest of SA too, as the same principles would be applied in the four provinces from 1919 onwards.

The second aspect related to the specific delimitation of the period, ties in with the promulgation of archival legislation which was passed between 1922 and 1996. These four pieces of legislation will be analysed for the specific use of gendered language and how it reflects the mind-set of the time.

It is against this backdrop of the evolving archive in SA, with the employment of women archivists in government, that the contribution of the study lies. Women archivists entered the South African archival domain for the first time in the early part of the twentieth century. Marie Kathleen Jeffreys, Joan Hoskyn Davies and Anna Jacoba Böeseken were the pioneer female archivists in a time when women were not acknowledged as equal to their male counterparts.

1.3 Key concepts

The following key concepts are of relevance to the study and will be defined in terms of how they are interpreted in this context: women's history, gender history, feminist studies, archive/s, records, archivist, gender, and gendered language.

²⁰ H. Giliomee, 2 August 2003/n.d., <<http://www.oulitnet.co.za/seminarroom/afwomen.asp>>, access: May 2020.

Women's history takes “women” as its subject matter and can be defined as focusing on women's experience, activities, spaces, lives, family, sexuality, religion, identity and discourses.²¹

Gender history, as described by Joan Scott, examines the social organization of the relationship between the sexes.²² In an article Natalie Davis defines the goal of women's history as “to understand the significance of the sexes, of gender groups in the historical past.”²³ There is a tendency to use the terms women and gender interchangeably, even as substitutes. June Purvis is of the opinion that women's and gender history are closely related and that one is not superior to the other, but rather complement each other.²⁴ Scott concedes to this, but she differentiates between women's history and gender history as follows: “‘women's history’ proclaims its politics by asserting...that women are valid historical subjects; ‘gender’ includes but does not name women and so seems to pose no critical threat”.²⁵

Feminist studies are primarily committed to make women visible in the historical record.²⁶ Jill Matthews, however, states that women's lives and experiences are as integral to history as men's. She claims that the recognition of gender relations as a major dynamic within history is very much central to feminist history. Also, that feminist history is more than agreeing with rules regarding women's history and gender – it is a “political stance, a demand on behalf of women for ‘freedom from oppressive restrictions imposed by sex; self-determination; autonomy’”.²⁷

Archives: The word archive stems from the Greek word *arche* which means government. The Greek word *archeion* refers to the office and/or building of a magistrate in which the official archives were deposited for safe keeping. In Latin the word *archivum* was used to describe the archive where public records and documents

²¹ G. Bock, "History, women's history, gender history", EUI Working paper No. 87/291, 1987, p. 4. <<https://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/22864>>, access: April 2020; J. Purvis, “‘A Glass Half Full’? Women's history in the UK”, *Women's History Review* 27(1), 2018, p. 90.

²² J.W. Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis”, *The American Historical Review* 91(5), 1986, p. 1053.

²³ N.Z. Davis, “Women's history in transition: The European case”, *Feminist Studies* 3(3/4), 1976, p. 90.

²⁴ J. Purvis, “‘A Glass Half Full’? Women's history in the UK”, *Women's History Review* 27(1), 2018, p. 91.

²⁵ J.W. Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis”, *The American Historical Review* 91(5), 1986, p. 1056.

²⁶ G. Duganzich, “‘She's' who make history’: Reviewing the historical treatment of black women by four South African scholars”, *Historia* 44(1), 1999, p. 68.

²⁷ J. Matthews, “Feminist History”, *Labour History* 50, 1986, pp.148, 150, 153.

are deposited for preservation.²⁸ The more current use of the word “archive” has diverse meanings and is most commonly used to describe records preserved for their archival value. It can also refer to the institution responsible for the administration and managing of these records and, lastly, archive refers to the building in which the archives are preserved.²⁹

In the study reference is made to, for example the “archive/s” of an institution. The term as used in this study may refer to the collection of records (see definition below) still in use and stored by an institution and/or the collection of records not in use anymore and permanently stored. The distinction between current and non-current records was not made in earlier times as the practice is today. The terms “archive/s” and “records” are sometimes used interchangeably.

Only **records** with long term archival value are kept in archives. **Records** can be defined as “recorded information regardless of medium (for instance paper, microfilm or electronic media) or form (paper, for instance is used, in the form of correspondence files, maps, plans, registers etc.) created or received by an individual or body (institution, organisation or agency).”³⁰ This includes records created electronically and stored by means of computer technology.³¹ The term “records” as used in the study refers to information in any medium or form.

In SA a distinction is made between public and non-public records. Public records are those created or received in the course of official business by governmental bodies at central, provincial and local levels; and non-public or private records include all other categories e.g., church records, business records, private institutions and private papers.³²

Archivist: An understanding of the definition of an archive will be incomplete without referring to the person working with and responsible for these records, namely the

²⁸ A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, pp. 26-27; L.K. Born, “Baldassare Bonifacio and his essay ‘De Archivis’”, *The American Archivist* 4(4), 1941, pp. 227-228.

²⁹ V. Harris, *Exploring Archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, pp. 4, 6, 33. According to the Society of American Archivists’ Dictionary of archives terminology there are at least twelve commonly used meanings in the word “archives”. (Society of American Archivists, Dictionary of archives terminology, n.d., <<https://dictionary.archivists.org>>, access: April 2020.) For the purpose of this study the definition of archives as defined by Harris will be used.

³⁰ V. Harris, *Exploring Archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. 4.

³¹ V. Harris, *Exploring Archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. 4.

³² V. Harris, *Exploring Archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. 4.

archivist. An archivist is a professional with expertise in the management of records of enduring value and is responsible for the maintenance, preservation of the integrity of those records be it in the government departments or private institutions. An archivist's activities include amongst others appraisal, acquisition, arrangement and description, preservation, and the provision of access to records under his/her supervision according to legislation.³³

The title of the study refers to a “gendered South African archivist”. An exposition of the title includes defining the words “gender” and “gendered” and how it is understood in this study. The Oxford Quick Reference defines gender as follows:

The distinction between sex and gender is attributed to the anthropologist Margaret Mead (*Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, 1935). Sex is the biological category, whereas gender is the culturally shaped expression of sexual difference: the masculine way in which men should behave and the feminine way in which women should behave. It is emphasized by de Beauvoir that in this system woman is the Other: the kind of person whose characteristics are described by contrast with the male norm. It is a central aim of much feminist thought to uncover concealed asymmetries of power in differences of gender, and to work for a society in which the polarization of gender is abolished.³⁴

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines gender in similar terms as:

The state of being male or female as expressed by social or cultural distinctions and differences, rather than biological ones; the collective attributes or traits associated with a

³³ Society of American Archivists, Dictionary of archives terminology, n.d., <<https://dictionary.archivists.org>>, access: April 2020.

³⁴ Oxford Quick Reference, 2022, <<https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20111018151124466>>, access: November 2022.

particular sex, or determined as a result of one's sex. Also: a (male or female) group characterized in this way.³⁵

The word “gendered”, as an adjective, is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as:

Specific to, biased towards, or belonging to one of the sexes or genders; divided or differentiated according to gender (considered either culturally or biologically).³⁶

Gender is used in this study to refer to the cultural notions and distinctions of what it means to be male and female as in the definitions above. The adjective “gendered” as defined above describes the noun “archivist” and refers to the two sexes, male and female, but also implies the biases towards specifically female gender. In the study the “gendered archivist” is in most cases used to refer to male archivists as it appears, for example, in legislation.

However, gender does not come alone. Gender, as in the above definitions, is culturally shaped and language is one of the tools in this shaping process. Language is an integral part of what it means to be human, “to engage with and make sense of the world”³⁷ and to a degree language mediates identity.³⁸ Through language people construct, order and classify their worlds and it is an important conduit for social meaning.³⁹ As Sarah Lawson succinctly puts it “[p]eople construct their reality according to rules formulated by patriarchal society, and the key to the system is the semantic rule of the male-as-norm”.⁴⁰ Thus, language is seen as “a central medium to power” and of dominance.⁴¹

³⁵ Oxford English Dictionary, 2022, <<https://www.oed.com/viewdictionaryentry/Entry/77468#:~:text=The%20state%20of%20being%20male,a%20result%20of%20one's%20sex>>, access: November 2022.

³⁶ Oxford English Dictionary, 2022, <<https://www.oed-com.uplib.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/263636?rskey=3cr33c&result=4&isAdvanced=false#eid>>, access: November 2022.

³⁷ V. Reddy & E. de Kadt, "Thinking about language and gender: a South African perspective", *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 24(4), 2006, p. 417.

³⁸ P. Martin & P. Papadelos, "Who stands for the norm? The place of metonymy in androcentric language", *Social Semiotics* 27(1), 2017, p. 52.

³⁹ S.P. Larade & J.M. Pelletier, "Mediating in a neutral environment: Gender-inclusive or neutral language in archival description", *Archivaria* 35, 1993, pp. 100-101.

⁴⁰ S. Lawson, "More on sexism and language", *American Speech* 59(4), 1984, p. 370.

⁴¹ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, p. 308.

The term **gendered language** (also denoted as sexist language) as referred to in the study is defined in the *Cambridge Dictionary* as:

language which excludes one sex or the other, or which suggests that one sex is superior to the other. For example, traditionally, he, him and his were used to refer to both sexes, male and female, but nowadays many people feel that this makes she, her and hers seem less important or inferior. It is best to avoid sexist language in order not to offend people.⁴²

The use of gendered language in for example legislation, promoted and maintained stereotyping people according to their sex and assumed the male as norm and superior.⁴³

1.4 Historiography, methodology and sources

1.4.1 Local and international trends in women's history and the archive

History matters and its power should not be underestimated.⁴⁴ History forms part of our consciousness, shapes our values and contributes amongst other things to our identity. If the purpose of history is to understand the past and societies as a social necessity, history involves also a constant re-writing, re-representation and re-interpretation.⁴⁵ History is neither objective nor value free, it is affected by power relations and people's interest,⁴⁶ rendering it a contested space.⁴⁷ South African history is no different and several schools of historical thought interpreted and represented the history of SA and their imprint was still evident towards the end of the twentieth century. This section endeavours to give a brief overview of the local and

⁴² The *Cambridge Dictionary* is used in this instance as the *Oxford English Dictionary* has no entry on sexist or gendered language. Cambridge Dictionary, 2022, <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/grammar/british-grammar/sexist-language?q=language>>, access: November 2022.

⁴³ S.P. Larade & J.M. Pelletier, "Mediating in a neutral environment: Gender-inclusive or neutral language in archival description", *Archivaria* 35, 1993, p. 102.

⁴⁴ K.L. Harris, "How history blurs the memory and archives obscure the truth: Historical turns?" Inaugural address: New Head of Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria, May 2019.

⁴⁵ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, pp. 379, 24.

⁴⁶ N. Dladla, "The liberation of history and the end of South Africa: some notes towards an Azanian historiography in Africa, South", *South African Journal on Human Rights* 34(3), 2018, p. 426.

⁴⁷ K.L. Harris, "How history blurs the memory and archives obscure the truth: Historical turns?" Inaugural address: New Head of Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria, May 2019.

international trends in historiography with specific reference to women's history as well as the origin and history of the archive up to the end of the twentieth century.

Traditionally four key schools of thought are discernible in the South African historiography – the Settler, Liberal, Afrikaner-nationalist and neo-Marxist radical scholarship.⁴⁸ The legacy of South African historiography dates back to the nineteenth century with the work of George McCall Theal and George Cory who represented the so-called Settler school of historiography which featured strong Eurocentric characteristics.⁴⁹ It portrayed “white-black relationships as a struggle between the forces of 'civilisation' and 'savagery’”.⁵⁰ In the 1920s and 1930s the views of the Settler historians were challenged by the Liberals with prominent historians such as W.M. Macmillan, C.W. de Kiewiet and E.A. Walker.⁵¹ This school of thought would establish itself as the dominant tradition with which many academic historians identified. The Liberals placed bigger emphasis on social and economic aspects, for example industrialisation, poverty and the impact of imperialism. Although the Liberal historians directed their investigations and writing to the lives of “ordinary man”, greater emphasis was laid on race relations and they considered the arrival of Western colonialism and capitalism as a great step forward.⁵² The Afrikaner-nationalist school of thought developed parallel with the Liberal and predominantly English historiography. However, it went against the Liberal tendency of integrating the population groups into one national image of history and created a separate Afrikaner history and culture with no room for the experiences of any of the other population groups in SA.⁵³

⁴⁸ Dladla mentions a fifth, namely the British/Imperialist school of thought. N. Dladla, "The liberation of history and the end of South Africa: some notes towards an Azanian historiography in Africa, South", *South African Journal on Human Rights* 34(3), 2018, pp. 427-428.

⁴⁹ G. Verbeeck, "A new past for a new nation? Historiography and politics in South Africa - A comparative approach", *Historia* 45(2), 2000, p. 388.

⁵⁰ A. Cobley, "Does social history have a future? The Ending of Apartheid and recent trends in South African historiography", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(3), 2001, p. 613.

⁵¹ N. Dladla, "The liberation of history and the end of South Africa: some notes towards an Azanian historiography in Africa, South", *South African Journal on Human Rights* 34(3), 2018, pp. 431-432.

⁵² G. Verbeeck, "A new past for a new nation? Historiography and politics in South Africa - A comparative approach", *Historia* 45(2), 2000, p. 388.

⁵³ G. Verbeeck, "A new past for a new nation? Historiography and politics in South Africa - A comparative approach", *Historia* 45(2), 2000, pp. 389-390.

The Liberal school inspired a synthesis of South African history, the *Oxford History of South Africa*,⁵⁴ published in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which was fiercely critiqued by a new generation of scholars – the radical neo-Marxist or “revisionist” school of thought.⁵⁵ According to the latter critique, the analysis in the publication continued to study the population groups (whites and non-whites) as separate worlds with not much emphasis on social and economic interaction and integration.⁵⁶ Although there was emphasis on race,⁵⁷ class differences and capitalism were not taken into consideration and therefore the radical neo-Marxist scholars saw the Liberal analysis as out-dated and ill-equipped to account for the resilience of racial capitalism.⁵⁸ The neo-Marxist historiography had as its fundamental objective the re-interpretation and re-writing of South African history. The central principle of the neo-Marxist tradition can be described as society being structured by material considerations. They held that political, social and economic events cannot efficiently be explained with the concept of race, but only through an analysis of class and its relation to, for example culture, race, capitalism and labour.⁵⁹ By the 1980s it was clear that the radical neo-Marxist theorists displaced the liberals as authors of the dominant tradition in South African historiography.⁶⁰ The neo-Marxists were not a local homogenous group, they followed different types of Marxist schools and were from different academic backgrounds.⁶¹ Furthermore, this school of historiography did not come into existence in isolation – Marxist theories had been an established trend in European historiography as well as in America and Britain since the 1960s.⁶² Although

⁵⁴ M. Wilson & L. Thompson (eds), *The Oxford history of South Africa, part I: South Africa to 1870; part II: South Africa 1870-1966*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1969-1971.

⁵⁵ G. Verhoef, "Die Neo-Marxistiese historiografie oor Suid-Afrika", *Historia* 30(10), 1985, pp. 13-14.

⁵⁶ A. Copley, "Does social history have a future? The Ending of Apartheid and recent trends in South African historiography", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(3), 2001, p. 614.

⁵⁷ G. Verhoef, "Die Neo-Marxistiese historiografie oor Suid-Afrika", *Historia* 30(10), 1985, pp. 13-25; G. Verbeeck, "A new past for a new nation? Historiography and politics in South Africa - A comparative approach", *Historia* 45(2), 2000, p. 392.

⁵⁸ S. Sparks, "Review article. New Turks and Old Turks: The historiographical legacies of South African social history", *Historia* 58(1), 2013, p. 215.

⁵⁹ G. Verhoef, "Die Neo-Marxistiese historiografie oor Suid-Afrika", *Historia* 30(10), 1985, pp. 13-25.

⁶⁰ A. Copley, "Does social history have a future? The Ending of Apartheid and recent trends in South African historiography", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(3), 2001, p. 615.

⁶¹ G. Verhoef, "Die Neo-Marxistiese historiografie oor Suid-Afrika", *Historia* 30(10), 1985, p. 15.

⁶² J.W.N. Tempelhoff, "Writing histories and creating myths: Perspectives on trends in the discipline of history and its representations in some South African historical journals 1985-1995", *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies* 27, 1997, pp. 121-147.

the radical neo-Marxist approach was criticised⁶³ its contribution to historiography in the Western world and SA is undeniable - it actively opened up areas of study previously obscured from historical view. It turned traditional historiography with a view of the political and important individual leaders literally upside down to a history from below wherein it emphasised the lives of ordinary people⁶⁴ and also gave prominence to the roles and achievements of women which brought new scholarship to the fore.⁶⁵ The late 1980s saw a greater emphasis on black social history in SA, but also a growing diversity of themes was explored, for example questions of environment, health, religion and gender relations.⁶⁶

Reference was made earlier regarding trends in international and European historiography. It is of importance to trace the origin and development of these trends to contextualise the South African historical writing. Moreover, these trends also illustrate and express some views regarding the archive and how it was perceived by historians of the time. The form historical writing took at the end of the eighteenth century beginning of the nineteenth century can be described as a desire to see the past from the inside and establish what actually happened (*wie es eigentlich gewesen*).⁶⁷ The main figure during this time was Leopold von Ranke, a Prussian historian, whose contribution influenced historiography until the twentieth century. Ranke conceptualised history as a “science” based on archival or primary sources, he endeavoured to uncover “objective” facts of history. His contribution lay in the fact that he elevated the primacy of archival records through this type of analysis; also, his application of “scientific” methodology to describe sources (footnotes) is still being applied.⁶⁸ However, the history written during this period was with great emphasis on the nation-state, diplomatic and political history.⁶⁹ Ranke, his fellow historians as well

⁶³ P. Hetherington, "Women in South Africa: The historiography in English", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26(2), 1993, pp. 241-242; G. Verhoef "Die Neo-Marxistiese historiografie oor Suid-Afrika", *Historia* 30(10), 1985, pp. 21-24; A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, pp.145-148.

⁶⁴ G. Verbeeck, "A new past for a new nation? Historiography and politics in South Africa - A comparative approach", *Historia* 45(2), 2000, p. 393.

⁶⁵ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, p. 136.

⁶⁶ A. Cobley, "Does social history have a future? The Ending of Apartheid and recent trends in South African historiography", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(3), 2001, p. 616.

⁶⁷ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, p. 40.

⁶⁸ K.L. Harris, "How history blurs the memory and archives obscure the truth: Historical turns?" Inaugural address: New Head of Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria, May 2019; A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, pp. 39-47.

⁶⁹ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, p. 47.

as archivists of the time, placed great emphasis on the authority of records enshrined in the archive.⁷⁰

Reading the contributions of Ranke against the grain, there are two aspects of concern for this study. First, the primacy and authority given to the archive resulted in a view of the archive as a “storehouse”⁷¹ of records which held the “objective facts” of the past. This would greatly influence how the archive as well as the functions of the archivist would be perceived in the decades and even century to come. The archive was seen as a neutral space and the archivist as the innocent, objective and neutral “keeper of the records/archives/truth”.⁷² The second aspect concerns the important part Ranke played in the development of teaching history at university level.⁷³ He instituted the seminar where he taught his method of examining archival sources. The seminar system was introduced throughout Europe, Britain and the United States of America. The seminar was treated like “laboratories” where books and documents were treated as specimens, examined and tested.⁷⁴ In contrast to the lecture halls of universities which were public and open to women for attendance, the seminar rejected the femininity of the public lecture hall and restricted historical engagement to a small private space where entry was by invitation only - women were not invited.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the seminar experience was stimulating for it “converged with the ... progressive concept of male citizenship” and this citizen was “implicitly gendered male and whose autonomy was shored up by the excluded and dependant status of women”.⁷⁶ Men’s studies at home came to serve the same function as the seminar room – it was termed as “closets” or “cabinets” which were beyond the reach of ordinary life and women and wives were not to cross the threshold.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ E. Yale, "The history of archives: The state of the discipline", *Book History* 18, 2015, p. 341.

⁷¹ See for example also Yale’s statement that the archive was seen as windows on or mirrors of the past that give a full and faithful view of the past. However, the archive and archives (records) are not “transparent windows onto the past”. E. Yale, "The history of archives: The state of the discipline", *Book History* 18, 2015, pp. 340, 342.

⁷² T. Cook, "The archive(s) is a foreign country: Historians, archivists, and the changing archival landscape", *The American Archivist* 74, 2011, pp. 600-632.

⁷³ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, p. 43.

⁷⁴ B.G. Smith, "Gender and the practices of scientific history: The seminar and archival research in the nineteenth century", *The American Historical Review* 100(4), 1995, pp. 1154, 1166.

⁷⁵ B.G. Smith, "Gender and the practices of scientific history: The seminar and archival research in the nineteenth century", *The American Historical Review* 100(4), 1995, pp. 1152, 1157, 1162.

⁷⁶ B.G. Smith, "Gender and the practices of scientific history: The seminar and archival research in the nineteenth century", *The American Historical Review* 100(4), 1995, p. 1163.

⁷⁷ B.G. Smith, "Gender and the practices of scientific history: The seminar and archival research in the nineteenth century", *The American Historical Review* 100(4), 1995, pp. 1174-1175.

In the early twentieth century French historians were responsible for more substantial developments in historical writing with new and wider approaches to history. The Annales tradition, as it became known, sought after new syntheses and new questions as the old political and constitutional mainstream history was totally inadequate in understanding human society. The Annales school historians gave rise to a new integrated and “total history” which offered a broad picture of human society by being open to cooperate with and incorporate other disciplines, for example social sciences.⁷⁸ A very important aspect in the Annales tradition was their structuralism approach to history. They were not as much interested in “events” of history, but more in the deeper trends, behaviour and economic and social determinants – the structures formed below or behind empirical reality.⁷⁹ Structuralism as an academic approach originated in linguistics. As the Annales historians searched for the structures below or behind human behaviour it is not surprising that there is a central emphasis on language in their approaches and historical writing.⁸⁰

Towards the end of the twentieth century the paradigm of post-modernism confronted historians and theoretically challenged the validity of history as a discipline. However, the postmodernist challenge was countered by showing how much of the postmodernist charge was already part of the historian’s work. Paul Maylam deliberated in an article that those who write history are aware that what they write is incomplete, imperfect and that their work is subject to critique, revision and reinterpretation, also that historical writing will be influenced by the individual’s values and beliefs.⁸¹ Thus, to some degree it has been argued that the paradigm of post-modernism only highlighted the limitations of which the historian was already aware.

Some of the first historical writing in SA on women’s history was published in the 1980s and focused primarily on black women and had two main themes, namely, the portrayal of black women as oppressed victims of capitalism, and secondly the

⁷⁸ A. Megill, "Coherence and incoherence in historical studies: From the "Annales" school to the new cultural history", *New Literary History* 35(2), 2004, pp. 210-211; A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, pp. 77-83, 121.

⁷⁹ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, pp. 122-123, 148-149.

⁸⁰ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, pp. 149, 404.

⁸¹ P. Maylam, "'Dead horses, the baby and the bathwater': 'Post-theory' and the historian's practice", *SA Historical Journal* 42(1), 2000, pp. 121-135.

celebration of these women's resistance to this oppression.⁸² The historiography on white women in SA is limited as it is usually concerned with working-class women for example prostitutes, garment workers and white servants.⁸³ More recent studies consider the white Afrikaner woman as *volksmoeder* (mother of the nation) and the ideology of Afrikaner nationalism.⁸⁴

Other trends in international and national women's history include women's representation and political activism; power structures and women's fight against patriarchal oppression; women and their economic activities; women and religion (with reference to missionaries); gender violence and relations; motherhood and with that women's reproduction and health.⁸⁵

The section above traced the development of historical writing in SA and internationally; it also briefly considered trends in women's historiography. The remainder of this section focuses on the archive and writings concerning it. A noticeable international trend was the emergence of post-modernist thinking towards the latter part of the twentieth century. Activists of post-modernism impacted the archive by their writings, lectures and influence in the archival environment and profession. Much has been written about archives and the archivist in SA as part of

⁸² P. Hetherington, "Women in South Africa: The Historiography in English", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26(2), 1993, p. 261. See also: M. Zungu et al., "HERstory: Writing women into South African history", *Agenda* 28(1), 2014, pp. 7-17; C. Walker, *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*; N. Gasa, *Women in South African History: Basus'iimbokodo, Bawel'imilomho / They remove boulders and cross rivers*; J. Guy, "Analysing Pre-Capitalist Societies in Southern Africa", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 14(1), 1987, pp. 18-37.

⁸³ See for example, the chapter "Prostitutes and Proletarians" in C. van Onselen, *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Witwatersrand, 1886-1914, Part 1: New Babylon*, Raven Press, Johannesburg, 1982; P. Hetherington, "Women in South Africa: The Historiography in English", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26(2), 1993, p. 261.

⁸⁴ See amongst others L. Vincent, "A cake of soap: The Volksmoeder ideology and Afrikaner women's campaign for the vote", *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 32(1), 1999, pp. 1-17; E. Brink, "Man-Made Women: Gender, Class and the Ideology of the Volksmoeder" in C. Walker (ed.), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*, pp. 273-292; M. du Toit, "The Domesticity of Afrikaner Nationalism: Volksmoeders and the ACVV, 1904-1929", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 29(1), 2003, pp. 155-176; R. van der Merwe, "Moulding volksmoeders or volks enemies? Female students at the University of Pretoria, 1920-1970", *Historia* 56(1), 2011, pp. 77-100.

⁸⁵ L.F. Ntwape, *A Historiography of South African Women's History from c. 1990 A survey of monographs, anthologies and journal articles*, pp. 98-116.

the post-modernist debate by prominent professionals and academics.⁸⁶ The edited book *Refiguring the archive* by C. Hamilton, V. Harris, J. Taylor, M. Pickover, G. Reid and R. Saleh is a case in point. More recently, V. Harris has also published on the contested nature of archives. In *Ghosts of Archive. Deconstructive intersectionality and praxis*⁸⁷ Harris argues that the archive is political and not neutral and impartial as taught in archival programs. Furthermore, that power is at play in the archive in deciding who is in and who is out, who is heard and who is not.⁸⁸ For Harris there are traces in the archive of the present, the past and the future – he refers to it as that the archive is haunted by ghosts of the living, ghosts of the dead and ghosts of those still to be born and the meanings and significances yet to emerge from the archive. For Harris a deconstructive approach to intersectionality is probably the only theoretical tool for understanding the haunted present. He contends further that the work of archive is justice, and the work of an archivist is to be an activist for social justice; the archivist is in a position to listen “to the whispers of absent authors, cryptic idioms, names without stories and stories without names, absent content, unknown contexts, the incessant movement of recontextualisation, readings of content (past, present and future), readers excluded or obstructed”.⁸⁹

Another international trend in archival writing is the emphasis placed by academics and archivists on archival history.⁹⁰ In this study, literature regarding this development as it features in international writings and publications will be investigated and will illustrate for example the gender bias in the coverage of archival biographies.

At the end of the twentieth century post-modernism challenged history as a discipline. However, another aspect of this paradigm targeted that which historians rely on to

⁸⁶ C. Hamilton et al., *Refiguring the archive*; T. Cook, “From the record to its context: The theory and practise of archival appraisal since Jenkinson”, *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, pp. 32-52; E. Ketelaar, “Archives of the people, by the people, for the people”, *SA Archives Journal* 34, 1992, pp. 5-16; V. Harris, “Claiming less, delivering more: A critique of positivist formulations on archives in South Africa”, *Archivaria* 44, 1997, pp. 132-141; V. Harris, “Redefining Archives in South Africa: Public Archives and Society in Transition, 1990-1996”, *Archivaria* 42, 1996, pp. 6-27; G. Cuthbertson, “Postmodernising history and the archives: Some challenges for recording the past”, *SA Archives Journal* 39, 1997, pp. 3-16; V. Harris, “Refiguring the archive”, *SA Archives Journal* 40, 1998, n.p.

⁸⁷ V. Harris, *Ghosts of archive. Deconstructive intersectionality and praxis*. Routledge, London, 2021.

⁸⁸ V. Harris, *Ghosts of archive. Deconstructive intersectionality and praxis*, p. 49.

⁸⁹ V. Harris, *Ghosts of archive. Deconstructive intersectionality and praxis*, p. 108.

⁹⁰ See amongst others the articles of the following: R.J. Cox, “American Archival History: Its Development, Needs, and Opportunities”, *The American Archivist* 46(1) 1983, pp. 31-41; and M. Brichford, “Who are the archivists and what do they do?” *The American Archivist* 51(1-2), 1988, pp. 106-110.

construct the past, namely the archive. It targeted the limitations of the archive, documents and texts. The view held was that archives were constructed by those who held political power and the call was made that the archive should shift its boundaries beyond “grand narratives” and the “dominant political realm”.⁹¹ One of the routes along which this change was envisaged was by including neglected, marginalised or silenced voices “through alternative historical material emerging as part of the counter-archive”⁹² in order to provide different or alternative narratives to the dominant historical record.⁹³

1.4.2 Methodology and sources

This is a qualitative study tracing the history and development of the South African archive with reference to women archivists’ invisible voices through the twentieth century. In the study various primary and secondary sources have been used. Literature is the main source historians work with. Some historians refer to three types of sources which are: primary, secondary and tertiary sources.⁹⁴ This study only utilises the first two types. Primary sources are understood to be those “sources which came into existence during the actual period of the past which the historian is studying, they are those relics and traces left by the past”.⁹⁵ In other words, primary sources are the raw materials of history, the original documents and objects. The different types of primary sources can include documents of record, for example records of national, provincial and local government institutions, laws and other records of Parliament, business institutions, churches, personal letters and diaries.⁹⁶ Other primary sources may include maps, photographs, paintings and sculptures to name but a few. Oral history is also a primary source which may include taped records of interviews, folk

⁹¹ K.L. Harris, “How history blurs the memory and archives obscure the truth: Historical turns?”. Inaugural address: New Head of Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria, May 2019.

⁹² K.L. Harris, “How history blurs the memory and archives obscure the truth: Historical turns?”. Inaugural address: New Head of Department of Historical and Heritage Studies, University of Pretoria, May 2019.

⁹³ D.M. van der Merwe, *Story Cloths as a Counter-Archive: The Mogalakwena Craft Art Development Foundation Embroidery Project*, p. 9.

⁹⁴ J. Myrdal, “On source criticism in world history”, in A. Jarrick, J. Myrdal & M.W. Bondesson (eds), *Methods in world history. A critical approach*, p. 47.

⁹⁵ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, p. 199.

⁹⁶ In SA a distinction is made between public and private records: public records refers to records of the government and governmental bodies and institutions. Private records include the rest: businesses, churches, universities, trade unions and all other private collections held by individuals.

sayings, songs and traditions.⁹⁷ Despite the fact that primary sources, and specific archival sources, are of a fragmentary, imperfect and fragile nature, it often reflects the interests and concerns of their creator or author and therefore they must be critically examined and evaluated.

Historians make use of external and internal criticisms and evaluations to consider amongst other factors the authenticity, provenance, type of source, the dating of the source, and how the record was understood by contemporaries.⁹⁸ Primary sources used in this study are mainly archival collections held in the Western Cape Archives and Records Service in Cape Town and the National Archives and Records Service repository in Pretoria. Other government publications that were scrutinised were the various archival acts and regulations as published in the *Government Gazette*. The Debates of the House of Assembly (known as *Hansard*) as well as the *Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Council* (known as the Blue Books) were also examined and provided useful information on the views of the government of the time concerning archival matters.

Secondary sources are the accounts written later by those looking back upon a specific period in history. Secondary sources make use of primary sources to analyse, evaluate and/or interpret topics or phenomena.⁹⁹ This includes books, theses, dissertations, journal and newspaper articles, papers presented at conferences and electronic sources as is reflected in the source list of the study. Literature pertaining to the topic of the history of the South African archive is scarce, although dissertations and theses were done on the subject, they dealt either with short periods of time or discussed the transformation of the archive. As far as could be determined, books, articles and research on women archivists in the public archive do not exist. There may be different reasons for this. Archives represents a relatively small and not well-known profession which is to a large extent invisible to broader society.¹⁰⁰ Society viewed women differently in the past and relegated them to secondary positions which

⁹⁷ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, pp. 208-216.

⁹⁸ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, pp. 221-233.

⁹⁹ A. Marwick, *The nature of history*, p. 199; J. Myrdal, "On source criticism in world history", in A. Jarrick, J. Myrdal & M.W. Bondesson (eds), *Methods in world history. A critical approach*, p. 48.

¹⁰⁰ T. Nesmith, "What's history got to do with it?: Reconsidering the place of historical knowledge in archival work", *Archivaria* 57, 2004, pp. 1-27.

obscured them further from history. Moreover, literature on the archive generally focussed more on aspects such as transformation and record management.

This chapter detailed the main concern of the study, namely the history and roots of the South African archive as well as establishing the invisible voices of archivists up to the twentieth century. It also discussed the aim and envisaged contribution of the study in this specific area of study. The chapter also briefly set out the historiography of women's history and the archive as well as an explanation of methodology and sources utilised in the study.

Chapter 2: Select literature review

This chapter presents a select overview of some of the key sources on the subject of archives and, in particular, the history of archives. A wide range of sources that contextualise this study include books and journal articles written on the subject of archives nationally and internationally, unpublished postgraduate theses and information on certain websites.

As far as could be determined there is no systematic overarching study on archives in SA.¹⁰¹ There is no single source that considers the factors that influenced the development of archives, local archival theory and practise, the history of archives and how archives originated and developed in SA. Articles concerning some aspects of the historical development of archives in SA have been published in the *SA Archives Journal* and other historical journals, but at best this remains a relatively fragmented view.¹⁰² The academic work that exists on archives is rather episodic in view, concerned with short time periods during the history of archives;¹⁰³ specific archival repositories and institutions;¹⁰⁴ some pioneering individuals associated with the archives;¹⁰⁵ records management and its challenges;¹⁰⁶ digitisation of specific

¹⁰¹ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, p. iv; L. Lambrechts, *Ethnography and the Archive: Power and Politics in five South African music Archives*, p. 10.

¹⁰² This is not a complete list of published articles. See issues of the *SA Archives Journal* 1960 (2); 1961 (3); 1962 (4); 1963 (5); 1969 (11); 1976 (18); 1986 (28); 2012 (45); 2019 (52). For an example of articles in historical journals see: G. Hendrich, "A rich storehouse for research': The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service", *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, pp. 74-97.

¹⁰³ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*.

¹⁰⁴ L. Lambrechts, *Ethnography and the Archive: Power and Politics in five South African music Archives*; G. Hendrich, "A rich storehouse for research': The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service", *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, pp. 74-97; B. Maaba, *The history and politics of Liberation Archives at Fort Hare*.

¹⁰⁵ I.D. Bosman, Dr George McCall Theal as die geskiedskrywer van Suid-Afrika as well as C.J. Rossouw's "Die werk van Hendrik Carel Vos Leibbrandt as Argivaris en Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedskrywer" both as quoted in P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*.

¹⁰⁶ I. Schellnack-Kelly, *The role of records management in governance-based evidence, service delivery and development in South African communities*.

collections or archives,¹⁰⁷ or taking a view on archives, its management and role in SA since the beginning of democracy i.e. after 1994.¹⁰⁸

This chapter will be divided into two sections, the history of archives and the history of women and gender.

2.1 History of archives

As indicated earlier, one of the trends in international archival literature is the emphasis placed by academics and archivists on archival history. Already in the 1960's Ernst Posner, a well-known and respected American archivist, directed a plea to the American archival profession for historical research on state archives:

To write a full history of the development of American state archives would require many and detailed preliminary studies. The record making and record-keeping practices of colonial America should be investigated, with particular attention to their relationship to the practices of the respective mother countries; so should the practices of the states during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We also need histories of individual archival agencies their struggles, and their achievements.¹⁰⁹

His plea for research in this regard has largely been ignored and as M. Brichford states “[t]here is [still] no Dictionary of American Archival Biography”.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ N.S. Netshakhuma, *An exploration of the digitisation strategies of the liberation archives of the African National Congress in South Africa*; P. Lalu, “The virtual stampede for Africa: digitisation, postcoloniality and archives of the liberation struggles in Southern Africa”, *Innovation: Journal of Appropriate Librarianship and Information Work in Southern Africa* 34, 2007, pp. 28-44; S. Anderson & G. Hart, “Challenges in digitising liberation archives: a case study”, *Innovation: Journal of Appropriate Librarianship and Information Work in Southern Africa*, 53, 2016, pp. 21-38.

¹⁰⁸ S.F. Mtshali, *A strategic approach to the management of the National Archives of South Africa*; M. Yuba, *The role of the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa in the young democracy*. Please note that this is not a complete list of academic work done.

¹⁰⁹ R.J. Cox, “On the Value of Archival History in the United States”, *Libraries & Culture* 23(2), 1988, p. 150 footnote 34 as quoted from E. Posner, *American State Archives* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964, p. 7.

¹¹⁰ M. Brichford, “Who are the archivists and what do they do?” *The American Archivist* 51(1-2), 1988, p. 109.

Richard J. Cox, described as one of the most knowledgeable historians of the archival profession in the USA,¹¹¹ penned at least three important articles on the importance and future of archival history. In his 1983 article he considers the development, needs and opportunities of American archival history and investigates the literature published about this subject.¹¹² He concludes that there were three works published in the 1960s of unqualified success and thus demonstrates the uneven coverage in quality and subject. Similarly, in his 1988 article, Cox delves in detail into the value that archival history offers the profession.¹¹³ In his 2000 article, he reviews some of the highlights in American archival history research up to that point and focuses on the reasons why archivists are still not interested in undertaking such research.¹¹⁴

In his 1995 article, James O'Toole, both an archivist and historian,¹¹⁵ reflected and reviewed some themes in the study of archival history, broad outlines of the kind of archival study that ought to be undertaken and some methodological approaches that might assist in the study and writing of archival history.¹¹⁶ These various sources point to the awareness of the need for archival histories, but are examples that underline the limited nature of what has been done in this domain.

An example of a more recent exception in this regard is the work of Elizabeth Shepherd in Great Britain. In her book *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England* published in 2009, she addresses the lacunae that existed in English archival history by a historical narrative of archival institutions and the archival profession over a period of just more than a century. She highlights the historical events that molded the archives, the legislation and commissions, the peculiar and sometimes eccentric personalities who shaped the archives and were beforehand unbeknown to historians and archivists alike. There are quite a number of interesting comparisons to be made between the archival history in England and SA, considering that Great Britain was one of the

¹¹¹ B. Brothman, "The Society of American Archivists at Seventy-Five: Contexts of Continuity and Crisis, A Personal Reflection", *The American Archivist* 74(2), 2011, p. 389.

¹¹² R.J. Cox, "American Archival History: Its development, needs, and opportunities", *The American Archivist* 46(1), 1983, pp. 31-41.

¹¹³ R.J. Cox, "On the value of archival history in the United States", *Libraries and culture* 23(2), 1988, pp. 135-151.

¹¹⁴ R.J. Cox, "The failure or future of American archival history: A somewhat unorthodox view", *Libraries and culture* 35(1), 2000, pp. 141-154.

¹¹⁵ S. Smith, September 2020/n.d., <<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/bcnews/campus-community/announcements/o-toole-named-university-historian.html>>, access: 2 December 2020.

¹¹⁶ J. O'Toole, "The future of archival history", *Provenance, Journal of the Society of Georgia Archivists* 13(1), 1995, pp. 1-24.

“mother countries” where South African archival practise is concerned. In Shepherd’s book, the advent, development and importance of archival history and the archival profession is addressed, documented and narrated – the first work of its kind and size in England.¹¹⁷

In as much as the above is a first, the “other first” is the place and space Shepherd gives to the women archivists during that time. Shepherd continued in this vein by exploring the life (family, educational background friendships), professional work, activities and contributions of these “hidden” women archivists in later published articles.¹¹⁸ By constructing a space in the historical narrative, Shepherd brings them out of the shadows of history and through her work she gives the hidden a strong voice.

Turning to the writing of a full history regarding the development of the public archive in SA poses similar challenges as in America, namely the uneven coverage in quality and subject focus. Articles relating to the history of specific archive depots and the organisational development of government archives of the Union of SA¹¹⁹ appeared in the *SA Archives Journal* (journal of the South African Society of Archivists (SASA)), but no single comprehensive historical and/or archival study on the inception of archival development in SA (from the Dutch and British¹²⁰ colonial period) up to the present has appeared. In general, the articles mostly deal with the nuts and bolts of everyday archival practise, business archives, and biographical articles on the Chief Archivists/Directors of Archives on their appointments or retirements.¹²¹ Similar articles were also published in the *Argiefnuus/Archives News*¹²² (a publication for and by the state archives personnel). The South African “debate” in the archival profession

¹¹⁷ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*. Ashgate Publishing, England, 2009.

¹¹⁸ E. Shepherd, “Hidden voices in the Archives: Pioneering women archivists in early 20th century England”, in F. Foscari, H. MacNeil, B. Mak, G. Oliver (eds). *Engaging with Archives and Records: Histories and Theories*, pp. 83-104; E. Shepherd, “Pioneering women archivists in England: Ethel Stokes (1870–1944), record agent”, *Archival Science* 17(2), 2017, pp. 175–194.

¹¹⁹ See for instance: J.H. Davies, “The Organisational Development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa”, *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 7-19.

¹²⁰ P.A. Muburgh’s unpublished MA thesis however does cover the period 1876 to 1910. See: P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*.

¹²¹ For an example of such articles see among others: *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960; J.H. Cilliers, “Dr J.H. Snyman: Nuwe Direkteur van Argiewe”, *SA Archives Journal* 28, 1986, pp. 59-61; V. Harris, “Editorial. New horizons”, *SA Archives Journal* 34, 1992, pp. 1-4. The *SA Archives Journal* was first published in 1959 and is still published today but under a new name: *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists*.

¹²² See for example *Archives News* 32(9), 1990 for the variety of subjects covered.

on theory and practise, record management, and electronic records was relatively barren. From the 1990s, the new political dispensation brought the years of political, cultural and economic isolation to an end and allowed archivists and record managers to not just attend conferences, seminars and symposia internationally and across national borders, particularly within the southern African sub-continent, but also allowed for the successful organising and hosting of the same in SA. This allowed for new and fresh ideas to be communicated and debated.¹²³

Locally an unpublished thesis concerning the history of the development of the archive in SA was completed by P.A. Myburgh in 1993.¹²⁴ The thesis covers the period 1876 to 1910 and describes the historical development of the archive during this period. Myburgh was an archivist at the State Archives Service (SAS) and was familiar with and had access to primary sources in various archive repositories in Cape Town, the former provinces of the Transvaal and Orange Free State and the Central Archives Repository in Pretoria. The value of this work is in its use of mostly primary sources and documenting the history of the archive and the processes involved in its development during this three-decade period.

In another thesis, submitted in 2012 on the South African archives, L. Lambrechts¹²⁵ researches the issues concerning power and politics in South African musical archives. Her approach was firstly, to consider the changing understanding of the archive postulated in a post-modernist society; secondly, she explored five music archives examining to what level archival theory is engaged with and practised in these archives; and lastly how a critical reading of music archives can supplement our understanding of archives as places of power.¹²⁶ This work adds to a body of studies and published work about archives and their place in society. However, it is telling to

¹²³ V. Harris, "Editorial. New horizons", *SA Archives Journal* 34, 1992, pp. 1-4.

¹²⁴ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*.

¹²⁵ L. Lambrechts, *Ethnography and the Archive: Power and Politics in five South African music Archives*.

¹²⁶ L. Lambrechts, *Ethnography and the Archive: Power and Politics in five South African music Archives*, p. iii.

note that there is no reference to women archivists and their experience in the music archive per se.¹²⁷

In 1997 the National Archives of South Africa (NASA) published *Exploring Archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*¹²⁸ written by Verne Harris who was at that stage the deputy director at the National Archives. This small book of a mere 70 odd pages was meant, as stated in the Foreword, to be an elementary introduction to the South African archives and as such gave voice to the new archival discourse in SA. At the least this work shared a window into the transformation of South African society, but more specifically the South African archive environment. In the second edition, published in 2000, a chapter on the history of the archive in SA was included. According to some international archivists the second edition “is the world’s first comprehensive text of archival theory and practice treated in the postmodern or deconstruction paradigm”.¹²⁹ It is important to note that in both editions Harris acknowledged that “a substantial majority of South African archivists are women”.¹³⁰ Yet, women archivists are still invisible to a great extent.

A prominent work concerning archives and the debate around specifically the South African archives and archivists in the new democratic era is taken up in the edited book *Refiguring the Archive*, published in 2002.¹³¹ The book originated from the 1998 Refiguring the Archive project hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand's Graduate School for the Humanities and Social Sciences in conjunction with other stake holders. The book embraces a post-modernist and deconstructive approach and it challenges the reader to fundamentally question and rethink the nature and purpose of archives. This is an important work, as is attested to by the positive reviews by many archivists and historians.¹³² However, even in these watershed writings, the woman

¹²⁷ There are two other studies undertaken with reference to the SA archive, namely J. Geber, *The South African Government Archives Service: Past, Present and Future*. Unpublished MA dissertation, University College of London, 1987 and R. Saleh, *A National archival policy for a democratic South Africa*. Unpublished MA dissertation, University College of London, 1993. Various efforts were made to locate these dissertations, but to no avail.

¹²⁸ V. Harris, *Exploring Archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. v.

¹²⁹ E. Ketelaar, Book reviews. “Exploring Archives: An Introduction to Archival Ideas and Practice in South Africa”, *Archivaria* 51, 2001, p. 196.

¹³⁰ V. Harris, *Exploring archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. 41.

¹³¹ C. Hamilton (eds)., *Refiguring the archive*.

¹³² C. Kirkwood, “Refiguring the archive”, *SA Archives Journal* 43, 2003, pp. 94-97; B. Dodge, “Book reviews. Refiguring the archive”, *Archivaria* 55, 2003, pp. 141-146; A. Verdoolaege, “Book review. Refiguring the archive”, *Africa (pre-2011)* 74(2), 2004, pp. 302-304; J. Wright, “Book reviews. Refiguring the archive”, *SA Historical Journal* 49(1), 2003, pp.267-272.

as archivist is still invisible. Subsequently Verne Harris wrote *Archives and Justice: A South African perspective*,¹³³ a collection of essays, speeches, conference presentations and articles, in which Harris enters into a dialogue about the nature of archives, records and memory; the significance of these in society and the lives of individuals, but moreover the ever-evolving roles and responsibilities of archivists. For Harris the archivist has a central responsibility to justice and society – a point he also poignantly drives home in *Ghosts of Archive*.¹³⁴

2.2 History of women and gender

Women and their contribution to history became a focal point of historical studies in the Northern hemisphere as late as the 1950s and 1960s, with the first studies concerning women in SA only being published from the 1980s onwards.¹³⁵

The interest shown and academic approach to women up to the 1970s were mostly written by liberal feminists, influenced by Eurocentric biases and earlier anthropological presentations of women. This research was centred mainly with women's role in the family, female socialisation and sexuality. This appeared primarily within the disciplines of anthropology and sociology, but these issues were not avidly explored in historical research.¹³⁶

Early in 1983, the extensive and thought-provoking article of Belinda Bozzoli "Marxism, Feminism and South African studies" was published.¹³⁷ P. Hetherington acknowledges that this was the first "considerable attempt" to survey developments in women's history. Bozzoli lamented in this article that in spite of the radicalisation of South

¹³³ V. Harris, *Archives and Justice: A South African perspective*, Society of American Archivists, Chicago, 2007.

¹³⁴ V. Harris authored various articles and books on archival matters. For some of his work, please refer to the following: V. Harris, *Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective*, Society of American Archivists, Chicago, 2007; V. Harris, *Exploring Archives: An Introduction to Archival Ideas and Practice in South Africa*, Second Edition, National Archives, Pretoria, 2000; V. Harris (ed.), *Archives and the Protection of People's Rights*, ESARBICA, 1999.

¹³⁵ B. Bozzoli, "Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 9(2), 1983, pp. 139-171.

¹³⁶ L.F. Ntwape, *A Historiography of South African Women's History from c. 1990 A survey of monographs, anthologies and journal articles*, pp. 9-10; P. Hetherington, "Women in South Africa: The Historiography in English", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26(2), 1993, p. 245; D. Gaitskell, "Introduction", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 10(1), Special Issue on Women in Southern Africa, 1983, pp. 1, 2, 10.

¹³⁷ B. Bozzoli, "Marxism, Feminism and South African Studies", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 9(2), 1983, pp.139-171.

African history, most radical scholars still lacked an awareness of gender.¹³⁸ She noted that Marxist scholars more often than not directed their analyses toward the family as reproductive unit in society and by using that kind of analyses gender struggles taking place within the family structure are missed.¹³⁹ Through this article Bozzoli questioned the interpretation of South African women's history in the nineteenth to the twentieth century and called for a reinterpretation and analyses of women's history.¹⁴⁰ Historians agree that this article by Bozzoli is still of great relevance and her work remains as that of one of the pioneers of this theoretical approach.¹⁴¹ The fact that this article is still read and cited globally and that it forms the basis of an entire field of social theory, confirms its significance almost four decades after it first appeared in 1983. Catherine Burns, in an obituary article, aptly summarised it as "written ... across regional, ethnic, race and class divisions, with gender relations as its petrol and women at the wheel."¹⁴²

Probing archival history and examining sources and the literature available, reveals a meagre body of knowledge concerning women archivists in the South African context. This is a striking weakness and indicates that this lacuna needs to be addressed.

2.3 Chapter outline

The introductory chapter of this dissertation placed the study in context through a historiographical introduction. It also offered an explanation of the title, aims and contribution to the historiography of the archive. Key concepts used in the study were defined and explained. Furthermore, the historiographical trends, methodology and sources with specific reference to primary and secondary sources, were briefly discussed.

¹³⁸ P. Hetherington, "Women in South Africa: The Historiography in English", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26(2), 1993, p. 247.

¹³⁹ P. Hetherington, "Women in South Africa: The Historiography in English", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26(2), 1993, p. 259.

¹⁴⁰ L.F. Ntwape, *A Historiography of South African Women's History from c. 1990 A survey of monographs, anthologies and journal articles*, pp. 26-27, 35.

¹⁴¹ N. Erlank and L. Clowes, "Reports on colloquium sessions. Session 7: Writing and teaching gendered history in Africa in the twenty-first century", *South African Historical Journal* 50(1), 2004, p. 232; P. Hetherington, "Women in South Africa: The Historiography in English", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26(2), 1993, p. 260.

¹⁴² C. Burns, 10 December 2020/n.d., <<https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2020-12-10-belinda-bozzoli-a-brave-and-beautiful-life-that-had-ripples-far-beyond-sa/>>, access: 11 December 2020.

Chapter two considers the literature review which focuses on secondary sources that are of relevance to this study. Attention will be given to key texts, internationally and locally, on the debate about women in history, and in public archive institutions so as to provide context for the study.

Chapter three provides a broad historical background to archives from ancient times to the more recent and modern times. As Elizabeth Yale puts it “the questions of the history of archives are the questions of history”.¹⁴³ This chapter explores the origins of what would become the archive as we understand it today. The fact that the archive in SA evolved to a great extent from the Netherlands and Great Britain as the “mother countries” will also be highlighted.

The following two chapters (chapters four and five) will use the promulgation of laws as a framework to establish historical archival developments and the place of women archivists in the public sector. Chapter four will first consider the archival situation from the late nineteenth century up to 1921. It will then analyse the two pieces of legislation of 1922 and 1953. While chapter five is dedicated to consider legislation enacted between 1962 and 1996.

The study concludes with chapter 6. This chapter takes an almost “top to bottom” view as regards the use of gendered language. The use of gendered language in archival legislation is investigated and listed in tables to confirm the almost excessive use thereof. A second layer of gendered language is identified as “articulated gendered language” where the writings of men in high-ranking positions of the South African public archive were analysed for the use of this type of language. A third and last layer is the experience of three key women archivists as well as their contribution to the archives and South African historical writing up to the end of the twentieth century.

¹⁴³ E. Yale, "The history of archives: The state of the discipline", *Book History* 18, 2015, p. 333.

Chapter 3: Archives from antiquity: Historical background

3.1 Introduction

This section provides a rather detailed overview of the history and development of archives from ancient times to the modern era in Western Europe. Specific reference is made to archival history and development in the Netherlands and England as the “mother countries” of archival developments for SA. Attention is also given to the colonial period in SA and the unification of the four colonies into the Union of SA in 1910 culminating with the new democratic dispensation introduced in 1994.

Archives embody humankind’s efforts to organise their lives and daily economic, political, and personal experiences. In his seminal book *Archives in the Ancient World*¹⁴⁴ Ernst Posner, a German-American historian and archivist describes the archival and historical development of archives from the Tigris-Euphrates civilization to the division of the Roman Empire into Eastern and Western empires,¹⁴⁵ from the clay tablets in Mesopotamia to the records and repositories of Imperial Rome.¹⁴⁶ Posner claims that “[i]n its great design, the contours of Western archival development can already be discerned” in the history of the ancient archives.¹⁴⁷ Also, the Western world “owe[s] their archival organization as well as their register techniques to a twofold inheritance: the ancient Roman institutions... and the chancery practices of the ancient Orient that reached [these courts] through the administration of the Fatimid Arabs of Egypt and Sicily, which, [in turn], had absorbed Persian influence.”¹⁴⁸ However, Posner also submits that our knowledge of ancient archives and their history rests on uneven and incomplete foundations.¹⁴⁹ Looking at the history of ancient times there is a wealth of data and information of some periods allowing for a reconstruction of for example archival buildings and documents, but for others “almost all is complete darkness”.¹⁵⁰ It leaves the archival historian with the difficult task not just to tell what

¹⁴⁴ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, Harvard University Press, United States of America, 2003.

¹⁴⁵ L.J. Cappon, “Reviews”, *The American Archivist* 36(1), 1973, p. 67.

¹⁴⁶ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*. Given its landmark qualities this publication has been relied on extensively for the evolving history of archives.

¹⁴⁷ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 11.

¹⁴⁸ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 11.

¹⁴⁹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 8.

¹⁵⁰ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 128.

existed, but to tell what archives could or should have existed. It remains an uneven and partly contestable episode of history.¹⁵¹

Posner's point of departure is a firm belief that "archives of the ancient world seem to have much in common with those of our own times".¹⁵² To illustrate this point he identified six basic types of records: laws; records of administrative activity; financial and accounting records; land ownership and tax records; records facilitating control over persons for example military service records and forced labour (slaves); notarial records by which the state sanctioned and preserved the private transactions of individuals.¹⁵³ He refers to these as the "constants in record creation" regardless of the particular culture, civilization or institution, governmental, religious, or economic entity that produced them.¹⁵⁴

3.2 Ancient archives

Archival practice and administration grew as a natural phenomenon as soon as writing on perishable material was invented.¹⁵⁵ The earliest evidence of such material is the use of wood (wooden writing boards and tablets), clay and ivory tablets, papyrus, and leather.¹⁵⁶ Only an extremely small part of these early records have been preserved as the fragile nature of these materials made long-term preservation almost impossible. Posner argues that the first archives were established by the Sumerians in Mesopotamia with wooden and then later clay tablets dating back to the middle of the fourth millennium B.C.¹⁵⁷ The tablets were used for the daily running and administration of the kingdom to document economic and legal transactions, for example property ownership, and were stored in clay or wood boxes or on wooden shelves in an archives room built purposely for preservation. Temples and courts were used for the safe keeping of records and archives for religious, legal, administrative, commercial, and genealogical purposes.¹⁵⁸ Interesting to note that official, as well as

¹⁵¹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 8.

¹⁵² E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 2.

¹⁵³ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 3-4; J.M. O'Toole, "Back to the Future: Ernst Posner's Archives in the Ancient World", *The American Archivist* 67(2), 2004, p. 165.

¹⁵⁴ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 3.

¹⁵⁵ M. Duchein, "The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe", *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 15.

¹⁵⁶ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 19, 22-23.

¹⁵⁷ A. Cunningham, "Archival institutions", in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 26.

¹⁵⁸ A. Cunningham, "Archival institutions", in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 26.

private documents, were found in temples and royal archives of Nineveh,¹⁵⁹ however, the keeping of private records with official records was more an exception than the rule.

During the second and third millennium B.C. the ancient Egyptians developed an extensive system of archives and record keeping. They can be described as a record-conscious bureaucracy as no act of government administration or public engagement with a government office or the application of the law was done without the compilation and presentation of records.¹⁶⁰ The number of documents that needed to be preserved for future reference was enormously cumbersome. The person in charge was the Vizier (second in charge to the Pharaoh) and his staff. It can be assumed that some sort of information retrieval system existed to be able to preserve and retrieve information on such a large scale, although it was most probably “supplemented by the knowledge of the archivist who (was) familiar with the archive and its holdings”.¹⁶¹ The archives in ancient Egypt thus served the administrative, legal, and military purposes of the government.¹⁶²

Turning to the East it is believed that archives and an archival repository existed during China’s first dynasty which ruled from the twenty-first century to the seventeenth century B.C.¹⁶³ Hence archives in China can be traced almost as far back as the Sumerian period in the ancient Near East.¹⁶⁴ The first known written records in imperial China originated from the Shang dynasty (1766 – 1122 B.C). Partial archives of the Shang and subsequent dynasties and rulers that survived the destruction brought on by wars, fire, neglect, and insects were inscribed on tortoise shells, animal bones (also called oracle bones), bronze vessels, wood and bamboo strips, silk, stone tablets, and paper.¹⁶⁵ Surviving imperial Chinese archives include mainly official records and a few

¹⁵⁹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 14, 22-23, 71, 93.

¹⁶⁰ A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 26; E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 74.

¹⁶¹ A. Gilliland, “Afterword: in and out of the archives”, *Archival Science* 3, 2010, p. 339.

¹⁶² E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 71, 77, 82-83; A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 26.

¹⁶³ W. Zhang, “Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration”, *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, p. 19.

¹⁶⁴ A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 26.

¹⁶⁵ W. Zhang, “Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration”, *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, pp. 21, 26.

land and debt records and lineage genealogies.¹⁶⁶ Records of imperial China were compiled for easy retrieval and use by future imperial officials¹⁶⁷ with no intent to allow the general public access. The imperial historians were not only the record producers, recording events in the empire or recording decrees and laws of the land for distribution, they were also the archivists in charge of the records. This position enabled them to write the history of the specific dynasty with access to primary sources.¹⁶⁸

As was the case with the archives of the ancient Near East, the imperial temples in China served as repositories, giving easy access to and safe storage of the archives. The notion of creating duplicate copies of important imperial documents by sending the original to the central archive and filing the duplicate at various administrative offices commenced with the Zhou dynasty (eleventh to the eighth century B.C.).¹⁶⁹

It would seem that the different imperial dynasties were far more interested in controlling than preserving their archives. Control over the archives was manifested for example in what will be included and written about in the dynastic historiography and also the destruction of the archives. Once the history of the preceding dynasty was compiled and recorded it was common practice to destroy any surviving archive of that dynasty. Imperial China was characterised by turbulence, violence, rebellions, and war and it was customary when an empire was overthrown and its palace went up in flames, the same fate would befall the imperial archives.¹⁷⁰ The toll exacted on the archives of this period of Chinese civilisation was enormous and so is its historical loss.

The purpose of archives and types of records kept was of an administrative, legal and religious nature, for example, laws of the land, military reports, financial records, and tax records.¹⁷¹ It was not until the Song Dynasty (960-1279 A.D.) that the imperial

¹⁶⁶ W. Zhang, "Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration", *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, p. 18.

¹⁶⁷ W. Zhang, "Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration", *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, p. 34.

¹⁶⁸ W. Zhang, "Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration", *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, pp. 18-19, 25.

¹⁶⁹ W. Zhang, "Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration", *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, pp. 19, 21.

¹⁷⁰ W. Zhang, "Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration", *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, p. 18.

¹⁷¹ W. Zhang, "Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration", *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, pp. 21, 35.

archive and the main administrative archive were separated¹⁷² and the succeeding empires built on that. It is worth noting that virtually no private collections were kept in the imperial archives, in contrast to the situation in the temples of Nineveh and the later Roman Empire where private archives were encountered. A characteristic of ancient China and its intellectual community was that efforts were more concentrated on collecting and compiling books than organising and preserving archival records.¹⁷³

The development of the archive in ancient Greece was of great significance, for the Greek language gave to the Western world the internationally accepted terms for the designation of official documents. For example, the Greek word *archeion* was used for archival repositories and indirectly referred to and was used to describe the persons managing them.¹⁷⁴ The term *archeion* refers to the office of a magistrate and the records kept there, as does the Latin word for archives *archivum*.¹⁷⁵ Baldassare Bonifacio who wrote one of the first known treatises on archives in 1632, confirms the meaning of the terms as “a public repository of records and documents”.¹⁷⁶

The knowledge about Greek archival arrangements and practice is scanty. As in Egypt, the preferred writing material in Greece was wooden tablets or wooden boards and papyrus. As a result of the use of perishable materials very little survived of the Greek archives. No site of a Greek archival establishment has been found or excavated yet and very little is known about these premises, the mode of storage, and arrangement except for the Metroon in Athens.¹⁷⁷ This thus makes it difficult to speculate on the archival practices used during this period.

From around 400 B.C. the Greek city-state Athens housed its archives in the Metroon, the temple of the mother of the gods situated next to the courthouse.¹⁷⁸ Records pertaining to laws, decrees, minutes, financial matters, diplomatic documents, and court proceedings were to be found in this archive. The role of Greek archives differed

¹⁷² W. Zhang, “Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration”, *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, p. 31.

¹⁷³ W. Zhang, “Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration”, *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, p. 35.

¹⁷⁴ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 91-92.

¹⁷⁵ A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, pp. 26-27.

¹⁷⁶ L.K. Born, “Baldassare Bonifacio and his essay ‘De Archivis’”, *The American Archivist* 4(4), 1941, p. 228.

¹⁷⁷ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 92, 102, 112.

¹⁷⁸ A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 26.

from repositories in the Near East as they had private as well as public material for safe keeping. Private material, among others, consisted of contracts on the sale of real property, records of ships, loans, gifts, records of slaves¹⁷⁹ and even plays by Sophocles and Euripides.¹⁸⁰ The responsibility of safeguarding private records in public facilities was a significant development¹⁸¹ and “this combination of archival and notarial (safekeeping of private material) responsibilities became characteristic of Greek city government and seems to have followed it to the Greek colonies in southern Italy, Sicily, and Africa, where the Romans became acquainted with it”.¹⁸²

In contrast to the dynasties in China, the Athenian government in accordance with its democratic principles allowed public access to records and holdings for research purposes.¹⁸³ Another characteristic of archival development in Greece was the fact that the evidential value of archives and the need to protect the integrity of records were clearly understood. For example, in Athens, a law was directed against bringing falsified documents into the archive.¹⁸⁴ Temple archives and to what extent they were used as personal repositories is not known, but that they were important foci of record-keeping is certain. Documents pertaining to the selling or dedication of slaves to the god of the temple were kept in the temple archives. Furthermore, temples also had to maintain records regarding their treasures. Interestingly temples kept financial records as was their practice of accepting deposits and lending money in particular to the state. The role of the temple archives however changed and later became obsolete as the city-states began to make provision for the official registration of business transactions.¹⁸⁵

Archives in the Roman period are characterised by three main eras, namely the Ptolemaic / Roman Egypt, Republican Rome, and Imperial Rome. The early period had a strictly centralised government structure and it was evident that attention to official documents including the recording of all kinds of transactions, the preservation

¹⁷⁹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 93, 95.

¹⁸⁰ A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 26.

¹⁸¹ J.M. O’Toole, “Back to the Future: Ernst Posner’s Archives in the Ancient World”, *The American Archivist*, 67(2), 2004, p. 169.

¹⁸² E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 95.

¹⁸³ A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 26; E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 113.

¹⁸⁴ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 114.

¹⁸⁵ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 115-117.

of records, and providing access to them, became all-important.¹⁸⁶ Control over records was not perfect and because the higher Roman authorities believed that the original records were not safe in the offices spread throughout Egypt, official copies were sent to the regional state archives in every regional (or nome) capital. In doing so, the records were better protected, and a secondary advantage was gained, namely the centralizing of specific kinds of documents in specific areas.¹⁸⁷ In contrast to the Greeks, the Romans found the safeguarding of official records and private records by the same agency impractical and inappropriate. This most likely prompted them to separate the two types of records and a property record office was established for the preservation and management of non-official records.¹⁸⁸

Public archival institutions in Republican Rome were slow to develop. The keeping of private archives preceded concern for the preservation and safekeeping of public and official records. The *tablinum* or house archive played a significant role and it can be said to have a dual purpose: firstly, Roman citizens stored and preserved records of their business transactions there, and; secondly, outgoing government officials were quite likely to place the documents and records of their term of office in their private house archive. There existed no designated establishment charged with the exclusive objective of preserving archives in Republican Rome. However, in about 509 B.C. the state treasury, the *Aerarium*, was established¹⁸⁹ which kept laws, decrees, reports, financial records,¹⁹⁰ and resolutions by the Senate. It was also more of a treasure house than an archive repository as the *Aerarium* housed public funds, precious metals, insignia, and other treasures. This dual purpose of the *Aerarium* came to an end when it was destroyed in a fire in 83 B.C. The *Tabularium*, completed in 79 B.C., became Rome's first official state archives. It served as a seemingly central archive into which most, but certainly not all the records of the Republic of that period, were gathered. The *Tabularium* continued during the Empire period, but with limited competence.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁶ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 137.

¹⁸⁷ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 146-147.

¹⁸⁸ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 147.

¹⁸⁹ A. Cunningham, "Archival institutions", in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 27.

¹⁹⁰ A. Cunningham, "Archival institutions", in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 27.

¹⁹¹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 165-167; A. Cunningham, "Archival institutions", in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 27.

Access to records in the *Tabularium* was restricted and only qualified people, after paying a fee, could make use of the records and copy them. Also, the security conditions in the state archives left much to be desired as visitors to the archives sometimes destroyed records by setting fire to documents that incriminated them.¹⁹² The Republican era was important in the archival development as the *Tabularium* was the first of its kind in human history: a monumental and fire-resistive structure to house the state archives. This period also signifies a trend to absorb records of different organisations, offices, and institutions into the state archives, and there was a notion of service, though not perfect, to the state and the public.¹⁹³

The collapse of the Roman Republic brought about not just political and economic changes, but also impacted the organisation of the administration of the new state and thus affecting record keeping and archives. These changes were, firstly the centralization of the administrative, judicial, and legislative authority in the person of the emperor, and secondly the development and growth of a civil service that would serve the emperor. This created an enormous output of official records, at a central as well as a provincial level of government.¹⁹⁴

During the Imperial period, the *Tabularium* lost its character as a pseudo-central archive.¹⁹⁵ This caused the situation in the *Tabularium* to become dire with documents going missing. Upon the death of an emperor, his successor may decide to keep or dispose of the archives of his predecessor. Typically, the papers inherited were destroyed.¹⁹⁶ There was no intention to keep a central archive as is evident when the empire split into West and East and the central government became a migratory body.¹⁹⁷

By building the *Tabularium* Republican Rome took an interesting and unique step by attempting to meet the archival needs of a modern state. However, with the transition to Imperial Rome, the *Tabularium* lost its precedence, and the most important documents accumulated at the seat of the emperor were now in the hands of the

¹⁹² E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 182-183.

¹⁹³ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 184-185.

¹⁹⁴ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 185, 188.

¹⁹⁵ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 187, 190.

¹⁹⁶ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 191-193.

¹⁹⁷ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 222.

chancery and other central offices. The concept of, and opportunity to create a central state archive agency serving the rest of the government was lost.¹⁹⁸

The role of the church in the development of archival administration must not be underestimated. When the church was recognised by the state during the Roman Empire¹⁹⁹ it was able to develop its own organisational structure and was eager to coordinate with the state and in so doing adopted its administrative principles and practices. The church transferred these structures to its own proceedings and even used secular terminologies. The archive of the church extended its function of preserving and protecting its own records to include personal records of the public or rather those who desired to entrust their personal records to the church.²⁰⁰ This function is similar to the temples in more ancient times as referred to earlier. Importantly, the church through its administrative experience of Imperial Rome and adopting similar archival practices, was able to not only preserve these experiences but also hand them down to the modern state.²⁰¹ The church played an important role during the Middle Ages too as most medieval European archives were kept and maintained in church archives, monasteries, and other ecclesiastical institutions.²⁰²

It is assumed that those responsible for record-making and record-keeping in the church were male. However, historical research is challenging the view “revealing that religious women were not only literate but also prolific producers and consumers of books”.²⁰³ Women thus may have been present in the early archive, but remain elusive.

3.3 Early archives of Islam

It would be a disservice to any history of archives and archival administration to not include the administrative archives of the Islamic empires during the medieval period.²⁰⁴ However, as Posner points out, a discussion of archives in the Islamic world poses difficulties. Except for some records of the lower level administration in Egypt

¹⁹⁸ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 222.

¹⁹⁹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 201, 213.

²⁰⁰ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 222.

²⁰¹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 222-223.

²⁰² A. Cunningham, “Archival institutions”, in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in society*, p. 27.

²⁰³ A. Radini *et al.*, “Medieval women's early involvement in manuscript production suggested by lapis lazuli identification in dental calculus”, *Science Advances* 5(1), 2019, pp. 1-8.

²⁰⁴ E. Posner, “Archives in Medieval Islam”, *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, p. 315.

and a few religious institutions, archives in the Muslim world concerned with this period in history, have not survived. Knowledge about the archival practices of this period is derived from letters of texts and documents as well as manuals used by secretaries and financial officers that give some insight into the organisation of government agencies as well as the creating and keeping of records.²⁰⁵ As Persia (the Sasanian Empire) and Egypt were conquered, first by Arabic rulers and from the mid-thirteenth century ruled by non-Arabic dynasties, the new rulers were uneducated and inexperienced in administrative affairs and were in some instances forced to rely on and maintain the lower level of administration systems that were in place. Even the Persian and Greek languages were retained as administrative languages,²⁰⁶ supposedly to minimise disruptions to the system. This would also imply the continuance of personnel in some administrative posts. With the system formalised in the seventh century, it was necessary to create central departments or *diwans* where registers could be kept and updated by regular censuses. The word *diwan* is of Persian origin and originally meant a register of troops, but it was a secondary function of the office, namely record-keeping, that gave its name to an entire agency.²⁰⁷ The organisation and establishment of a chancery in the seventh and eighth century was the first step toward the formation of a Muslim bureaucratic government. The *diwan* would be responsible for all incoming and outgoing correspondence and would serve as the central record office of the caliphs,²⁰⁸ the chief Muslim civil and religious ruler. These offices or *diwans* were established in Damascus, Baghdad, Tunisia (North Africa) and Egypt.²⁰⁹

A code or manual written in the eleventh-twelfth century gives a glimpse into the inner workings of such an office. The author of the manual, Ibn al-Sayrafi, was the chief of the State Chancery and wrote it as a guide for the employees of the Chancery. He placed great emphasis on efficiency, promptness, careful documentation of administrative actions taken, completion of registers of all incoming and outgoing mail, and was convinced that good record management will prevent time-consuming

²⁰⁵ E. Posner, "Archives in Medieval Islam", *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, pp. 292-293.

²⁰⁶ E. Posner, "Archives in Medieval Islam", *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, p. 295.

²⁰⁷ E. Posner, "Archives in Medieval Islam", *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, p. 296.

²⁰⁸ E. Posner, "Archives in Medieval Islam", *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, p. 297.

²⁰⁹ E. Posner, "Archives in Medieval Islam", *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, pp. 296, 299, 300, 305.

searches. He also stated that “negligent officials will be ‘fired’”.²¹⁰ The day-to-day administration of an empire is a mammoth task and, in his manual, Ibn al-Sayrafi explained how the main functions of the State Chancery were divided among several secretaries with their tasks and duties set out. Amongst these were the duties of the registrar and archivist of the Chancery. Posner argues that “these undoubtedly are our oldest professional ‘job descriptions’”.²¹¹ The volume of records must have been considerable as the practice was to “at intervals of three years, (sent) letters and documents ... to the great store (*al khizana al-uzma*) to be finally classified and indexed”.²¹² The Persians, even though conquered, were masters in administration systems and the precedence and experience of Persian administration officials in the new government administrations made their influence felt via the Muslim dynasties, not only in the Near East, but also in Sicily and as far west as Spain.²¹³

The perception of the gender of the archivist is of importance to this study. Ibn al-Sayrafi, as referred to above, commented on what characteristics the archivist should have and he was of the opinion that “[h]e [the archivist] must be honest, judicious, and trustworthy; *his* loyalty must be clear beyond any doubt, for ‘the archivist has the reigns of everything in *his* hands,’ and no bribe must ever sway *him* from *his* duties”.²¹⁴ The use of androcentric pronouns made it clear that the incumbents of these positions were all male.

Posner is of the opinion that the continuation of the Muslim (and Persian) practices as briefly discussed above, can serve as a connecting link between these practices and archive and recordkeeping in the emerging national states and other institutions in the West.²¹⁵ The similarities in archival recordkeeping between East and West are striking.

The history of archival administration in Africa was briefly touched on by Posner with his reference to the *diwan* (record offices) in Tunisia, North Africa, but neglected to include the archives in the southwestern part of the region. The archives and libraries of Timbuktu may hold some more answers.

²¹⁰ E. Posner, “Archives in Medieval Islam”, *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, p. 301.

²¹¹ E. Posner, “Archives in Medieval Islam”, *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, p. 301.

²¹² E. Posner, “Archives in Medieval Islam”, *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, p. 297.

²¹³ E. Posner, “Archives in Medieval Islam”, *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, pp. 297, 304-305.

²¹⁴ E. Posner, “Archives in Medieval Islam”, *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, p. 302. My emphasis.

²¹⁵ E. Posner, “Archives in Medieval Islam”, *The American Archivist* 35(3-4), 1972, pp. 291-292.

3.4 Africa: Archives of Timbuktu

The archives of Timbuktu provide an unparalleled window into the societies and intellectual traditions of the Western Sudan area²¹⁶ which formed part of the greater Muslim world. As stated earlier in the chapter, archives can be described as humankind's endeavour to organise their lives and experiences on an economic, political, and cultural level and the same can be said of the Islamic world where paper was used as a carrier of cultural, religious and scholarly transmission. The emergence and introduction of paper and papermaking possibilities across the Islamic countries in the ninth and tenth centuries "encouraged the transition in medieval Islamic times from a memory-based to a text-based culture".²¹⁷ This change to text-based or written culture is demonstrated in the Timbuktu archive as it was "by all accounts incomparably more brilliant than anything known in contemporary Europe".²¹⁸ Writing did not consist of religious affairs only, but included topics from legal and administrative matters, poetry, philosophy, geography, navigation, astronomy, mathematics, botany, medicine, historical accounts, and even cookbooks.²¹⁹ In her article on the Timbuktu rare manuscripts project published in 2006, M. Minicka²²⁰ relates a comparison of sorts between known libraries in medieval contemporary Europe and those in Timbuktu. She concludes that not only could nothing in the contemporary Christian world compare with the "bibliomania" of the Islamic countries, but also that not even the ancient civilisations of Greece and Rome had produced anything on a similar scale.²²¹ It is estimated that the Timbuktu archive today consists of about 700,000 manuscripts.²²²

²¹⁶ F. Garaba, "The incunabula of African intellectualism and civilization: some reflections on the preservation of the Timbuktu manuscripts", *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists* 45, 2012, p. 96.

²¹⁷ M. Minicka, "Timbuktu rare manuscripts project: Promoting African partnerships in the preservation of Africa's heritage", *ESARBICA Journal* 25, 2006, p. 41.

²¹⁸ M. Minicka, "Timbuktu rare manuscripts project: Promoting African partnerships in the preservation of Africa's heritage", *ESARBICA Journal* 25, 2006, p. 49.

²¹⁹ M. Minicka, "Timbuktu rare manuscripts project: Promoting African partnerships in the preservation of Africa's heritage", *ESARBICA Journal* 25, 2006, p. 49; F. Garaba, "The incunabula of African intellectualism and civilization: some reflections on the preservation of the Timbuktu manuscripts", *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists* 45, 2012, p. 97.

²²⁰ M. Minicka, "Timbuktu rare manuscripts project: Promoting African partnerships in the preservation of Africa's heritage", *ESARBICA Journal* 25, 2006, pp. 35-68.

²²¹ M. Minicka, "Timbuktu rare manuscripts project: Promoting African partnerships in the preservation of Africa's heritage", *ESARBICA Journal* 25, 2006, p. 50.

²²² P. Commey, "Timbuktu manuscripts, evidence of Africa's glorious past", *New African* 420, 2003, p. 30.

Timbuktu, located in the modern West African country Mali, was founded in the twelfth century. Located at the crossing of the Niger River and a major caravan route towards Marrakech (Morocco), and also across the Sahara Desert to Sudan, Timbuktu not only became a major trading centre, but also an important stop for pilgrims en route to Mecca. Over time Timbuktu evolved into something more permanent with great numbers of Sudanese trader-scholars settling and transforming it into an emergent scholarly community. By the mid-fifteenth century, Timbuktu was renowned as a major centre of Islamic learning,²²³ but was not unique to West Africa and must be seen in the context of Islamic culture and learning in the North African region. It was also not the sole or most important city of learning, as the Walata centre of learning in Mauritania was established much earlier and, to some scholars, holds more significance.²²⁴

Nearly every mosque had a library of some size and most of the larger mosques possessed multiple libraries, predominantly those with affiliated colleges.²²⁵ Brent D. Singleton states that during the sixteenth century Timbuktu housed between 150 and 180 Koranic schools with four to five thousand students²²⁶ and it is estimated that at its height the University of Timbuktu enrolled about 25,000 students.²²⁷ This gives an indication not just of the size of the university and schools, but also of the libraries, books, and manuscripts housed by these institutions. A very important difference between the Timbuktu archive and those of the rest of the Islamic region is that the majority of Muslim libraries maintained an open access policy to scholars from around the world, especially the libraries in Mecca, Tunis, Morocco, and Cairo. The libraries of medieval Timbuktu, on the other hand, seemed to have all been private collections of individual scholars or families. After the violent Moroccan invasion of 1591, the

²²³ M. Minicka, "Timbuktu rare manuscripts project: Promoting African partnerships in the preservation of Africa's heritage", *ESARBICA Journal* 25, 2006, p. 37; B.D. Singleton, "African Bibliophiles: Books and Libraries in medieval Timbuktu", *Libraries & Culture* 39(1), 2004, p. 2.

²²⁴ M. Minicka, "Timbuktu rare manuscripts project: Promoting African partnerships in the preservation of Africa's heritage", *ESARBICA Journal* 25, 2006, p. 37; A. Ulam, "Elusive Libraries of Timbuktu", *Archaeology* 57(4), 2004, p. 40; B.D. Singleton, "African Bibliophiles: Books and Libraries in medieval Timbuktu", *Libraries & Culture* 39(1), 2004, p. 7.

²²⁵ B.D. Singleton, "African Bibliophiles: Books and Libraries in medieval Timbuktu", *Libraries & Culture* 39(1), 2004, p. 7.

²²⁶ B.D. Singleton, "African Bibliophiles: Books and Libraries in medieval Timbuktu", *Libraries & Culture* 39(1), 2004, p. 3.

²²⁷ P. Commey, "Timbuktu manuscripts, evidence of Africa's glorious past", *New African* 420, 2003, p. 30.

larger libraries were looted and archives either taken to other countries or were dispersed among relatives and other people²²⁸ and some were lost forever.

One interesting cultural aspect that might have contributed to the preservation of the Timbuktu manuscripts over the centuries was the fact that “[e]ach family had a person who was identified to be the heir and custodian of the heritage ... [and that] [t]his person would swear publicly to protect and make sure the heritage was passed on to the next generation”.²²⁹ This family tradition is still being practiced by some families today.²³⁰ The Timbuktu archives suffered a similar fate as those in bygone centuries such as violent invasions, war, dust and sand, insects, water, inappropriate storage, neglect, indifference, theft, misplacement of records, destruction by accident or intentionally.²³¹

Scholars agree that the importance of the Timbuktu archives is evidence that a pre-colonial literary history existed, specifically in North Africa. The existence of some manuscripts written in the local vernacular with Arabic script, dispel the myths of an illiterate African past.²³² However, not all scholars hold the same view. Baz Lecocq is of the opinion that the Timbuktu archive predominantly consists of orthodox scriptural Islam that is perceived and celebrated as African heritage. The investments and involvement in Timbuktu for example by the South African government through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), various funding of other organisations towards the Timbuktu rare manuscript project, and the building of the Ahmad Baba Centre are evidence of this. The fact that these manuscripts largely consist of Muslim legal rulings (*fatwas*) and books on Islam Malakite laws is essentially overlooked.²³³

²²⁸ B.D. Singleton, "African Bibliophiles: Books and Libraries in medieval Timbuktu", *Libraries & Culture* 39(1), 2004, pp. 7-8, 10.

²²⁹ A. Motsi, "Preservation of endangered archives: A case of Timbuktu manuscripts", *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists* 50, 2017, p. 18.

²³⁰ A. Ulam, "Elusive Libraries of Timbuktu", *Archaeology* 57(4), 2004, p. 37.

²³¹ M. Minicka, "Timbuktu rare manuscripts project: Promoting African partnerships in the preservation of Africa's heritage", *ESARBICA Journal* 25, 2006, pp. 55-57; F. Garaba, "The incunabula of African intellectualism and civilization: some reflections on the preservation of the Timbuktu manuscripts", *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists* 45, 2012, p. 97.

²³² F. Garaba, "The incunabula of African intellectualism and civilization: some reflections on the preservation of the Timbuktu manuscripts", *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists* 45, 2012, p. 97; A. Ulam, "Elusive Libraries of Timbuktu", *Archaeology* 57(4), 2004, p. 40; B. Lecocq, "Distant shores: A historiographic view on trans-Saharan space", *The Journal of African History* 56(1), 2015, p. 31.

²³³ B. Lecocq, "Distant shores: A historiographic view on trans-Saharan space", *The Journal of African History* 56(1), 2015, p.31.

3.5 Sub-Saharan Africa

Scholars²³⁴ agree that pre-colonial societies in Sub-Saharan Africa were typically oral societies whose languages were not yet written. Archives in written format are very difficult to find in pre-colonial Sub-Saharan Africa.

European powers such as Britain, France, Belgium, Portugal and Germany had conquered most of the African continent by the late nineteenth century.²³⁵ By colonising these areas the different powers implemented their respective administrative structures as part of their colonial governments with an emphasis on order and record-keeping practices. The influence of the colonial administration on the subsequent colonies' record-keeping and archival practices was felt even after the independence of these colonies in the mid to late twentieth century.²³⁶ One can concur with the argument that record-keeping in the conventional sense, and that archival practice, in Sub-Saharan Africa began with the colonial administrations.²³⁷ South Africa (with its four colonies before unification in 1910), Southern and Northern Rhodesia (today respectively Zimbabwe and Zambia), Nyasaland (modern Malawi), and Bechuanaland (modern Botswana) were some of the British colonies in southern Africa during the nineteenth and up to mid-twentieth centuries. Record keeping and administrative systems in these British colonies were mainly built around the concept of the registry system which was the basis for British government record-keeping for more than 200 years.²³⁸ In short, this system allowed for the registration (of incoming and outgoing correspondence), aggregation, classification, tracking²³⁹ and retrieving of documents.

²³⁴ Amongst others see: A.G. Tough, "Oral culture, written records and understanding the twentieth-century colonial archive. The significance of understanding from within", *Archival Science* 12, 2012, p. 246; A.A. Abdi, "Oral societies and colonial experiences: Sub-Saharan Africa and the de facto power of the written word", *International Education* 37(1), 2007, p.42.

²³⁵ J.F. Ade Ajayi & E.J. Alagoa, "Black Africa: The Historian's perspective", *Daedalus* 103(2), 1974, p. 126.

²³⁶ T.J. Lovering, "British Colonial Administrations' registry systems: a comparative study of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland", *Archival Science* 10(1), 2010, pp. 1-23; B. Reed, "Records", in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, pp. 114-117.

²³⁷ A.G. Tough, "Archives in sub-Saharan Africa half a century after independence", *Archival Science* 9, 2009, p. 188.

²³⁸ A.G. Tough, "Archives in sub-Saharan Africa half a century after independence", *Archival Science* 9, 2009, p. 188; B. Reed, "Records", in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, p. 114.

²³⁹ B. Reed, "Records", in S. McKemmish (ed.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, p. 117.

A.G. Tough suggests that archives per se (an entity exclusively used to collect, arrange, describe, make records available to the public, and preserve these records) were not established in colonial Africa until the mid-twentieth century when it became obvious to the colonial powers that independence was imminent.²⁴⁰ The colonial powers were blamed for a “culture of indifference to archives” and this attitude was passed on to the newly formed independent governments. However, the same person who brought the above claim added that it would be futile after so many years of independence to keep on blaming colonialism for the non-existence of an archives service.²⁴¹ Regardless, very little effort was made to train and educate indigenous people who would have to take over this function from the colonial administration.²⁴² Comments made by scholars researching the history of Africa after colonial rule indicate that the “question shifted from being about how to read ... archives, but how to find any archive at all”²⁴³ which accentuates the challenges and realities of archives in Africa. Adding to this is the realisation of African archivists early on that there are “gaps” in their colonial archives. The “migrated archives”,²⁴⁴ as it became known, has developed into a focal point of discourse ever since.²⁴⁵

3.6 European archives: From the fifth to the seventeenth century

The archives of the ancient empires were all but destroyed between the fifth and seventh centuries A.D. be it by violent invasions, the chaos of war and rebellion, fires, neglect and indifference by those who were responsible for its care, or be it by the material used for creating documents which were of a perishable nature and if not properly preserved, disintegrated and were lost forever.²⁴⁶ The same fate befell the

²⁴⁰ A.G. Tough, "Archives in sub-Saharan Africa half a century after independence", *Archival Science* 9, 2009, p. 189.

²⁴¹ A.G. Tough, "Archives in sub-Saharan Africa half a century after independence", *Archival Science* 9, 2009, p. 189.

²⁴² S. Katuu, "The development of archives and records management education and training in Africa – challenges and opportunities", *Archives and Manuscripts* 43(2), 2015, p. 99.

²⁴³ L. White, "Hodgepodge Historiography: Documents, Itineraries, and the absence of archives", *History in Africa* 42, 2015, p. 310.

²⁴⁴ Migrated archives usually refer to archives (documents, records) of European colonial powers who after independence took (migrated) the archives with them to their country of origin. These archives are now held in the capitals of the West. N. Mnjama, "Archival landscape in Eastern and Southern Africa", *Library Management* 26 (8,9), 2005, p. 466.

²⁴⁵ A.G. Tough, "Archives in sub-Saharan Africa half a century after independence", *Archival Science* 9, 2009, p. 191; N. Mnjama, "Archival landscape in Eastern and Southern Africa", *Library Management* 26 (8,9), 2005, p. 465.

²⁴⁶ W. Zhang, "Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration", *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, p. 32.

archives and repositories of the kingdoms that were to follow the Roman Empire so that very few documents from before 1000 A.D. survived. It was only in the eleventh and twelfth centuries that European archives began to revive and emerge.²⁴⁷ After this period it is no longer possible to speak of “European” archives as the new European monarchies (German, French, English, later Spain) and other institutions and organisations, such as the feudal powers, the Church and town municipalities established their own record-keeping practices. Eventually, this led to national traditions and methods which in turn gave birth in modern times to the various archival practices and systems that are in existence today.²⁴⁸

The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw the emergence of local and national administrations and with them, archival repositories were created and began to function. For example, in 1284 A.D. an inventory and regulations were drawn up for the Anjou archives in Naples, France. Pierre d’Étampes began the cataloging of the chests and registers of the *Tresor des Chartes* in 1318; in England, William Stapleton drew up the first inventory of the Exchequer in 1323; and in 1346 the archives of the kingdom of Aragon were created.²⁴⁹ Other well-kept archives include monasteries, royal chanceries, civil or ecclesiastical courts, and municipalities, and typically these records were mainly for use by their owners.²⁵⁰ The idea of an archive repository open and accessible to the public was not yet envisaged.

It was not until the sixteenth century that the concept to concentrate archives in a central archival repository was first evident. An example of this was the creation of the crown of Castille, the *Archivo de Simancas* in 1542 in Spain where all the records of the chanceries, councils, secretaries, courts, treasuries and others were centralised with specialised archivists and staff to assist.²⁵¹ Other parts of Europe had similar notions of centralisation e.g. in Hanover (1713), Austria (1742), and the Scottish General Register House (1784), but the concentration of archives in one central place

²⁴⁷ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 15.

²⁴⁸ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 15.

²⁴⁹ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 15; E. Posner, “Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution”, *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, p. 160.

²⁵⁰ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, pp. 15-16.

²⁵¹ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 16.

was not the norm of archival practice in Europe.²⁵² The idea of a national archive would only become a reality late in eighteenth-century France.

The seventeenth-century heralded yet another development in the development of archives. In 1610 King James I of England appointed two men as “Keepers and Registers of Papers and Records”.²⁵³ This became the famous series of State Papers that today forms the core of The National Archives in London. These developments were necessitated by the fact that the records of the administration, local and central, grew in importance and the production of records increased as the administration’s functions got more specialised. With the appointment of the “Keepers and Registers”, the profession of the archivist received recognition. They brought with them the necessary skills, experience, and knowledge of conservation, arrangement, description, and general management of the huge masses of records in different media.²⁵⁴

M. Duchein, a former Inspector General of the *Archives de France*, suggests that the first signs of an archival science emerging were evident in the early seventeenth century with the publishing of Baldassare Bonifacio’s essay “De Archivis liber singularis ad amflissimum senatorem Dominicum Molinmn” in 1632²⁵⁵ and the work of a French Benedictine Monk, Dom Jean Mabillon on the science of diplomatics.²⁵⁶ Bonifacio’s publication was the first known treatise on the management of archives.²⁵⁷ However, a Swabian family, in the southwestern region of what is today known as Germany, the von Rammingen’s, published the results of their archival activities and experiences in a series of three books in 1571. The father practically spent his entire life organizing the records in the Wurttemberg State Archives. In her article on the history of European archival literature, archivist and historian, Olga Palmer concluded that the books by the von Rammingen family “marked the beginning of publications

²⁵² E. Posner, “Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution”, *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, p. 161.

²⁵³ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 16.

²⁵⁴ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 16.

²⁵⁵ L.K. Born, “Baldassare Bonifacio and his essay ‘De Archivis’”, *The American Archivist* 4(4), 1941, p. 226.

²⁵⁶ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 16.

²⁵⁷ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 16.

concerned with problems of archival economy which have continued to the present day.”²⁵⁸

The revolutionary events at the end of the eighteenth century would forever change the political as well as archival landscape in Europe. It would bring political change and records would be destroyed as peasants danced around the bonfires that once were documents and records which held them in subjection. Out of these fires of destruction would arise a new beginning for the archive.

3.7 Eighteenth century: From reason²⁵⁹ to revolution

This section takes a look at archives during the turbulent and violent times of the French Revolution. The actions of the new French government towards archives and the consequences of these events on archival development will also be explored.

The extreme social and political turmoil caused by the French Revolution of 1789 overthrew a monarchy, caused the violent deaths of thousands, and led to the destruction of records and documents, some of which were centuries old. The consequences arising out of the utter chaos and mayhem of this period would provide the impetus for the creation of a new context and outline of the archive and archival administration. Archival records, be they of the royal court, nobility or monasteries would no longer be hidden, kept secret, or be out of sight and out of reach of citizens. As the Bastille was stormed and taken by the peasants, the archive on a metaphorical (and certainly on a physical) level was violently plucked out of the hold of its creators, the monarchies and ecclesiastical institutions of centuries gone by, and for the first-time placed front and centre in society.

The French Revolution (1789-1799) and the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815) incited a total disruption of all governmental, administrative and legal structures throughout Europe, except for England and Russia.²⁶⁰ These radical changes and consequences marked the beginning of a new era in archives administration in the Western world,

²⁵⁸ O. Palmer, “The History of European Archival Literature”, *The American Archivist* 2(2), 1939, p. 69.

²⁵⁹ Also known as the period of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment advocated democracy, individual liberty, freedom of expression, and eradication of religious authority. Anon, n.d., <<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldhistory2/chapter/the-age-of-enlightenment/>>, access: 1 September 2021.

²⁶⁰ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, pp. 16-17.

the era of the modern archive.²⁶¹ Before one can truly appreciate the effect the events of this period had on archives administration it is necessary to briefly remark on what was understood under the term “archives” and how and for what purposes it was used in the eighteenth-century society. J.M. Panitch²⁶² cited the following definition of archives to illustrate its meaning at that specific point in time: "Archives is the term used for those old titles or charters which contain the rights, pretensions, privileges, and prerogatives of a house, a town, or a kingdom".²⁶³ Thus archives in the eighteenth century exclusively referred to “documents conferring *legal* or *economic* advantage upon the owner or named party”.²⁶⁴ The power wielded by archives is evident in the fact that the entire legal, political, and economic legitimacy of the monarchy and nobility rested upon them. It is no surprise therefore that monarchs viewed archives as critically vital and kept them in secret. Archives were to a great extent used by monarchs, the nobility, and others as holders of titles and charters, to execute power, to serve the rights of some, and to subjugate others. The actions of the peasants are understandable when early on in the revolution, archives were seen as a symbol of feudal oppression and as such hated, attacked and burned.²⁶⁵

The third estate (peasants) and their actions undoubtedly posed a great threat to archival records, but it was the state itself that became the author of a far more systematic vandalism in the destruction of archival records of the Ancien Régime. Laws passed from 1789 to 1793 enabled the newly formed French Republic to strip the nobility of their titles and privileges, to appropriate the properties of the nobles, clergy, and the monarchy to the government, and along with it all documents and records belonging to and granting rights and privileges to these classes. One such law, decreed in 1792, ordered that all confiscated documents and records of the nobility and orders of knighthood, housed in Paris should be burned. Similarly, a law passed in 1793 authorised the en masse destruction of archives in all provinces. Documents, records, and papers were not just burned, but were also sold for profit,

²⁶¹ C. Kecskemeti, “The Professional Culture of the Archivist”, *The American Archivist* 50(3), 1987, p. 412.

²⁶² J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, pp. 30-47.

²⁶³ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 33.

²⁶⁴ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 33. My emphasis.

²⁶⁵ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, pp. 33-34.

used for ammunition cartridges, pulped and made into paper as the financial situation of the new government deteriorated.²⁶⁶ As Judith M. Panitch poignantly puts it, “[t]he extent of cultural losses resulting from this state-sanctioned vandalism are to this day unknown and unknowable.”²⁶⁷

Panitch argues that if the French Revolution as a phenomenon was perhaps the most complex to be studied by historians, its relationship to and treatment of archival records proved to be no different. Panitch continues by pointing out that archives instead of displaying a direct and discernible evolutionary path as one would expect to find when the early history of archival development as discussed at the beginning of this chapter is taken into account, rather reflects the influence of two opposing tendencies. The first tendency was to eradicate all traces of the Ancien Régime. During the revolutionary campaign documents (titles and charters) and books were burned, but it went a step further when statues were torn down and church facades defaced as the revolutionaries endeavoured to wipe out any sign of the hateful and shameful past. On a much larger scale, the government enforced and contributed to this vandalism and destruction by passing legislation that contributed to the systematic destruction of books, archival records, and other historical artefacts. Opposite to this, the conflicting inclination is described by Panitch as a mood of conservation that took hold and resulted in the founding of museums, libraries, and archival repositories. The motivation behind this conservation was twofold, on the one hand, to preserve remnants from the past for pedagogical reasons, and secondly to immortalize the creation of the new Republic.²⁶⁸ Posner adds a possible third reason for the conservation, namely the growing realisation of the historical value of archival records.²⁶⁹ Curiously, the “mood of conservation” as described by Panitch was brought about by decrees passed by the National Assembly, the same institution that ordered the destruction of records in previous years. These paradoxical tendencies of

²⁶⁶ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, pp. 33-36.

²⁶⁷ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 36.

²⁶⁸ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 32.

²⁶⁹ E. Posner, "Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, p. 161.

destruction and preservation, of amnesia and memory, in many ways, defined this era.²⁷⁰

Earlier in the chapter, it was mentioned that in the centuries before and especially after the Middle Ages up to the French Revolution the idea of a centralised archive for all records was a foreign concept.²⁷¹ The tradition was for every office to keep its own non-current records. Posner argues that despite some early attempts to centralise archives in Europe, for example in Hanover in 1713, in Austria from 1749, and in Scotland in 1784, the overall character of archives administration before the French Revolution was decentralisation.²⁷² The very fact that institutions be it monarchical (the king with his charters), parliamentary (parliament with its registers), monastically (the church and the records it kept), or communal (records kept by a community) guarded their records so closely,²⁷³ made it almost impossible to conceptualise the centralisation of these records.²⁷⁴ The result was a scattered and “unregulated multiplicity of archival repositories”.²⁷⁵ The fact that there were, at the close of the eighteenth century, 405 archival repositories in Paris alone and 5700 outside the capital (inclusive of monasteries and seigneurial seats) is a clear illustration of this.²⁷⁶ The realisation of a centralised archive for the whole of the state administration, on a central and provincial level, would not and could not spontaneously transpire, it needed an external impetus,²⁷⁷ one which was provided by the events of the French Revolution.

The new Republic gained control over a large number of the records of the monarchy, monasteries, and the aristocracies by confiscation or general abandonment, and mass destruction ensued. At the same time, the new government produced records of its

²⁷⁰ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 32.

²⁷¹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 4, 192.

²⁷² E. Posner, "Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, p. 161.

²⁷³ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 38.

²⁷⁴ E. Posner, "Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, p. 161.

²⁷⁵ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 38.

²⁷⁶ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 38.

²⁷⁷ E. Posner, "Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, p. 161.

own decisions and conduct²⁷⁸ that required preservation. Panitch warns that given the complexity of the Revolution and its relationship with archival records, this might be an over-simplistic view of the French archival history. She argues that from the outset of the revolutionary events many voices were raised in defence of the nation's cultural heritage and that the designing of certain measures and decrees was attempted to bring some kind of order and safety to the masses of old records now in the hands of the Republic. The law passed in August 1790 that mandated the centralisation of several depositories in Paris that housed the documents of the Ancien Régime, serves as such an example. Due to a lack of space, this did not happen until November 1793 when these archives were assigned to one of two repositories both under the authority and control of the Archivist of the Republic.²⁷⁹ The piece of legislation that culminated in setting the new course of archival administration was the law passed in June 1794. This legislation noticeably amplified the tendencies of preservation and care by centralising records, and also legalised the automatic destruction of records (mostly titles and charters) that were seen as without any utility or use.²⁸⁰ The importance of the June 1794 law lies in the fact that it transformed the *Archives Nationales*, originally formed in 1789 as the parliamentary archive of the National Assembly, into a central archives establishment of the state. This development signified what Posner postulates as the first archival consequence of the revolutionary era, namely that for the first time in archival history a framework for a nationwide public archives administration was established. The idea of one centralised archive was contemplated during this time, but under the law of October 1796 sectional and local depositories were maintained and organised into archival departments subject to the central archive. For the very first time, the archive administration covered the whole extent of already existing depositories of older records and materials, and current record-producing government agencies.²⁸¹ This was a feat that would resonate throughout Europe and beyond.

²⁷⁸ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 38.

²⁷⁹ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, pp. 39-40.

²⁸⁰ J.M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, p. 41.

²⁸¹ E. Posner, "Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, p. 161.

A second outcome of the Revolution and legislation passed, was the fact that the state acknowledged its responsibility to care for and preserve the documentary heritage of the past. The paradoxical understanding and inclination towards archives brought on by the late eighteenth century upheavals namely, to destroy the old and preserve the new, was touched on earlier. It would seem that from 1796 onwards there was a growing comprehension by the new Republic and its archivists of the historical value of all historical material including documents of the old order that they handled and were responsible for.²⁸²

A third contribution made by the Revolution to the new era of archival administration was the principle of access to archival records by the public. For the first time archives were officially open to the public.²⁸³ This right is viewed and protected as a human right in modern democratic governments' constitutions and implemented to hold governments accountable and protect citizens' rights.²⁸⁴ This signified a distinct break with past archival customs and practices. These ideas spread throughout Europe and were aided by the fact that considerable parts of Europe were under French control after the Napoleonic wars. The French brought with them new institutions and their way of doing into these countries. This influence was evident too in the archival institutions in the conquered parts of Europe.²⁸⁵

The French Revolution had an unforeseen consequence that had a direct impact on future archivists. The establishments where archivists traditionally received their training and practiced their skills in the pre-Revolution time (monasteries for example), were now suppressed and restricted. This led to the loss of archival skills of paleography and diplomatics and new places of learning and teaching of these skills needed to be established. Attempts to meet this need were made during the nineteenth century when schools of this nature were built in Naples (1811), Munich (1821) and Paris (1821). Duchein is however of the opinion that these institutions were

²⁸² E. Posner, "Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, pp. 161-162.

²⁸³ E. Posner, "Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, pp. 161-162.

²⁸⁴ J. Mustonen (ed.), *The World's first Freedom of Information Act. Anders Chydenius' legacy today*, 2006, p. 4. Interestingly, a freedom of information act already existed in the Sweden-Finland state in 1766.

²⁸⁵ E. Posner, "Some aspects of archival development since the French Revolution", *The American Archivist* 3(3), 1940, p. 162.

more schools of historical science than schools of archival science.²⁸⁶ Even if it were true, these archival schools played an important part as archivists were taught as a specialist professional group and often separate from librarians. Employment in most European national archives from the 1850s onwards was on condition that the applicant received training at one of these schools.²⁸⁷ It was also the ideas taught at the school in Paris in the latter part of the nineteenth century that would influence and have a great effect on one of the Dutch archivists in contemplating ideas around the methodology of the arrangement of archival records.

3.8 Nineteenth century: Some attributes of the archive

The nineteenth-century saw the growth of national archives throughout Europe and the United Kingdom of Great Britain. In England the Public Record Office (PRO) was established in 1838, in Spain the *Archivo Historico Nacional* was created in 1866, and the first national archivist in the Netherlands was appointed in 1802. It would appear that the archive lost its practical and immediate relevance in the period directly after the French Revolution. The tendency to view archives as “historical” repositories prevailed to a great extent as these repositories received records exclusively of defunct and obsolete institutions and bodies. The archives’ historical significance predominated rather than the legal-administrative functions it previously held.²⁸⁸

Under the rule of Napoleon I (1804-1815) the French archive would once again be pushed into unchartered waters. Napoleon envisioned the archive as a living institution and not to be solely characterised by a “historical” function, in other words, to exclusively receive records of obsolete and non-operational institutions and departments. In 1808, by his initiation, regulations were issued ordering the regular transfer of records to the central archive repository. Europe formed a stark contrast to the French example as the archives still strongly featured the “historical” propensity, for example, the PRO in England would take decades before the records of functioning

²⁸⁶ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 17.

²⁸⁷ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 7.

²⁸⁸ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 18.

government departments were allowed to be transferred to the PRO. In some countries, this orientation lasted almost until the Second World War (1939-1945).²⁸⁹

The effect of the regular transfer of records to archival repositories was immense and archivists had to face the full onslaught of the bulk of papers and other material produced by the governments and their administrative offices. Archivists encountered enormous challenges with the transfer of these records, the appraisal, the arrangement and description, and the opening of the archive to the public.²⁹⁰ As Duchein indicates, “[i]t was then that most of the national archival institutions took their modern form, which in several cases has lasted until the present day.”²⁹¹

The onslaught of records transferred to archives resulted in the main theoretical debate of the 1850s, namely the arrangement of archives. Essentially it came down to arranging or classifying archives in subject matter (for example legislative, administrative, judicial) or according to the principle of provenance. France was the first to use the subject-based method in 1808 and soon countries such as Prussia, Austria, Milan and England followed suit. On the other hand was the provenance-based approach which was notable, especially in the Netherlands. The principle of provenance dictates that all documents that come from a body, a family, or an institution form a *fonds* and must be kept together. A second principle, related to the “*respect de fonds*” was the “respect for the original order”.²⁹² According to Duchein, “[i]t is indeed possible to say that the modern archival science, such as it is, began with those two basic principles of provenance and respect for original order.”²⁹³

These two principles, provenance and respect for the original order, provided the distinct European approach to archives and were articulated in the writings of three Dutchmen: Samuel Muller, Johan Feith, and Robert Fruin. The writings and influence

²⁸⁹ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 18.

²⁹⁰ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 7; M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, pp. 17-18.

²⁹¹ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 18.

²⁹² E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 7; M. Duchein, “The History of European Archives and the Development of the Archival Profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, pp. 18-19.

²⁹³ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 19.

of these three Dutchmen became in the span of a decade the most influential in the archival landscape worldwide.

3.9 Archives in the Netherlands

The statement that the development of a country's archive is intricately linked to the political, societal, and constitutional development of the specific country, is certainly true of and applicable to the Netherlands.²⁹⁴ The Netherlands consisted of several united provinces known as the Republic of the United Netherlands which lasted from the late sixteenth to the late eighteenth centuries (1588-1795).²⁹⁵ The government of the Batavian Republic (1795–1806) would bring about the beginning of the profession of archivist in the Netherlands.²⁹⁶ It was also under King William I that the archives in the Netherlands would be realised as reflected in his instruction to the first archivist, Hendrik van Wijn.²⁹⁷ The history and development of archives in the Netherlands not only reflects the political and institutional development of the country, but also shows the influence of ideas that were apparent and to some degree practiced in Europe in the nineteenth century. However, it would be the life work of a handful of prominent Dutch archivists that would give to the world the archival methodology that would extend its influence globally, literally to the North, the South, and the West, and even to the East.

It would seem that historians and archivists considering the archival development in the Netherlands use the year 1795 as their point of departure.²⁹⁸ The national archive in the Netherlands (*Nationaal Archief*) observes the same division into pre- and post-1795 records in their keeping to acknowledge the changes to the creation and uses of archives brought about by the revolutionary events of the late eighteenth century,²⁹⁹ as discussed previously. The reason for this separation can directly be attributed to

²⁹⁴ A. Grundlingh, "Historical writing and the State Archives in a changing South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 35, 1993, p. 79; E.J. Human, "Die Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefdiens word eenhonderd jaar oud: Met spesifieke verwysing na die Kaapse Argiefbewaarplek waar die Diens sy ontstaan gehad het", *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, p. 29.

²⁹⁵ Anon, n.d., <<https://www.britannica.com/place/Dutch-Republic>>, access: 15 June 2021.

²⁹⁶ M.R. Barritt, "Archival training in the land of Muller, Feith, and Fruin: The Dutch National Archives School", *The American Archivist* 51(3), 1988, p. 336.

²⁹⁷ T. van Havere, "Plaatsen van geschiedenis. De 'Belgische' archieven tijdens de jaren 1810", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, 133(3), 2020, p. 458.

²⁹⁸ B. Woelderink, *Hoofdlijnen van de geschiedenis en organisatie van het archiefwezen*, p. 2; P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, pp. 249-270.

²⁹⁹ M.R. Barritt, "Archival training in the land of Muller, Feith, and Fruin: The Dutch National Archives School", *The American Archivist* 51(3), 1988, p. 336.

the French Revolution when France invaded the Netherlands in 1795 and replaced the Republic of the United Netherlands with the Batavian Republic.³⁰⁰ The French Revolution was as much a watershed in the development of archives as it was a watershed for the political, social, and economic changes in Europe as referred to earlier.

In the period before 1795, there existed no archival policy in the Netherlands which could create the space for a “national archive” or central repository for the transfer of records; there was also no such office as a Chief Archivist as head of such a governmental department to take responsibility for the archives. Responsibility for the archives rested with the office, functionary, and organ which created these records be it on a local, provincial or central government level. The function of archival records was purely to settle legal disputes and served an administrative purpose. B. Woelderink states that accessibility to archival records was almost non-existent, this and the secrecy that enshrined the archives were underlying principles of the time.³⁰¹

Reference was made earlier to the upheavals of 1795 onwards as the Batavian Republic replaced the Republic of the United Netherlands. The new regime proclaimed the sovereignty of the people, but the Netherlands was nothing more than a protectorate of France.³⁰² The establishment of the new government indicated a break with the legal system and this led to a change in how records were perceived, namely the legal-administrative interest in records changed to a more historical interest as archive repositories became collections of historical sources. The winds of change blowing through Europe brought change to the Netherlands too. One of the significant changes wrought by the French Revolution was the fact that archives were now perceived to belong to the people (not to the record creators alone). They would be used to keep the government accountable and be used to study and write the history of the nation.³⁰³ This was seen in the appointment of the first Batavian archivist. As mentioned, Hendrik van Wijn was appointed archivist of the Batavian Republic in 1802

³⁰⁰ Anon, n.d., <<https://www.britannica.com/place/Dutch-Republic>>, access: 15 June 2021.

³⁰¹ B. Woelderink, *Hoofdlijnen van de geschiedenis en organisatie van het archiefwezen*, 1972, p. 6; P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 249.

³⁰² Anon, n.d., <<https://www.britannica.com/place/Netherlands/The-period-of-French-dominance-1795-1813>>, access: 15 June 2021.

³⁰³ M.R. Barritt, "Archival training in the land of Muller, Feith, and Fruin: The Dutch National Archives School", *The American Archivist* 51(3), 1988, p. 336.

with the instruction to locate, arrange and compile inventories of archival records up to 1648.³⁰⁴ Thus focusing only on the old records and solely for historical purposes. Van Wijn's instruction was soon changed to locate, preserve and centralise all records up to 1795. His greatest challenge during the rule of the Batavian government would be Emperor Napoleon's push to centralise the archives of all the conquered nations in Paris. It was due to the efforts of Van Wijn and other archivists that only a very small portion was in effect sent to Paris. After independence, most of these records were retrieved and taken back to the Netherlands.³⁰⁵

Considering the historical development of the archive in the Netherlands it was slow going at the best of times and at the worst of times not a priority of the government. The response to a ministerial request in 1826 is evidence of this. The Minister of Interior requested a report from all the provincial governors concerning the size and condition of archives under their responsibility. He furthermore requested an assessment and a concise overview of said archives. The result was revealing: it exposed a clear incomprehension regarding the issue of archives especially on the local government level as some incomplete reports were submitted and some did not even bother to reply.³⁰⁶

By the mid-1850s the court records and the old colonial records were placed under the responsibility of the *Rijksarchief*. Bakhuizen van den Brink, the archivist at the *Rijksarchief*, proposed the implementation of archive legislation by which he wished to reform the Netherland's archival milieu and by doing so bring the archive on par with its European counterparts. The proposed bill would bring the provincial archives under the jurisdiction of the *Algemeen Rijksarchief* (State Archive), and make it possible for the local municipal archives to transfer their records to the provincial archives. Unfortunately, because of political circumstances, the bill was not passed.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ B. Woelderink, *Hoofdlijnen van de geschiedenis en organisatie van het archiefwezen*, 1972, p. 7; P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 249.

³⁰⁵ B. Woelderink, *Hoofdlijnen van de geschiedenis en organisatie van het archiefwezen*, 1972, p. 7; Anon, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 13 October 2020; T. van Havere, "Plaatsen van geschiedenis. De 'Belgische' archieven tijdens de jaren 1810", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 133(3), 2020, pp. 458-459.

³⁰⁶ B. Woelderink, *Hoofdlijnen van de geschiedenis en organisatie van het archiefwezen*, 1972, p. 9.

³⁰⁷ B. Woelderink, *Hoofdlijnen van de geschiedenis en organisatie van het archiefwezen*, 1972, pp. 10-12.

This was a missed opportunity and it would take another five decades before archival legislation was passed in the Netherlands.

Despite the success, Bakhuizen van den Brink had very few cities properly care for their records and in the smaller towns and municipalities, the situation was even worse during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Archives in the Netherlands suffered the same fate as records in any other part of the world namely, neglect. This was due to a lack of trained archivists, a lack of funds to pay the archivists proper wages (some local governments combined the posts of archivist and librarian, or archivist and museum curator), and lastly the lack of funding to finance new buildings or maintain the already existing facilities where these archives were kept and so preserve the records from fire, damp and other threats.³⁰⁸

It was noted earlier that the main debate in the mid-nineteenth century centred on the arrangement of archives and that some countries preferred the subject-based method and others the principle of provenance. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, a new generation of archivists came to the fore. P. Horsman states that the fundamental discussion concerning alternatives was led by this new generation of archivists who had more modern ideas concerning the study of history and asked new questions about the arranging and description of archives.³⁰⁹

Samuel Muller (city archivist of Utrecht and later State Archivist) and Theodoor van Riemsdijk (archivist and later General State Archivist)³¹⁰ were faced with the question of how to proceed with arranging the records piling up in their archives. There existed neither formal training for archivists nor written books or training manuals on archival matters.³¹¹ In comparison with France where laws were passed and a framework for a national archive administration was created, the Netherlands lacked a cohesive and unified archival framework as the opportunity to pass archival legislation in the 1850s was sadly missed. Muller, however, attended some lectures at the Paris *École des Chartes* (the French archive school) in 1873 where he came into contact with the

³⁰⁸ B. Woelderink, *Hoofddlijnen van de geschiedenis en organisatie van het archiefwezen*, 1972, p. 16.

³⁰⁹ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 252.

³¹⁰ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, pp. 249-270.

³¹¹ F.C.J. Ketelaar, "S. Muller Fz. En het Nederlands archiefwezen", *Nederlands Archievenblad* 78, 1974, p. 201.

principle of provenance or “*respect de fonds*”,³¹² as first described by the French archivist and historian Natalis de Wailly in 1841.³¹³ The probing question asked by Muller and Van Riemsdijk about how to arrange the archives was dealt with in a more philosophical than the pragmatic way in their subsequent letters and conversations in which they exchanged their views, experiences, and interpretations³¹⁴ and was the fledgling beginning of the development of archival theory. They analysed ideas about what archives are, the essential characteristics, and properties thereof. Van Riemsdijk gave precedence to the analysis and clarification of how organisations created and organised their records i.e., the processes followed to create the records. He was more focused on establishing an archival theory and felt it essential before the methodology of arranging and describing the archives can be considered. Muller was astonished by Van Riemsdijk’s ideas and approach but Muller, demonstrating a very impatient nature, moved rather quickly from the theoretical base of analysing archives to applying the methodology in practice.³¹⁵

Muller published his archival principles on which he and Van Riemsdijk agreed in his annual report on the city archive in 1880. In 1885 in his book on the registry of the States-General Van Riemsdijk concluded: “that the systematic structure of the archives must be matched to the old classification.”³¹⁶ The publication of their findings and theories formed an important foundation in the development of an archival theory. In this way, two main principles were beginning to take on form, namely the acknowledgment that the records of an organisation or body form a whole (a *fonds*) and that the specific order of the original registry system (the “old classification”) must be kept intact when the records are arranged and described as such. However, the precise criterion for the arrangement of archives still needed to be decided and agreed upon.³¹⁷

³¹² E. Ketelaar, “Archival theory and the Dutch Manual”, *Archivaria* 41, 1996, pp. 32-33.

³¹³ The principle of provenance dictates that all documents that comes from a body, a family, an institution forms a fonds and must be kept together. M. Duchein, “The history of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 19.

³¹⁴ E. Ketelaar, “Archival theory and the Dutch Manual”, *Archivaria* 41, 1996, p. 33.

³¹⁵ E. Ketelaar, “Archival theory and the Dutch Manual”, *Archivaria* 41, 1996, p. 33.

³¹⁶ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, “New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual”, *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 252.

³¹⁷ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, “New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual”, *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 252.

The practice of the Dutch archivists in the early nineteenth century was to place the archival records in chronological order regardless of their provenance thus replacing the original order and structure of these records with a structure of their own making, foreign to the organisation or body who created these records.³¹⁸ It was apparent that this method of arranging archives caused much damage as it undermined the authentic character of documents; it destroyed the interconnection of these records in which their nature and context were also lost. Lastly, Van Riemsdijk argued that the breaking up of the original interconnection of these records destroyed the evidential capacity of the archival records.³¹⁹ The realisation of the dire consequences of this way of arranging archives led to a growing tendency to respect the original order when arranging a specific archive. However, despite the broad agreement to respect the original order and how it was to be carried out, there was no consensus.³²⁰

In 1890 Van Riemsdijk as the General State Archivist arranged the first-ever conference for all state archivists in the Netherlands which purposed to reach a consensus concerning the arrangement of archives “on the basis of the principle of respect for archival structure”.³²¹ However, it was clear that Muller and his supporters, Victor De Stuers, the head of the Department of Arts and Sciences within the Ministry of the Interior, and Robert Fruin (Muller’s pupil) favoured methodology above archival theory. This resulted in a normative approach through which binding directives were issued from 1897 onwards to all state archives to standardise methods of distinguishing and arranging archives in state repositories.³²²

³¹⁸ This method was not in any way strange to the methods used in other parts of Europe. As early as the late eighteenth century the records of the old regime in France were centralised by the new government in two repositories: an “administrative and land” section and a “judicial and historical” repository. Individual documents were arranged according to document type and content. Additionally, records pertaining to history, sciences, art or useful for pedagogic purposes would forthrightly be sent to the national library (*Bibliothèque Nationale*) or local libraries. Records were not kept intact nor in context, but were “sorted and reordered, frequently abandoned and misused... [and] [t]hose which survived were promptly reclassified and relocated.” J. Panitch, “Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival lessons from the case of the French Revolution”, *The American Archivist* 59(1), 1996, pp. 40-41, 45.

³¹⁹ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, “New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual”, *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 252; E. Ketelaar, “Archival theory and the Dutch Manual”, *Archivaria* 41, 1996, p. 34.

³²⁰ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, “New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual”, *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, pp. 251, 253-254.

³²¹ E. Ketelaar, “Archival theory and the Dutch Manual”, *Archivaria* 41, 1996, p. 34.

³²² E. Ketelaar, “Archival theory and the Dutch Manual”, *Archivaria* 41, 1996, pp. 34-35.

A growing sense of communality and solidarity between archivists as professionals led to the establishment in 1891 of the first professional association for archivists in the world: the “*Vereniging van Archivarissen in Nederland*” (VAN), translated: the Association of Archivists in the Netherlands (or Netherlands Association of Archivists, others referred to it as the Society of Dutch Archivists).³²³ Soon thereafter in 1892, the Association founded its journal the *Nederlandsch Archievenblad* which soon became a forum, together with the annual meeting of the Association, for discussions and debates concerning the technical aspects and the furthering of methods for the arrangement and description of archives³²⁴ in state archive repositories. Needless to say, from the outset, this was and remained a male-driven initiative.

The initial discussions of the archivists who participated in the VAN focused primarily on practical instructions and the development of formulas for the creation of inventories. Regarding the practical instructions, Muller had something similar in mind as he proposed that a manual for archivists might develop through these discussions and publications in the journal. As a manual did not exist at that time, Muller pleaded for the development of archival methods and not for the creation of formulas for inventories.³²⁵ He argued that although each archive is unique, the method(s) dealing with it, the principles and terminology should be the same. In 1893 Muller was elected president of VAN and took the initiative to have categories of topics drawn up by the board and this was discussed at the 1894 annual VAN meeting. Discussing the different topics at the annual meeting was not the most economic or best way to deal with it as consensus and agreement all around could not be reached and only the first point was deliberated and resolved. A new approach was needed if any practical instruction of any sort was to see the light of day. The board decided that a three-man commission was to be established which then could start on drawing up guidelines concerning the arrangement and description of Dutch archives. It was not until the latter part of 1895 that the composition of the committee was finalised and it could commence its work.

³²³ M.R. Barritt, "Archival training in the land of Muller, Feith, and Fruin: The Dutch National Archives School", *The American Archivist* 51(3), 1988, p. 337.

³²⁴ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 254.

³²⁵ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, pp. 255-256.

The committee, comprising of Samuel Muller, Johan Feith, and Robert Fruin, saw it fit to divide the manual into chapters and these into sections and it would become known as the “one hundred rules (or principles)” for the arrangement and description of archives in the Netherlands. The trio, Muller, Feith, and Fruin, were in agreement concerning the main principles but it was not easy going as the following note of Fruin on a matter shows: ““I regret the decision of the Master [Muller], but consider it better to remain silent about the entire matter.”³²⁶ It was hard grinding, but May 1898, at last, saw the publication of *Handleiding voor het Ordenen en Beschrijven van Archiven* (translated: *Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives*). The *Manual* consisted in essence of one hundred principles illuminated with explanations and examples (mostly of the Utrecht archive with which Muller and Fruin were very well acquainted) from the state archive repositories. It was meant to guide the starting of a professional society,³²⁷ but its influence soon stretched across the globe, literally.

The *Manual* was an instant success and was soon translated into German (1905), Italian (1908), French (1910), into Bulgarian from the French in 1912, and a summary of its contents appeared in Russian in 1925. The work was translated into English from the second Dutch edition of 1920 by Arthur H. Leavitt of the United States National Archives in 1940. The influence and effect of the *Manual* on the American archival practice were significant. A Portuguese translation appeared in 1960.³²⁸ In America, the *Manual* was reissued in 1968. In the Netherlands, a centennial edition with a 105-page introduction by Peter Horsman, Eric Ketelaar, and Theo Thomassen was issued in 1998. The most recent edition, reprinting the Leavitt translation, with a condensation of the Horsman, Ketelaar, and Thomassen introduction and a reprint of Marjorie Rabe Barritt, "Coming to America: Dutch Archivistiek and American Archival Practice"³²⁹ was published by the American Society of Archivists in 2003.³³⁰

The significance and contribution of the Dutch trio (Muller, Feith, and Fruin) were the fact that they could “...articulate the most important principles (or "rules") concerning

³²⁶ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 256.

³²⁷ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, pp. 254-257.

³²⁸ M. Brichford, "The Origins of Modern European Archival Theory", *The Midwestern Archivist* 7(2), 1982, p. 98.

³²⁹ M.R. Barritt, "Coming to America: Dutch Archivistiek and American Archival Practice", *Archival Issues* 18(1), 1993, pp. 43-54.

³³⁰ Anon, n.d., <<https://www.historyofinformation.com/detail.php?id=2251>>, access: 11 June 2021.

both the nature and the treatment of archives”.³³¹ The *Manual* is described as a pioneering work. It defined an archive and formulated the connection between the archive and the functions of the administrative body. It also stated that the boundaries and structure of an archive need to be respected and that the components of an archive can only be understood within its original context. The ideas were not new³³² but the combination of these ideas and their application to the historical record were new and innovative.³³³ As Terry Cook, the well-respected Canadian archivist, concludes “... the work of Muller, Feith, and Fruin has widely influenced our collective (archival) theory and practice”.³³⁴

For the first time, the archival principles of provenance (“*respect de fonds*”) and the principle of original order were published. The first international archival congress held in Brussels in 1910 formally sanctioned the Dutch principles. In the late 1950s, the American archival theorist Theodore R. Schellenberg called the Dutch Manual “a Bible for modern archivists”. Both Schellenberg and Sir Hilary Jenkinson (well-known English archival theorist) “based their landmark books on this very solid Dutch foundation”.³³⁵

The *Manual* had its limitations too. It only addressed government archives and archives established by associations, organisations, companies, and foundations,³³⁶ but it failed to consider private, personal, and family archives and relegated them to be the concern of librarians.³³⁷ The Dutch archival renaissance, with Muller at its centre,³³⁸ had reached the shores of distant lands. It would not be long before the “Bible for modern archivists” reached the shores of the Cape colony.

³³¹ T. Cook, "What is Past is prologue: A History of Archival ideas since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", *Archivaria* 43, 1997, p. 21.

³³² The ideas of “respect de fonds” and the principle of original order were already known respectively in 1873 and 1880. M. Duchein, "The history of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe", *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 19.

³³³ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist* 66, 2003, p. 257.

³³⁴ T. Cook, "What is Past is prologue: A History of Archival ideas since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", *Archivaria* 43, 1997, p. 22.

³³⁵ T. Cook, "What is Past is prologue: A History of Archival ideas since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", *Archivaria* 43, 1997, p. 22.

³³⁶ P. Horsman, E. Ketelaar & T. Thomassen, "New respect for the old order: The context of the Dutch Manual", *The American Archivist*, 66, 2003, p. 259.

³³⁷ T. Cook, "What is Past is prologue: A History of Archival ideas since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift", *Archivaria* 43, 1997, p. 21.

³³⁸ M. Blichford, "The Origins of Modern European Archival Theory", *The Midwestern Archivist* 7(2), 1982, pp. 93-99.

3.10 Archives in England³³⁹

The French Revolution and Napoleonic conquests transformed the governmental, administrative, and legal structures of the greater part of Europe except for Great Britain and Russia.³⁴⁰ At the close of the eighteenth century, public records in England were scattered between sixty buildings in London and Westminster. Concerns about the state of public records led to the establishment of a committee in 1800 to inquire into this.³⁴¹ The subsequent report of this committee recommended a single central national repository, the appointment of paid keepers (archivists, who were all male),³⁴² and the authority to dispose of records not worth preserving. The report further proposed the establishment of a Royal Commission. Quick work was made of this and the first of six Royal Commissions were established in 1800 with the final one concluding its work in 1837. A report was published in 1836 of a Select Committee in which a single central repository was once again recommended. This report laid the foundations for the Public Record Office Act of 1838 in which the concept of a central repository was established.³⁴³ Despite the growing acknowledgment and appreciation of the historical value of records, Parliament was unwilling to commit large sums of money to such a project and it would be more than a decade after the promulgation of the Public Record Office Act that the building of the central repository, known as the PRO, commenced in 1851.³⁴⁴

The Public Record Office Act of 1838 only addressed the preservation of central legal and court records. Other types of records were neglected despite numerous government reports recommending archival legislation.³⁴⁵ However, it was soon realised that there was a dire need to manage and preserve departmental records too.

³³⁹ “[T]he National Archives at Kew in London (formerly the Public Record Office) is technically the National Archives of England, Wales and the United Kingdom Government. Both Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own national archives, which each operate under different legislation and in different fashions from the National Archives at Kew.” B. Jackson, “Local government archives in the United Kingdom”, *Comma* 2014(1/2), 2015, p. 39.

³⁴⁰ M. Duchein, “The History of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe”, *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, pp. 16-17.

³⁴¹ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 22.

³⁴² The first woman Keeper of the Public Records were appointed in England in 1992. E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 214.

³⁴³ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 22.

³⁴⁴ P. Levine, “History in the Archives: The Public Record Office and Its Staff, 1838-1886”, *The English Historical Review* 101 (398), 1986, pp. 20-21; T. Eastwood, “Jenkinson's writing on some enduring archival themes”, *The American Archivist* 67(1), 2004, p. 32.

³⁴⁵ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, pp. 211, 2.

An Order in Council was issued in 1852 and included “all records belonging to Her Majesty deposited in any office, court, place or custody”.³⁴⁶ This formalised the matter, but it would be more than two decades later, in 1877, that reasonable arrangements were formulated to transfer records from government departments to the central repository.³⁴⁷

The transfer of more current records to the PRO showed the separation between the administration and the historical archive distinctly. Furthermore, it brought new questions to the fore, questions that archivists on the continent also contended with especially concerning the arrangement and description of archival records. This led to the formulation of the ideas of provenance and original order as defined by archivists in the Netherlands in 1898 and later captured for an English audience in 1922 by Sir Hillary Jenkinson in his work “Manual for Archive Administration”.³⁴⁸

3.11. Conclusion

As shown, the origins of archival practice and thought date back to ancient times. Dynamic factors such as politics, society, and economics influenced the archival practice and thought then as much as they do today. It can be surmised that ancient archives, akin to archives in modern times, were founded by the state, to (exclusively) serve the interests of the state and so reflect its hierarchy and organisation. Archives, therefore, had a judicial-administrative and economic purpose.³⁴⁹

As indicated, some aspects of modern archival administration and practice were to some degree discernible in ancient times and can be identified as, amongst others, the accessioning of records,³⁵⁰ challenges concerning accommodation and space for records, appraisal, and disposal of records to a degree as no concept or official policy existed.³⁵¹ Other important archival functions that are worth mentioning are arrangement and description.³⁵² The identification of records and preparation of lists

³⁴⁶ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 66.

³⁴⁷ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 217.

³⁴⁸ E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England*, p. 217.

³⁴⁹ T. Cook, “What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift”, *Archivaria* 43, 1997, p. 44; W. Zhang, “Dang An: A Brief History of the Chinese Imperial Archives and Its Administration”, *Journal of Archival Organization* 2(1-2), 2004, p. 35.

³⁵⁰ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 147; J.M. O’Toole, “Back to the Future: Ernst Posner’s Archives in the Ancient World”, *The American Archivist* 67(2), 2004, p. 166.

³⁵¹ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, pp. 88, 138, 162-163.

³⁵² E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 14.

and finding aids were also present in the ancient archives.³⁵³ Preservation and protection of records as the archivist's "first and unavoidable duty"³⁵⁴ created as many challenges for those in ancient times as for the present-day archivist. It may be that there was ample provision made for the preservation of documents, but it does not mean that the integrity of the records was protected. Throughout time, not much is known about those who were responsible for keeping the records (clay, papyrus or otherwise) - they are not necessarily mentioned in historical records, but it can be deducted with some certainty that they were most probably male. This view was confirmed by Geoffrey Yeo (researcher and author) at a recent conference that no female record keepers (archivists) were encountered in research done on early societies and their record-making and record-keeping practises.³⁵⁵

Thus, as is evident in this detailed account of the origin and development of archives, policy and legislation, archivists, decision-makers and policymakers were for the most part male.

³⁵³ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 60.

³⁵⁴ E. Posner, *Archives in the Ancient World*, p. 12.

³⁵⁵ G. Yeo, "Writing (uncanonical) archival histories: challenges and opportunities" [online keynote presentation], 10th International Conference on the History of Records and Archives, virtual conference hosted by the National Archives of the United Kingdom, July 2022.

Chapter 4: Legislating archives 1922 and 1953

4.1. Introduction

The history and development of the South African archives are, as in the case of other countries, intricately linked to the political and constitutional development of the country. Furthermore, archives inherently reflect the society we live in and as such the ideological direction of the government at the time.³⁵⁶ With this statement in mind, an analysis of the different pieces of archive legislation promulgated in SA provides a context in which the history of the South African archive in the politically turbulent twentieth century may be considered. Moreover, it provides a lens through which society may be explored, and in particular the position and place – or a lack thereof – of women. This chapter considers the period 1922 to 1953, while the next considers 1962 to 1996.

The South Africa Act, signed by King Edward VII on 20 September 1909 led to the official establishment of the Union of South Africa on 31 May 1910. The four colonies Cape, Natal, Orange River and Transvaal became the four provinces of the Union of South Africa.³⁵⁷ This chapter comprises a brief history of the organisation and development of archives in each of the former two colonies and two republics and later provinces and will include the periods of the different colonial governments. The unification of the former colonies in 1910 brought with it the centralisation of the colonies' archive services. However, the first archival legislation in SA was only passed in 1922, but the period from 1910 to 1922 is of importance too, and needs to be considered.

The first archive legislation in SA of 1922 served as the archives act for thirty-one years without any amendments and was only repealed by the Archives Act of 1953. It would be a short nine years later when the Archives Act no 6 of 1962 replaced the 1953 archival legislation. This piece of legislation (Act of 1962), with its four amendments, was in place until 1996 when the first-ever national archives act was

³⁵⁶ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, p. vi; A. Grundlingh, "Historical writing and the State Archives in a changing South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 35, 1993, p. 79.

³⁵⁷ S.B. Spies, "Heropbou en unifikasie, 1902-1910", in C.F.J. Muller (ed.), *500 jaar Suid-Afrikaanse Geskiedenis*, p. 385; Anon, n.d., <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/constructing-union-south-africa-negotiations-contestations-1902-10>>, access: 27 May 2020.

passed in the first democratically elected Parliament of SA, thus transforming the archive service from an exclusive and state-orientated entity to embrace inclusivity of all the people of SA.

In essence, the archival legislation provides a framework to establish the historical development of the archive in SA. The pieces of legislation will be presented by identifying the role players and functionaries responsible for the creation of the different pieces of legislation, their roles, and the powers assigned to them by these acts. It will in the light of this study's focus also flag the male dominance in this sector.

4.2. South African legacy

4.2.1 Cape Colony - A British legacy?

The Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC)) occupied the Cape of Good Hope and established a refreshment station and trading post in 1652. Their administration of the Cape lasted until 1795 when the colony was taken over by Britain. In 1803 the Cape was handed to the Batavian Republic (as the Dutch state was known under French rule) by the Treaty of Amiens (1802) until 1806 when the British again occupied the Cape. The second occupation concluded the incorporation of the Cape Colony into the British Empire and the Cape would remain a British colony until 1910.³⁵⁸ Each of these different government administrations' offices had control over, what we today understand to be its own current records (documents and any other form of record still in use) and archives (records that are closed off and not in use anymore). To consider the concept archive as we know and use it today is to some extent problematic for there was no such concept formulated in SA before 1876 and archives were not considered to be archives as we understand them now. Consideration will be given to both the Dutch and British legacies in a South African archival context.

The historical development and context of public archives in the Netherlands as well as the influence the Dutch archivists had on archival matters were considered in the previous chapter. The Netherlands may be considered one of the "mother countries" in terms of the South African archive, not just because some of the oldest archives

³⁵⁸ J. de Villiers, "Die Nederlandse era aan die Kaap, 1652-1806", in F. Pretorius (ed.), *Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika. Van voortye tot vandag*, pp. 41, 60-62; R. Ross, *A Concise history of South Africa*, pp. 22-37.

date back to the VOC period, but also because of the profound influence and long-lasting effect the *Handleiding voor het ordenen en beschrijven van archieven* (developed and written by Dutch archivists in 1898) had on the development of the South African archive. It must however be noted that the VOC was a private trading company and therefore its records and archives were not the responsibility of the Dutch government. During the VOC administration of the Cape (1652-1795), no formal archival framework or procedures existed as we are accustomed to today. As this chapter focuses on the history of the South African archive and its roots it would be beneficial to briefly consider how documents, records, and indeed archives were managed (or the lack of management, or even mismanaged) during this period at the Cape of Good Hope. The VOC's attitude towards records and archives might indicate the way the same was treated at the Cape. Aspects that will be considered are the physical archival space where the records and archives were kept, and those who were responsible for the records.

The oldest archival records preserved in the Western Cape Archive and Record Service in Cape Town today are records created by the VOC which date back to 1651.³⁵⁹ The history of the South African archive is interwoven with the history of the VOC and its activities. It is reasonable to claim that part of the South African archive had its birth on the waters of the Atlantic Ocean on board the *Drommedaris*, in water and ink as Jan van Riebeeck kept the *daghregister* (daily journal) as instructed by the directors of the VOC. The demands in terms of navigation to faraway places, to keep a “memory” or log of the daily navigation combined with the need to administer territories on several continents turned writing into a crucial tool for the VOC. The charter of 1602, which marked the birth of the VOC, placed writing at the very centre of its activities and undertakings as it declared that every commander of every ship shall be obliged to report on the journey and its achievements and provide the company with a written account of the journey. Every commander was supplied with among other things a logbook or *daghregister*, maps, and navigational instruments. “The memories of navigation” and important matters and happenings were to be written daily in the *daghregister* not just to comply with the VOC instructions but also, more importantly, for navigational and steerage purposes of the ship. Soon the practice of daily writings went beyond the objective of mere navigation of time, speed,

³⁵⁹ Anon, 1 April 2022, <<https://www.westerncape.gov.za/cape-archives>>, access: 21 April 2022.

progress, and the improvement of hydrographic knowledge. A fitting example can be found in the instructions Jan van Riebeeck received on the eve of his departure from the Netherlands to the Cape in 1651 to establish a halfway station for ships. He was duly instructed that “[o]f all that occurs in your neighbourhood, you will keep accurate notes and a diary, and shall not fail in this point”.³⁶⁰ The purpose of “memory of navigation” on sea transcended into a “memory of the colony” on land as the *daghregister* became the collective for information of a commercial, political, geographical, meteorological, and ethnographical nature.³⁶¹

The importance of the information gathered while on sea and later on land caused the directors of the VOC to formalise regulations as early as 1609 and 1617 which made it compulsory for these documents and records to be sent back to the Netherlands. The *daghregisters* served a twofold purpose, firstly the navigational information was used to build up and improve the hydrographical knowledge, thus extending better navigational maps for use by the next fleet of ships. Secondly, the journal continued its narrative by including information on the places, government, laws, customs, and habits of local inhabitants, resources of the country, information on the trade and army of the VOC’s enemies, and finally, included comments on the army and trade of the VOC itself.³⁶² The daily writing and keeping of the *daghregister* and the fact that documents and records were to be sent to Batavia and the Netherlands caused an influx of documents that the directors of the VOC could not have foreseen.

The archive of the VOC as preserved in the *Nationaal Archief* (National Archive) in The Hague consists of 1277 linear metres of records.³⁶³ This immense quantity of documents was due to the VOC’s activities as described above. The elaborate mechanisms for communication between the Netherlands, the Cape of Good Hope, and the Dutch East Indies and Batavia for an extended period of over a century contributed to this.³⁶⁴ The VOC board of directors (Heeren XVII) expected all

³⁶⁰ A. Delmas & N. Penn (eds), *Written culture in a colonial context: Africa and the Americas, 1500-1900*, p. 106.

³⁶¹ A. Delmas & N. Penn (eds), *Written culture in a colonial context: Africa and the Americas, 1500-1900*, p. 107.

³⁶² A. Delmas & N. Penn (eds), *Written culture in a colonial context: Africa and the Americas, 1500-1900*, pp. 96-108.

³⁶³ Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; J. Pennings and R. Rabe, “Introduction to the archives of the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie. Preface.” N.p.

³⁶⁴ G. Hendrich, “‘A rich storehouse for research’: The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, p. 77.

documents of importance to be copied six-fold and sent back home to the Netherlands, one copy to each of the six chambers.³⁶⁵ The office in Batavia found it impossible to oblige all the chambers at any one time.³⁶⁶ However, it would seem that at least three copies of the documents of importance at the Cape, for example, the *daghregisters*, and the Resolutions (books of proceedings) were made and sent to the Netherlands and Batavia³⁶⁷ with the original correspondence kept at the Cape.³⁶⁸ The copying of documents was not so much intended for their preservation for posterity as it was to lessen the possibility of fraudulent activities, but even more so, to protect the originals from being lost at sea during the long and dangerous voyages across the oceans.³⁶⁹

Thus, the objective of sending letters and records from Batavia (and the Cape) to the Netherlands was to have access to the above for internal use and referencing and not for the sake of posterity. This concept explains the fact that the actions taken regarding record keeping and preservation by the VOC chambers were at best rudimentary with a view of short to medium-term preservation. There was no “archive” in the real sense of the word as a central archives repository or uniform archives and record-keeping administration did not exist that could house the VOC documents,³⁷⁰ maps, and drawings.³⁷¹ Each of the six chambers was responsible for its own records, maps, and drawings. The bigger chambers, Amsterdam and Zeeland, were divided into smaller departments that comprised smaller offices each of which was responsible for the care of its own records and the administration. Record-keeping practices existed in so far as that documents received from Batavia by each chamber were bound

³⁶⁵ There were six chambers which formed the VOC, namely the chambers of Amsterdam, Zeeland, Delft, Rotterdam, Hoorn and Enkhuizen. Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; F.S. Gaastra “The organisation of the VOC”, n.p.

³⁶⁶ Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; J.C.M. Pennings, “Origin and Administration of the VOC archives”, n.p.

³⁶⁷ Batavia served as the centre of administration and book-keeping of the VOC and the Cape of Good Hope was subject to the Governor-General and Council in Batavia. Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; F.S. Gaastra, “The Organisation of the VOC”, n.p.

³⁶⁸ H. Liebenberg, “Die Wes-Kaapse Argief en die begin van Afrikaans”, *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* 58(2), 2018, p. 209.

³⁶⁹ G. Hendrich, “A rich storehouse for research’: The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, p. 77.

³⁷⁰ Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; J.C.M. Pennings, “Origin and Administration of the VOC archives”, n.p.

³⁷¹ Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; C.J. Zandvliet, “VOC maps and drawings”, n.p.

together and care was taken to note the place of origin and date of receipt.³⁷² Accessibility to the records was restricted. The Company “observed stringent secrecy about its activities and its internal administration”³⁷³ and did its best to keep its documents concealed and out of the public space as these documents were “intended for internal use only”.³⁷⁴

The archives of the chambers differed in size, equivalent to the size of their business. The chambers of Amsterdam and Zeeland had much larger collections of records than the others. Moreover, they were financially in a better position to employ more personnel in the different offices and branches of their respective chambers’ activities. The Zeeland chamber, although the smaller of the two, could be considered a model regarding its “archival” or record-keeping practices.³⁷⁵ It had the services of a full-time archivist (*chartermeester*) and the first reference to the *chartermeester* occurred in 1737 when instruction was compiled that stipulated that books and documents from the *charterkamer* (archive) could only be lent to directors and functionaries in return for a receipt. The instruction also read that all the chests bearing documents and records from Asia (and the Cape) had to be opened in the presence of the archivist and all the content had to be recorded. The Amsterdam chamber initiated its first *charterkamer* in 1695, however, the first librarian (the term was used to also include archival duties) was appointed in 1699 when Pieter van Rijn, a bookkeeper by training took charge of the archive. The chamber’s attitude towards archives was quite evident in their handling of archival matters. It took the Amsterdam chamber sixteen years to appoint a replacement when Van Rijn, the first archivist, passed away. There was no real continuity in the archive because of the quick turnaround of archival personnel. The Amsterdam chamber did take note of the Zeeland archival procedures, but did not implement the same. This situation led to the archives being treated with the utmost

³⁷² A. Delmas & N. Penn (eds), *Written culture in a colonial context: Africa and the Americas, 1500-1900*, p. 109.

³⁷³ Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; J.C.M. Pennings, “Origin and Administration of the VOC archives”, n.p.

³⁷⁴ Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; J.C.M. Pennings, “Origin and Administration of the VOC archives”, n.p.

³⁷⁵ A. Delmas & N. Penn (eds), *Written culture in a colonial context: Africa and the Americas, 1500-1900*, p. 109; Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; J.C.M. Pennings, “Origin and Administration of the VOC archives”, n.p.

indifference as documents taken from the *charterkamer* were not returned and later could not be found again.³⁷⁶

The immense influx and growth of records from Batavia and the Cape caused another problem for the archivist, namely the fact that the records could not be stored in a central archive room. They were scattered across Amsterdam in different buildings and offices making proper supervision and care for the archives very difficult, and at times almost impossible. The situation in the smaller chambers' archives left much to be desired too and the position of the archivist was more often than not a secondary or an over and above position. The archives of the smaller chambers were in a state of utter chaos and no inventory lists or catalogues existed for its archives.³⁷⁷ A similar fate faced these records once they were not of immediate use anymore to the directors and offices of the chambers. One can assume that the preservation of the six chambers' records largely depended on specific individuals and their actions at the various chambers' points of receiving records from Batavia and the Cape. If there existed thus no formal policy on the maintenance, preservation, and archiving of VOC records in the Netherlands, it is plausible that a similar situation was prevalent at the Cape at the time.

During the VOC period (1652-1795) and the three years the Batavian Republic (1803-1806) was in control of the Cape, each department in the government had control over its own records and archives³⁷⁸ - a situation that mirrored that in the Netherlands. In the VOC period, important records such as the resolutions and *daghregisters* were kept by and were the responsibility of the secretary of the Political Council. The secretary was assisted by a first clerk and trained assistants or scribes (*scribenten*)³⁷⁹ who were responsible for writing and copying various records under the supervision of the secretary. As with other personnel of the VOC, these officials accepted service for between three to five years (many only worked for a year or less) after which they

³⁷⁶ Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; J.C.M. Pennings, "Origin and Administration of the VOC archives", n.p.

³⁷⁷ Anon, Nationaal Archief, 10 September 2020, <<https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/1.04.02>>, access: 4 March 2021; J.C.M. Pennings, "Origin and Administration of the VOC archives", n.p. Pennings also gives an account of some of the librarian/archivists working in the charter rooms or archives.

³⁷⁸ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:2.

³⁷⁹ A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. I, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel I 1651-1669*, p. viii.

were transferred either to Batavia or resigned and took employment elsewhere.³⁸⁰ The turnover of personnel was significant and had a substantial effect on the records. The 10 volumes of the *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad*³⁸¹ which covers the period 1651 to 1743, mentions by name some 27 secretaries,³⁸² some 9 first clerks,³⁸³ and some 98 assistants.³⁸⁴ These numbers are

³⁸⁰ A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. I, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel I 1651-1669*, p. viii.

³⁸¹ A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. I, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel I 1651-1669*, 1957; A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. II, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel II 1670-1680*, 1959; A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. III, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel III 1681-1707*, 1961; A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. IV, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IV 1707-1715*, 1962; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. V, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel V 1716-1719*, 1964; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VI, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VI 1720-1723*, 1968; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VII, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VII 1724-1728*, 1971; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. 8, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VIII 1729-1734*, 1975; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. 9, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IX 1735-1739*, 1981; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. 10, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel X 1740-1743*, 1984.

³⁸² This is excluding the volumes for the years 1670-1680, and 1740-1743, as no names could be identified in these periods. A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. I, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel I 1651-1669*, pp. vii-xiii; A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. III, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel III 1681-1707*, n.p.; A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. IV, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IV 1707-1715*, pp. xvii-xx; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. V, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel V 1716-1719*, pp. xxi-xxiii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VI, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VI 1720-1723*, pp. xxi-xxviii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VII, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VII 1724-1728*, pp. xxiii-xviii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. 8, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VIII 1729-1734*, pp. xxi-xxv; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No.9, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IX 1735-1739*, pp. xix-xxv.

³⁸³ This is excluding the volumes for the years 1670-1707, and 1740-1743 as no names could be identified in these periods. A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. I, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel I 1651-1669*, pp. vii-xiii; A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. IV, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IV 1707-1715*, pp. xvii-xx; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. V, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel V 1716-1719*, pp. xxi-xxiii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VI, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VI 1720-1723*, pp. xxi-xxviii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VII, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VII 1724-1728*, pp. xxiii-xviii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. 8, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VIII 1729-1734*, pp. xxi-xxv; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No.9, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IX 1735-1739*, pp. xix-xxv.

³⁸⁴ This is excluding the volumes for the years 1670-1707, and 1740-1743 as no names could be identified in these periods. A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. I, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel I 1651-1669*, pp. vii-xiii; A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. IV, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IV 1707-1715*, pp. xvii-xx; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. V, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel V 1716-1719*, pp. xxi-xxiii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VI, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VI 1720-1723*, pp. xxi-xxviii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VII, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VII 1724-1728*, pp. xxiii-xviii; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. 8, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel VIII 1729-1734*, pp. xxi-xxv; C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No.9, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IX 1735-1739*, pp. xix-xxv.

not definitive and most probably could be much higher as many handwritings could not be identified. From the names that were identified in the documents and records, these officials were all male. It can be said that record keeping and archiving during this period came down to the officials at the centre of the document creation process who were responsible for the circulation and safe keeping of documents and records.³⁸⁵ Mention was made earlier of the turnover of personnel and the effect it had on record keeping and archiving of records. There were periods when no secretary was employed and therefore no proper control and supervision were exercised over the records.³⁸⁶ This lack of control is quite obvious as there is evidence of a whole group of documents (1673-1675) that went missing. However, it was not just the absence of a secretary or first clerk that led to records being mismanaged or lost, it was most likely due to negligence on the part of the secretary and/or first clerk, as well as a lack of diligence and proper training which caused many volumes and/or books to be incomplete. A striking example of this is Willem Helot, secretary for the Political Council between 1706 and 1714. Heeren XVII, board of directors of the VOC, described his administration in a letter dated 30 October 1713 as “unsatisfactory” and amongst other things pointed out that the *daghregister* Helot was responsible for was not maintained and kept up to date for more than a year – it caused great concern and displeasure.³⁸⁷ However, there were competent secretaries who exercised strict control over the first clerk and assistants, such as Adriaan van Kervel. C.G. de Wet suggested that Van Kervel was diligent and read and re-read the resolutions copied by the assistants as evidence was found of him making changes to the copied resolutions.³⁸⁸ Concerning the physical care and preservation of the records at the Cape, not very much is known. What is known is that they were first kept in the old Fort and later moved to the Castle. The political, military, and civilian life centred in and around the Fort and later the Castle making the safe keeping of records imperative. Yet, the conditions in the Fort and Castle were not conducive to the successful storing and preservation of records. These old documents were exposed

³⁸⁵ H. Liebenberg, "Die Wes-Kaapse Argief en die begin van Afrikaans", *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* 58(2), 2018, pp. 205-206.

³⁸⁶ A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. I, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel I 1651-1669*, p. viii.

³⁸⁷ A.J. Böeseken (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. IV, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad Deel IV 1707-1715*, pp. xviii-xix.

³⁸⁸ C.G. de Wet (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap No. VI, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad VI 1720-1723*, p. xxiv.

to and badly damaged by water, damp, mould, rodents, and mismanagement by officials. Moreover, on various occasions, government documents were used to wad the cannons when salutes were fired.³⁸⁹

The situation regarding the custody of records during the two British occupations (1795 to 1803 and 1806 to 1910) differed slightly from the VOC period. The custody and care of records were the responsibility of government offices and individuals employed in these offices under the VOC, while under British administration this function in principle was centred in the Colonial Secretary³⁹⁰ who was in return responsible to the Home Office (1782-1801), the War and Colonial Department (1801-1854) and from 1854 to the Colonial Office proper.³⁹¹ M. Banton maintains that the colonies and their administration were neglected although some changes were brought in after 1806. Generally, the responsibility for colonial administration was still fragmented.³⁹² The day-to-day responsibility for the administration of the colony was effectively devolved to the governor and colonial government³⁹³ and it can be assumed that this included the record-keeping and archival responsibilities. The colonies were responsible for all of the records created including all “the local records of the governors’ and colonial secretaries’ office, the local government departments, the courts and magistrates, the parish vestries, the district commissioners and district officers, and the myriad temporary bodies which might exist from time to time.”³⁹⁴ Without proper guidance regarding the care and custody of records from the Colonial Office in London, record-keeping posed a daunting task.

³⁸⁹ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:2; G. Hendrich, “‘A rich storehouse for research’: The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service”, *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, pp. 77-78.

³⁹⁰ Previously the “Secretary and Registrar of Records”. State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:2.

³⁹¹ M. Banton, *Administering the Empire, 1801-1968: A guide to the records of the Colonial Office in the National Archives of the UK*, pp. 40, 167, 177. M. Banton, 2020/n.d., <<http://humanities-digital-library.org/index.php/hdl/catalog/book/administering-theempire-1801-1968>>, access: March 2021.

³⁹² M. Banton, *Administering the Empire, 1801-1968: A guide to the records of the Colonial Office in the National Archives of the UK*, p. 39. M. Banton, 2020/n.d., <<http://humanities-digital-library.org/index.php/hdl/catalog/book/administering-theempire-1801-1968>>, access: March 2021.

³⁹³ M. Banton, *Administering the Empire, 1801-1968: A guide to the records of the Colonial Office in the National Archives of the UK*, p. 22. M. Banton, 2020/n.d., <<http://humanities-digital-library.org/index.php/hdl/catalog/book/administering-theempire-1801-1968>>, access: March 2021.

³⁹⁴ M. Banton, *Administering the Empire, 1801-1968: A guide to the records of the Colonial Office in the National Archives of the UK*, p. 23. M. Banton, 2020/n.d., <<http://humanities-digital-library.org/index.php/hdl/catalog/book/administering-theempire-1801-1968>>, access: March 2021.

After the second British occupation of 1806, the government decided that the Castle would be primarily used for military matters³⁹⁵ and new offices for the government departments and records in their custody, needed to be found. In the period from 1809 to 1811, the old Slave Lodge was converted to serve as offices for the various government departments, and the current records still in use. However, the archives of the VOC were only transferred to the Slave Lodge (which now held the Supreme Court and became known as the Supreme Court building) a few years later, around 1814. The new buildings and exterior appearances might have been improved upon, but no proper record-keeping practices were implemented. Although there was a record room provided in the building it was for the exclusive use of judges, lawyers, and legal personnel. The archival records were consequently scattered across buildings and amongst government departments. Furthermore, the conditions under which the archives were kept at the new premises left much to be desired. The building posed a big fire risk, it lacked storage space and had insufficient lighting. Likewise, the building was cold, damp, and liable to continuous drafts during winter and intolerably hot during summer which did not only affect the personnel working there,³⁹⁶ but these conditions were detrimental to the long-term preservation of the already fragile colonial records.³⁹⁷ It must be remembered that the archival records kept in the Supreme Court building were not the complete archive as the records of the *Landdrosten* (magistrate offices) and *Heemrade* (town councils) were kept in the separate offices across the Cape districts and under much the same circumstances and conditions.³⁹⁸

The colonial archives were housed in the Supreme Court building from 1814 to 1881.³⁹⁹ During the 1860s the Cape legislators addressed the Governor on the topic of fireproof accommodation and proper care regarding the colonial records. However, the Governor was unable to make any commitment for the lack of sufficient funds⁴⁰⁰ - a response that would repeat itself throughout the coming decades. Attempts were

³⁹⁵ G. Hendrich, "'A rich storehouse for research': The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service", *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, p. 78.

³⁹⁶ G. Hendrich, "'A rich storehouse for research': The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service", *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, pp. 78-79.

³⁹⁷ C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 4; C.J. Beyers, "Die huisvesting van die Kaapse Argief", *SA Archive Journal* 1, 1959, p. 46; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 3:2-3.

³⁹⁸ G. Hendrich, "'A rich storehouse for research': The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service", *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, p. 79.

³⁹⁹ C.J. Beyers, "Die huisvesting van die Kaapse Argief", *SA Archive Journal* 1, 1959, pp. 46-47.

⁴⁰⁰ J.H. Snyman, "Archives Commission 1876-1877 Early beginnings", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 16.

made in 1872 to move the colonial records to the South African Public Library, but this was unsuccessful. However, the first AC appointed in 1876 moved the archives to a fire-proof safe in the offices of the Surveyor-General which was also situated in the Supreme Court building at the time.⁴⁰¹ Some kind of control was exercised over the archives as records could only be accessed with permission from the office of the Surveyor-General and only when an official of the said office was present.⁴⁰² In 1881 the newly appointed “Keeper of the Archives”, H.C. de Vos Leibbrandt, decided to move the archival records to the South African Public Library where they were kept until 1886. Leibbrandt, however, commented on the less than ideal conditions the records were kept in at the Public Library, mentioning that there were marks made with pencil on the documents and a severe lack of supervision. Due to his persistence, the records were again moved, this time to the basement of the Houses of Parliament in 1886 which would be “home” to the Cape archives for almost half a century.⁴⁰³

The conditions of the storage of the colonial records were considered above, and of equal importance were the record-keeping practices or the lack thereof by the different governments that followed this period. As referred to earlier, the old Slave Lodge was renovated and improved, but no appropriate record-keeping practices were implemented, at best the status quo was maintained. There was a total lack of access control to the records as many of the valuable documents and volumes landed on sales held at the Cape Parade where they were bought by people with an interest in history or eager collectors and ended up being part of their private document collections.⁴⁰⁴ Official access to archival records was granted to members of the public and it occurred in some instances that documents and volumes were removed by individuals and never returned.⁴⁰⁵ It would appear that around the 1850s the archival records were placed under the responsibility of the Treasury. C.G. Botha noted that it was during this time that the first effort under the British government was made to compile a register of all the old Colonial records. However, it is not known if it was

⁴⁰¹ C.J. Beyers, "Die huisvesting van die Kaapse Argief", *SA Archive Journal* 1, 1959, pp. 46-47.

⁴⁰² P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, p. 17.

⁴⁰³ C.J. Beyers, "Die huisvesting van die Kaapse Argief", *SA Archive Journal* 1, 1959, p. 47; C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 6; G. Hendrich, "'A rich storehouse for research': The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service", *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, p. 80.

⁴⁰⁴ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:3.

⁴⁰⁵ C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 4; C.J. Beyers, "Die huisvesting van die Kaapse Argief", *SA Archive Journal* 1, 1959, p. 46; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 3:2-3.

completed or what happened to the register.⁴⁰⁶ When the Cape was first occupied by the British in 1795 an inventory was compiled on the content of the colonial archive and interestingly this original inventory was used again in 1803 when the Cape was returned to the Batavian Republic.⁴⁰⁷ However, there was no inventory compiled of the British records. According to Botha, it would seem that the records of the Batavian Republic period (1803-1806) were complete⁴⁰⁸ as they had a designated person responsible for the safekeeping and preservation of records. Leibbrandt, in his 1893 report as “Keeper of the Archives”, lamented the fact that the British government did not have a similar designated person to care for the records.⁴⁰⁹

It was not uncommon for new administrators to incorporate the documents and series of documents of former colonial government administrations into their own system of records to make a successful administration possible, as was the case in the Cape.⁴¹⁰ However, in 1826 the Colonial Secretary wrote to London stating that “[w]e are frequently much embarrassed from not having the official records of the British Government during the first possession of this colony from 1795-1803.”⁴¹¹ He pointed out that a great number of the documents of the first British occupation were removed from the offices in the Cape and taken to London when the Cape was handed over to the Batavian Republic in 1803.⁴¹² This situation hampered the effective administration of the colony and led to serious gaps in the Cape archival records. The lack of a proper record-keeping policy, the lack of the appointment of a full-time archivist, and the disregard for proper care and administration of records by the different governments during the colonial period resulted in documents being in very poor physical condition.⁴¹³

The first archivist of records in the Cape and hence SA’s first archivist was appointed late in the nineteenth century by the British government, namely George McCall

⁴⁰⁶ C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 4.

⁴⁰⁷ C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁰⁸ C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 3.

⁴⁰⁹ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, p. 31.

⁴¹⁰ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, p. 1.

⁴¹¹ C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 3.

⁴¹² C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 3.

⁴¹³ P.A. Myburgh, *Die geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese, 1876-1910*, pp. 3-5.

Theal.⁴¹⁴ He correctly summarised the status of government records when he commented: “In Cape Town much of what was most valuable in some classes of documents ... was lost or destroyed through carelessness and indifference of the Government”.⁴¹⁵ Theal furthermore remarked that nothing had been done to locate and secure the lost records before 1876.⁴¹⁶ Yet, it was not only pure neglect and disregard that led to the loss of documents, the deliberate incineration of masses of documents in the first half of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries⁴¹⁷ also brought about the loss of records that is still keenly felt by researchers in the field. As devastating as the destruction and loss of these old archives appears, the very survival of important documents is nothing short of remarkable.

For nearly two and a quarter centuries there had been no official policy regarding the care for and custody of records at the Cape. The first tangible attempt by a Cape government to view the administration, care, and preservation of archives as important, was made in 1876 when Sir Henry Barkly, Governor of the Cape Colony, appointed a parliamentary commission concerned with archives. The members appointed were: Sir J.H. de Villiers (Chief Justice of the Cape),⁴¹⁸ John X. Merriman (member of Parliament),⁴¹⁹ C.A. Fairbridge (member of Parliament), W.E. Moore (member of Parliament), and A. de Smidt (Surveyor-General of the Cape).⁴²⁰ The AC of 1876 was charged “to collect, examine, classify and index the Colonial Archives”.⁴²¹ However, this Commission only concerned itself with records of the period before 1806 as the Commission regarded the records created after 1806 to belong more properly to the different public offices in which they were deposited.⁴²² This particular view taken by the AC might have perpetuated the neglect of records for government offices as it implied that they had sole responsibility and discretion over their records. Also, as long as there was no legislation in place regulating the care and custody thereof,

⁴¹⁴ J.H. Snyman, "Archives Commission 1876-877 Early beginnings", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 19; J.H. Cilliers, "Personalalia 1879-1977", *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, p. 49.

⁴¹⁵ P.A. Myburgh, *Die geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese, 1876-1910*, p. 5.

⁴¹⁶ P.A. Myburgh, *Die geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese, 1876-1910*, p. 5.

⁴¹⁷ F. Frescura, "Felons, Forgers and Fences: South Africa's Undeclared War on its archives", *Forerunners Journal of the Philatelic Society for Greater Southern Africa* 30(2), 2018, p. 45.

⁴¹⁸ W.G. Schulze, "Melius de Villiers - A biographical sketch", *Fundamina* 14(1), 2008, p. 11.

⁴¹⁹ P. Lewsen, *John X. Merriman. Paradoxical South African Statesman*, p. 51.

⁴²⁰ C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 5.

⁴²¹ J.H. Snyman, "Archives Commission 1876-1877. Early beginnings", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 16.

⁴²² State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:3.

the records remained at risk. The AC concluded its work when a report was submitted in 1877. Included in the report was an inventory compiled by Dr Van Oordt (a journalist by profession)⁴²³ who was co-opted by the Commission to examine, classify and index the records. The inventory as such was more of a general list than an inventory proper,⁴²⁴ but it might even be seen as the third “official” inventory made of the colonial period records at the time.

The position of the archivist was from its commencement under British administration in the late nineteenth century up to the early twentieth century a part-time position. The reason was a lack of sufficient funds to employ a full-time archivist and provide proper storage for the archives. This was in line with the recommendation of the AC of 1876 made by Van Oordt when he wrote “[i]n a country like ours (which is poor) it would be impossible to have a well-paid keeper of the archives...”,⁴²⁵ the solution was the appointment of a part-time archivist. The two male archivists who held the position of archivist or “Keeper of archives” from 1879 to 1908 both occupied more than one position. The above-mentioned Theal, while he served as an official in the Colonial Treasury, was appointed part-time as “Officer in Charge of Colonial Archives” and also served as the Librarian to the House of Assembly.⁴²⁶ In 1881 he was replaced by Leibbrandt and the position Theal held was converted to “Librarian of the House of Assembly and Keeper of the Colonial Archives”. This situation of being a part-time archivist continued until 1901 when the Keeper’s office was separated from the Joint Library of Parliament and became an independent office which gave SA its first full-time archivist in the person of Leibbrandt.⁴²⁷ The Leibbrandt appointment was not without controversy and was challenged in Parliament and the press which in turn accused the government of practicing “jobs-for-pals”.⁴²⁸ This incident caused lifelong enmity between Theal and Leibbrandt and they would use any and every opportunity to criticise the other.⁴²⁹ However, this feud was not without importance or meaning to

⁴²³ J.F. Preller, "Archival development in South Africa (1876-1922)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 43.

⁴²⁴ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:4.

⁴²⁵ J.H. Snyman, "Archives Commission 1876-877. Early beginnings", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 18.

⁴²⁶ J.F. Preller, "The Leibbrandt appointment", *SA Archives Journal* 1, 1959, pp. 28-32.

⁴²⁷ C.G. Botha, *A brief guide to the various classes of documents in the Cape Archives for the period 1652-1806*, p. 6; J.H. Snyman, "Archives Commission 1876-877 Early beginnings", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 19.

⁴²⁸ According to one source Leibbrandt received three times the salary than his predecessor. State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:5.

⁴²⁹ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:5.

South African historiography - it brought an even greater urge in both to excel at the work at hand and both of them played pioneering roles in the archive and historiography of SA.⁴³⁰

In difficult financial times, archives are normally one of the first departments to be cut back as they were (and mostly still are) perceived by some to be “a luxury”.⁴³¹ The early part of the twentieth century was financially exceedingly challenging and the Cape government was forced to cut down on government expenses.⁴³² The post of “Keeper of the Archives” was abolished and no instructions were issued on the care and preservation of the archives. This caused the Under Colonial Secretary, Noel Janisch, to put £50 on the budget out of his own pocket for some kind of supervision and for answering queries directed to the archive. Junior personnel were appointed of which one could not read or speak Dutch, yet he was the “senior” and in charge of the archives. Neither of the two gentlemen appointed to the archive had any experience or training in archives.⁴³³

In answer to a question in parliament in September 1909 on what the government’s strategy and plan was with the archives, Prime Minister John X. Merriman responded with the establishment of yet another archives commission. The instruction to the AC of 1909 was to “have the custody on behalf of the Colonial Government of the Archives”⁴³⁴ and, amongst other things, to report on the condition of the archives and to make recommendations to the government on the care, preservation, and use of the archive. Members appointed to the Archive Commission were: Dr George McCall Theal (Colonial Historian), Dr William Flint (Parliamentary Librarian), Prof. E.C. Godee-Molsbergen (Professor of History at the University College of Stellenbosch), Mr C.L.W. Mansergh (Secretary for Public Works), Mr J.G. van der Horst, Mr A.C.G. Lloyd (Librarian of the Public Library).⁴³⁵ The all-male Commission was responsible for the archive and its affairs were taken care of, after office hours, by three junior

⁴³⁰ A.J. Böeseke, "Theal as baanbreker (11 April 1837-17 April 1919)", *SA Archives Journal* 1, 1959, p. 35.

⁴³¹ J.H. Davies, "The Government archives of South Africa and Record Management", *SA Archive Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 16-17.

⁴³² P. Lewsen, *John X. Merriman. Paradoxical South African Statesman*, pp. 284, 308.

⁴³³ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, pp. 108-109.

⁴³⁴ J.H. Esterhuysen, "Die Argiefkommissie (1909-1913)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 58.

⁴³⁵ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 3:5.

officials of which Colin Graham Botha, the future Chief Archivist of the Union of SA was one.⁴³⁶

The importance of the 1909 AC can be found in the fact that the compilation of inventories of archives took prominence. At that point, the Commission realised no complete and comprehensive inventory of any of the archives existed despite the efforts and work of Van Oordt, Theal, and Leibbrandt. Leibbrandt believed that the archives needed to be made accessible to the people, and decided to rather publish excerpts of documents than prepare inventories of the different archives. Even though Leibbrandt wanted to make the archives accessible to the larger public it was found that upon the establishment of the AC in 1909 that the manuscript summaries (precis) were still in his private possession. Ironically, neither the AC nor the public had access to these documents and the Union government had to purchase them from his estate in 1912 for R600.⁴³⁷

Under the personal guidance of Godee-Molsbergen, all the documents in the archives at that time were arranged and described according to the principle of provenance and the methods applied in the Netherlands at that time. The Commission was very interested in the valuable records kept in government offices and every effort was made to get these offices to transfer them to the archive. The AC also intentionally focused on transferring documents and records outside of Cape Town to the archive, but there was not enough storage space to accommodate all the records. Private persons and organisations were also approached and requested to donate valuable documents to the archive. An interesting facet of the work of this Commission's activities was their efforts to obtain copies of documents with bearing on SA in overseas archives.⁴³⁸

When the historical development of the archive in the Cape Colony is taken into consideration there are a few aspects that come to the fore. The first is the obvious lack of proper care and custody of records due to the absence of a proper record-keeping policy as well as a full-time archivist(s) to implement it. Secondly, the rudimentary record-keeping practices implemented, and thirdly and most importantly

⁴³⁶ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, pp. 111-113; J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, pp. 8, 10, 13.

⁴³⁷ J.H. Esterhuysen, "Die Argiefkommissie (1909-1913)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 58-59.

⁴³⁸ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 3:8-3:9.

in the context of this study, the fact that the position of archivist was highly gendered. It can be assumed that officials performing record-keeping duties as part of the various colonial governments at the Cape were predominantly male.⁴³⁹ Take for example, the very nomenclature of the first archivist was *chartermeeester* which by its very name excluded women and emphasised men. This mindset is perpetuated throughout this early era. It is also evident in the appointment of the members of every Commission or committee that concerned itself with aspects of the archive during this period. At this stage in the historical development of the South African archive, there was total silence and no glimpse of any female attached to the archive. The situation in the Cape Colony was not unique and similar circumstances were apparent in Natal and the two Boer Republics.

4.2.2. Colony of Natal

The constitutional history of Natal can be traced back to the establishment of the Voortrekker state, the Republic of Natalia in 1838. It had a short life span as British annexation followed in 1842 and the official proclamation of the annexation was made in August 1843. In May 1844 Natal was made a separate district of the Cape Colony⁴⁴⁰ and it received Responsible Government in 1893.⁴⁴¹ Yet even with the close political connection and ties with the Cape Colony, there was no real effort made by the Natal government to establish an archival administration or archival service. Also during the colonial period, they never appointed a full-time archivist. It was apparent that every state department was responsible for its own records. One plausible explanation for this lack of an overarching policy and a proper repository for the colony's archives may be the fact that there was no interruption vis-à-vis its government administration.

In the period before unification in 1910, it was only the office of the Colonial Secretary in Natal that took steps to preserve its oldest archival documents, albeit in chambers

⁴³⁹ The workforce of the VOC was recruited from people (predominantly male) with different skill sets from merchants, seamen, soldiers and civil servants. See J. Lucassen, "A Multinational and Its Labor Force: The Dutch East India Company, 1595-1795", *International Labor and Working-Class History* 66, 2004, pp. 12-39; C. Rei, "Careers and Wages in the Dutch East India Company", *Cliometrica* 8, 2014, pp. 27-48.

⁴⁴⁰ J. Visagie, "Uittog en vestiging van die Voortrekkers in die binneland" in F. Pretorius (ed.), *Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika. Van voortye tot vandag*, pp. 143-145.

⁴⁴¹ J. Grobler, "Staatsvorming en stryd, 1850-1900" in F. Pretorius (ed.), *Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika. Van voortye tot vandag*, p. 167.

under the Colonial building.⁴⁴² With the unification in 1910, Natal became part of the Union of SA and the need for an archive became more evident as arrangements needed to be made concerning the records of the previous administration.⁴⁴³ Records in the possession of the Natal Colony were inter alia some records of the Natalia Republic, records of the Colony of Natal from 1845 to 1910, and the Zululand Government records from 1879 to 1898.⁴⁴⁴ Not unlike its sister colony, the Natal Colony also followed a male dominated pattern and women do not feature in the archival domain.

4.3 The two Boer Republics – The Dutch legacy?

4.3.1 Zuid-Afrikaansche Republic – Transvaal Colony

In its 50 years in power, the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republic (ZAR) government never created an archive or archives service. It was only the documents of the Secretary of State that can be considered an archival entity by the care taken and personnel appointed to preserve them. In February 1899 the post of archivist in the Secretary of State's office was approved, but the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War later that year, and more specifically the British occupation of Pretoria in June 1900, brought an end to this arrangement. The British Military administration was now in charge of all administrative matters, including the archival records.⁴⁴⁵

After the War (1899-1902), W.J. Fockens was appointed as the first "Keeper of the State Archives" in July 1903 with the care of the archives entrusted to him. P.A. Myburgh states that it is not mentioned as such in any correspondence, but this appointment showed intent by the government to establish some sort of archival component to the administration of the colony. But Fockens and more than half of his assistants spent most of their days bogged down with translating minutes, resolutions, and other documents and could not give the archive the attention it needed. On the eve of unification, 31 May 1910, the Transvaal Colony, as the ZAR was named after

⁴⁴² P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, p. 137; W.B. van der Vyver, "Die Natalse Argiefdepot", *SA Archives Journal* 1, 1959, p. 20; J.F. Preller, "Archival development in South Africa (1876-1922)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 46.

⁴⁴³ W.B. van der Vyver, "Die Natalse Argiefdepot", *SA Archives Journal* 1, 1959, p. 20.

⁴⁴⁴ J.H. Davies, "The organisational development of the Government archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 9.

⁴⁴⁵ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, pp. 150-151, 155, 161; J.F. Preller, "Archival development in South Africa (1876-1922)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 46.

the Anglo-Boer War, was still in want of a permanent archive personnel corps, a proper archive building, and still busy arranging its archives.⁴⁴⁶ The archive kept the records of very small, short-lived republics, records of the ZAR up to 1902, and records of the Military Administration and Transvaal Colony from 1900 to 1910.⁴⁴⁷

4.3.2. Orange Free State Republic – Orange River Colony

The records found in the archive of the Orange Free State are likewise indicative of its constitutional history. There are certain Orange River Sovereignty records, records of the Orange Free State Republic from 1854 to 1900, Military Administration, and Orange River Colony (as the Orange Free State was named after the Anglo-Boer War) records from 1900 to 1910.⁴⁴⁸ There was no official collection or compilation of archives in the Orange Free State before the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War in 1899. In 1903 Maj E.L. Calverley was appointed as Librarian and “Keeper of the Archives” and his duties were to care for the archives of the previous Orange Free State Republic, and arrange and catalogue them. He compiled an index card system of some sort and started to move the archives to the old Council Chamber (*Raadsaal*). This action prevented a tragedy from happening, for in 1908 a fire broke out in the Government building and destroyed most state documents. In 1909 the post of Librarian was abolished and as a temporary measure, the archives were placed under the care of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.⁴⁴⁹

The development and situation regarding the archives of the former colonies were briefly considered above. The administration, care and preservation of the archives of the former colonies were not on the same level for several reasons. For example, a lack of finance to properly house and preserve the records and the lack of skilled personnel. Moreover, the absence of an overarching legislative and archival framework to consolidate the different archive institutions was obvious. However great the need, nothing definite evolved from the Union government and it would take more than a decade for the government to put its words into positive action regarding the administration of its archives.

⁴⁴⁶ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, p. 165.

⁴⁴⁷ J.H. Davies, “The organisational development of the Government archives of the Union of South Africa”, *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 9.

⁴⁴⁸ J.H. Davies, “The organisational development of the Government archives of the Union of South Africa”, *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 9.

⁴⁴⁹ P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, pp. 143-144.

In the case of the two Republics, the “Keeper of the Archives” was understandably male. This remained the status quo in these regions for more than four decades into the union of the country.

4.4 Union archives to 1922

Four important events regarding archival matters characterised the period between 1910 and 1922. The confluence of these events gave impetus to the promulgation of the first archival legislation in SA and paved the way for the development of the archive service that would last until the close of the twentieth century. The first of these events was the already mentioned formation of the Union of SA as a British dominion in 1910. This resulted in the establishment of a unitary archive service placed under the Minister of the Interior, although it took the best part of twelve years to achieve this.⁴⁵⁰ The other events were: the establishment of an AC in 1918;⁴⁵¹ the appointment of a Union Archivist in 1919, including his overseas study tour to archive centres in other parts of the world;⁴⁵² and lastly events leading up to the promulgation of the first archival legislation in 1922.

In 1910 the former colonies became the four provinces of the Union of SA, but had limited powers given the quasi-federal nature of the Union. The control of the official archive services of the former colonies, now provinces, was not among the specified functions entrusted to the four new provincial administrations. The responsibility of establishing an archive organisation fell to the Union Government. However, nothing towards a nationwide organisation of archives of the former colonies was done before late 1919 with the appointment of C.G. Botha as the first Union Chief Archivist.⁴⁵³ A reason for this long pause in the immediate development of archival institutions in the Union can be attributed to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.⁴⁵⁴ The politics and personalities surrounding the archives might have also contributed to the delay in centralising the archives of the four provinces. Fockens, in charge of the Transvaal

⁴⁵⁰ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:2.

⁴⁵¹ J.F. Preller, “Archival development in South Africa (1876-1922)”, *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 43-46.

⁴⁵² J.H. Davies, “The organisational development of the Government archives of the Union of South Africa”, *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 9-10.

⁴⁵³ J.H. Davies, “The organisational development of the Government archives of the Union of South Africa”, *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁵⁴ J.F. Preller, “Archival development in South Africa (1876-1922)”, *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 46.

archives since the early part of the twentieth century, passed away in 1919. In a subsequent letter from the Department of the Interior addressed to Botha (Chief Archivist of the Cape Archives), it was stipulated that the archives of the four provinces could, at last, be placed under the centralised control of a Union Chief Archivist.⁴⁵⁵ The AC in its 1920 report welcomed this and expressed their hope for an increased spirit of cooperation and internal unity between the different archive centres.⁴⁵⁶ This begs the question if Fockens in any way delayed the process and if the centralisation of the archives and appointment of a chief archivist for the Union archives could have been concluded sooner.

Since unification, at least on paper, the archival services of the former colonies were incorporated into a single public archives service under the Department of the Interior. But for the best part, they were in an undecided or ignored state and for the most part the responsibility of clerks or other government officials. General C.F. Beyers accused J.C. Smuts, the then Minister of the Interior, in Parliament in March 1912 of a “dereliction of duty” regarding proper archival arrangement and preservation of the South African archives. Beyers was specifically indignant about the fact that no one was appointed to take responsibility for the archives of the four provinces.⁴⁵⁷ It would seem that Beyers’s plea brought matters to a head somewhat as several appointments were made after April 1912 of which the appointment of Botha as full-time “Keeper of the Archives” of the Cape archives in 1912⁴⁵⁸ was certainly the most important. For the next thirty-two years, he would play a formidable role in South African archival history and development.

The appointment of an AC in 1918 was the second event of importance. As early as April 1918 the Department of the Interior indicated that they saw a need to re-establish a body similar to the AC of 1909-1913. It was envisaged that this body would make recommendations to the government on the publishing of archives as well as recommend steps to be taken to the improvement of the archives. However, it was

⁴⁵⁵ Western Cape Archives and Record Service (WCARS) C.G. Botha Collection A1813 Vol. 28 Correspondence Archives, 1911-1961. Letter SI 205 dated 23 Oct 1919, p.1.

⁴⁵⁶ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 2 First Report Archives Commission C 4/20 27 March 1920, p. 4.

⁴⁵⁷ M.A. Coetzee, “Die aanstelling van ‘n Unie-argivaris”, *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, pp. 22-24.

⁴⁵⁸ E.J. Human, “Die Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefdiens word Eenhonderd jaar oud: Met spesifieke verwysing na die Kaapse Argiefbewaarplek waar die Diens sy ontstaan gehad het”, *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, p. 34.

made clear that this body would not interfere with the work of the archivist “but they might possibly help ... by bringing pressure to bear upon the Government to devote more time and money to the Archives of the Cape”.⁴⁵⁹ These efforts culminated in the appointment of the AC by the Department of the Interior on 20 August 1918⁴⁶⁰ and held its first meeting on 26 September 1918.⁴⁶¹ The responsibilities of the Commission were more clearly defined than what was suggested earlier that year as the Commission was ultimately tasked to make recommendations to the government on the custody and improvement of the collections of archives at the Cape Archive; to supervise the publication of any portion of archives; to make recommendations in regards to the collection, preservation, and distribution of public or private archives which have a bearing on the history of South Africa; and lastly to at least once a year submit a report on the proceedings of the Commission.⁴⁶² The following persons were appointed by the Minister as members of the Commission: Mr John X. Merriman, Sir James Rose-Innes (to be appointed chairman of the AC), Prof. S.F.N. Gie, Prof. E.A. Walker, Mr J.G. van der Horst, Mr A.C.G. Lloyd, and Mr C.G. Botha, the Chief Archivist of the Cape Archives.⁴⁶³ Later on, Mr J. de Villiers Roos also joined the Commission.⁴⁶⁴ From the above, it is clear that the AC was appointed with a view more towards the Cape archives than archives on a national level, and was also known as the Cape Archives Commission.⁴⁶⁵ However, its proceedings and recommendations would have a long-lasting impact on archives at a national level and prepare the foundation from which archives in SA would develop and grow.

The appointment of a Union Archivist in October 1919 was the third important event to take place in the period 1910 to 1922. The appointment of Botha as Union Chief Archivist was effected in October 1919.⁴⁶⁶ For the first time in the history of South African archives, SA had an archivist responsible for the records of all four provinces, including the archives of the former colonies and previous colonial governments.

⁴⁵⁹ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 2 File 13/1 Papers regarding Appointment of an Archives Commission. Letter CT 988 dated 19 April 1918, p. 2.

⁴⁶⁰ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 2 First Report Archives Commission dated 27 March 1920, p. 1.

⁴⁶¹ J.H. Esterhuyse, "Die Argiefkommissie (1909-1913)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 62.

⁴⁶² WCARS C.G. Botha Collection A1813 Vol 28 File Correspondence Archives, 1911-1961. Letter No 16/12 dated 20 August 1918, p. 1.

⁴⁶³ WCARS C.G. Botha Collection A1813 Vol 28 File Correspondence Archives, 1911-1961. Letter No 16/12 dated 20 August 1918, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁶⁴ J.F. Preller, "Archival development in South Africa (1876-1922)", *SA Archives Journal* 3 1961, p. 46.

⁴⁶⁵ WCARS ACB Archives of the Archives Commission Vol 1 Minute Book.

⁴⁶⁶ Government Notice No. 1589, 25 Nov 1919 in *Government Gazette* No. 1013, 5 Dec 1919, p. 454.

However, Botha was not the first choice for Union Chief Archivist. Smuts, as Minister of the Interior, intended to offer the position to Professor Leo Fouché,⁴⁶⁷ but he was already employed elsewhere and fairly well remunerated, a position which he had no intention of leaving.⁴⁶⁸ To place the archive on an upward trajectory concerning its structure, administration, and best practices it was proposed that Botha undertake a tour of Europe to study the systems used in the archive departments of the capitals of Europe and Northern America.⁴⁶⁹

By the end of February 1920, the AC was established and the Chief Archivist for the Union was appointed, both of which were widely welcomed. The only outstanding matter was archival legislation and policy to unify and guide government departments and the four archive centres. As referred to earlier, this would be the fourth event of importance. However, before this could be done the format of the archival organisation had to be decided on and this proved to be a point of contention. A small Archives Committee was appointed in 1919 by the Minister of the Interior to advise, amongst other things, on the custody of archives, their preservation, and cataloguing.⁴⁷⁰ It was evident from its report, however, that there was no consensus on the format the archival organisation had to take. The Committee consisted of Mr A.C.G. Lloyd (South African Public Library), Mr C.G. Botha (Chief Archivist of Cape Archives), and Prof. Leo Fouché (Transvaal University College).⁴⁷¹ The most difficult discourse concerned the location of the pre-Union archive material. Two of the members were in favour of what would later be described as a decentralised model with centralised control, thus keeping the archives not far removed from the geographical area it is associated with or where they originated from.⁴⁷² The third member, Fouché, was in total disagreement and argued that the fundamental principle in making archival material available for

⁴⁶⁷ Fouché was employed by the Transvaal University College as a professor of history until 1934. *Ad Destinatum. Gedenkboek van die Universiteit van Pretoria*, pp. 112-113.

⁴⁶⁸ WCARS ACB Archives of the Archives Commission Vol 2 File 9/1 Committee appointed to report on best method of dealing with the Archives in the future. Letter dated 18 October 1919, p. 1.

⁴⁶⁹ WCARS C.G. Botha Collection A1813 Correspondence Archives, 1911-1961. Letter SI 205 dated 23 Oct 1919, pp. 1-2.

⁴⁷⁰ WCARS ACB Archives of the Archives Commission Vol 2 File 9/1 Committee appointed to report on best method of dealing with the Archives in the future. Letter dated 18 October 1919, p. 1.

⁴⁷¹ *Ad Destinatum. Gedenkboek van die Universiteit van Pretoria*, pp. 112-113.

⁴⁷² WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 2 File 9/1 Committee appointed to report on best method of dealing with archives in the future. Letter No. 47/16/12 dated 26 Feb 1920. Report, pp. 1-9; W.B. van der Vyver, "Onder die soeklig. Privaat-versamelings: Erns of statussimbool?" *SA Archives Journal* 16, 1974, p. 37.

research is by the “completest possible concentration”⁴⁷³ of this material. This meant that the centralisation of most, if not all, the archival records in SA had to be affected. By centralising the archives, the argument continues, an end would be put to the ongoing dispersion of archival records which affected historical research negatively.⁴⁷⁴ The AC received a copy of the report and after a full discussion “there were strong objections to entertaining the idea of centralising the records of the four provinces in one depository or splitting up any collection to augment any other collection.”⁴⁷⁵ It was against this background that the Minister of the Interior proposed that Botha be sent on a six months tour to some of the capitals of Europe, the United States of America, and Canada to “study and report” on the methods used in these archival centres.⁴⁷⁶

After his visit, Botha submitted a report which was published in July 1921.⁴⁷⁷ He studied the methods of archives of countries where the union of states or provinces had taken place, similar to that of SA, namely the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Italy, and concluded that the decentralisation of archives might hold the answer to the archival challenges faced in the Union of SA. Furthermore, he noted that “in countries ‘where the archives have been highly centralised it has been found that the system has not been successful.’”⁴⁷⁸ He further recommended that the provinces retain their records before unification and those that have accumulated since.

According to his recommendations, the records of the Union government should be kept in the capital city of the Union (Pretoria) and archive centres to be established in the capital of each province. The government records of the old colonies were to be transferred to these archive centres and when they became transferrable, the provincial records after unification should also be transferred. The report strongly

⁴⁷³ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 2 File 9/1 Committee appointed to report on best method of dealing with archives in the future. Letter No. 47/16/12 dated 26 Feb 1920. Report pp. 6-8.

⁴⁷⁴ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 2 File 9/1 Committee appointed to report on best method of dealing with archives in the future. Letter No. 47/16/12 dated 26 Feb 1920. Report pp. 6-8.

⁴⁷⁵ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 1 Minutes of meeting held on 18 March 1920, p. 1.

⁴⁷⁶ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 1 Minutes of meeting held on 18 March 1920, p. 1.

⁴⁷⁷ C.G. Botha, *Report of a visit to various Archive Centres in Europe, United States of America, and Canada*, Government Printing and Stationery Office, Pretoria, 1921.

⁴⁷⁸ C.G. Botha, *Report of a Visit to various Archives Centres in Europe, United States of America and Canada*, p. 7 as quoted in J.H. Davies, “Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973”, *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 11.

suggested the decentralisation of the four archive centres, however, the administration of the centres should be centralised under the control of a Chief Archivist.⁴⁷⁹ It is of importance to note that a decision was taken by the Union government to only have one archive service and archive organisation for all three levels of government. While in most other Western countries the custom was that each level of government had control over its own archive.⁴⁸⁰ Botha's recommendations in favour of decentralisation, as contained in his report, were adopted by the authorities and accommodated in the first act on archives to be passed in SA.⁴⁸¹ The report on Botha's visit informed not only the archives Act of 1922, but also the various regulations promulgated in terms of the Act.⁴⁸² As such the report was a very important document, one which in effect would inform the South African archival landscape for decades to come.

While the first single women (to be discussed later) appears in the realm of the archives during this period, it remains a male dominated sphere.

4.5 Public Archives Act No. 9 1922

Archival legislation is vital to the efficient functioning of any public (state) or private archival institution. This translates to a written mandate from the highest authority of the organisation, in this case, the Union Government of the time. The purpose of the said mandate is to clearly define the functions and responsibilities and set the boundaries of the archive and archival personnel. The legislation embodies the principles, directions, and policy directives that form the basis for the various role players in which to perform their duties.⁴⁸³ The Public Archives Act of 1922⁴⁸⁴ provided the first legal framework for archives in South Africa.⁴⁸⁵ The Act itself was brief and relatively short, however, it covered the most important aspects concerning archival matters and laid the foundation for future archival legislation to be developed and expanded on.⁴⁸⁶ The Act consisted of eight sections of which one detailed the name

⁴⁷⁹ C.G. Botha, *Report of a Visit to various Archives Centres in Europe, United States of America and Canada*, p. 8 as quoted in J.H. Davies, "The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 11.

⁴⁸⁰ J.H. Esterhuysen, "Op pad na 'n eie Nasionale Argiefdiens", *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, p. 38.

⁴⁸¹ J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁸² J.H. Davies, "The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 12.

⁴⁸³ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:1

⁴⁸⁴ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. v.

⁴⁸⁵ G. Hendrich, "'A rich storehouse for research': The historical development of the Western Cape Archives and Records Service", *Journal for Contemporary History* 42(2), 2017, p. 82.

⁴⁸⁶ J.H. Cilliers, "Die eerste Argiefwet in Suid-Afrika", *SA Archives Journal* 26, 1984, p. 28.

of the Act, another provided a list of definitions of terms used in the Act, and the other six sections dealt with various archival matters. The first archival act of SA came into force on the 1st of July 1922.⁴⁸⁷

The Act of 1922 covered fundamental issues that are present in most archival legislation such as the duties of the Chief Archivist; the transfer of records to archival repositories; accessibility of archives by the public; the establishment and appointment of an AC; the promulgation of regulations concerning archival matters - all of which will be considered under the different functionaries, namely the Chief Archivist, the Minister, the AC, and the Governor-General. However, the Act of 1922 also included a list of definitions of important terms. For the first time, the term “archives” was officially formulated and defined. Following British custom, the Act used the term “public archives” and defined it accordingly as:

all such public records, documents and other historical material of every kind, nature and description as are in the custody of any of the public departments, whether of the Union Government or any provincial administration, or as have already been transferred to an archive dépôt (sic).⁴⁸⁸

The narrow focus of the Act is evident in the fact that the definition excluded any document which was kept in the custody of any particular officer under the provisions of any other law.⁴⁸⁹ For example, records of the transfer of deeds were kept with the Deeds Office. The definition of archives as taken up in later archival legislation differed from this first version and was defined more broadly to incorporate archives not just of the Union and provincial offices, but also archives of local authorities and the territory of South-West Africa (SWA, now Namibia). The current archives Act, the National Archives of South Africa Act 1996, draws a distinction between “archives” and “public records” as “archives” refers to records already in the custody of an archive repository, and “public record” means “a record created or received by a government body in pursuance of its activities”.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁷ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, pp. iv-v.

⁴⁸⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. v.

⁴⁸⁹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. v.

⁴⁹⁰ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 2.

The 1922 Act further distinguished between Union public archives and Provincial public archives. The first mentioned referred to the archives formed by the Union Government departments since 1910 and which had these records still in custody. The Provincial archives were defined as the archives created by the former four colonies. However, it also referred to the archives of the various provincial administrations which had to be transferred to archive repositories over time.⁴⁹¹ For these archives to be transferred, the Act provided for the following archive repositories: the Union public archives shall be transferred to a repository at the seat of the Union Government (i.e. Pretoria) and the provincial public archives shall be transferred to a repository at the seat of the particular provincial administration,⁴⁹² namely Pretoria, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, and Pietermaritzburg.

The first section of the Public Archives Act of 1922 describes the function and responsibility of the Chief Archivist. It can be said that the Act confirmed and consolidated the administrative structure that was developing since 1912.⁴⁹³ At the time of the passing of the 1922 Public Archives Act, Botha had already been appointed Chief Archivist of the Union.⁴⁹⁴ He had also fulfilled the role of head of the Cape Archives since 1912.⁴⁹⁵ Botha's contribution to the 1922 Act is evident from the fact that his report of his visit to various archive centres formed the basis for the Act as many of the recommendations he proposed were accepted and consolidated in the Act.⁴⁹⁶ Botha's background in law⁴⁹⁷ (he obtained the Cape Law Certificate in 1905) stood him in good stead regarding the formulation of what would become the Act of 1922. He started work in the Orphan Chamber branch of the Master's Office and met the "Keeper of the Colonial Archives", Leibbrandt in 1906. His work as magistrate's clerk in the Orphan Chamber brought him in close contact with the records and archives themselves and it sparked a lifelong interest and deep love for the South African archive that not only served the Union archives, but also impacted the archive service in SA for decades to come. Between 1906 and 1908 Botha had permission to explore these records in his spare time. In the previous section dealing with the

⁴⁹¹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. v; J.H Cilliers, "Die eerste Argiefwet in Suid-Afrika", *SA Archives Journal* 26, 1984, pp. 29-30.

⁴⁹² *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236 27 May 1922, p. iv.

⁴⁹³ J.H Cilliers, "Die eerste Argiefwet in Suid-Afrika", *SA Archives Journal* 26, 1984, p. 29.

⁴⁹⁴ J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha, 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 10.

⁴⁹⁵ C.J. Beyers, "Die huisvesting van die Kaapse Argief", *SA Archive Journal* 1, 1959, p. 49.

⁴⁹⁶ C.G. Botha, *Cape archives and records*, pp. 1-81.

⁴⁹⁷ J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 8.

archival legacy of the Cape Colony, mention was made of the AC appointed in 1909 and which had custody of the archives on behalf of the government.⁴⁹⁸ Botha, together with a few other junior officials, were deputed to sort and arrange the documents in the Cape archive.⁴⁹⁹ In 1911 Botha visited England as part of the Coronation Contingent, but stayed behind for six months and at his own expense visited archives in England, Scotland and Europe. Despite his tertiary education and keen interest and love for archives, he had no other training in archives. However, on his return to the Cape he had brought with him the by then famous *Handleiding voor het ordenen and beschrijven van archiven* of Muller, Feith and Fruin⁵⁰⁰ and later declared that “[t]he principles set forth in this manual have been followed in arranging the Cape archives.”⁵⁰¹ In 1914 the outbreak of the First World War delayed progress concerning the Cape archives for at least four years. At last, his “apprenticeship” was over when in 1919 Botha was appointed Union Chief Archivist with the responsibility of the public archives of all four provinces. As indicated, he held this position for two and a half decades until his retirement in 1944.⁵⁰²

The sole function in the Act of 1922 ascribed to the Chief Archivist was the “care, custody and control of public archives in every archives depôt (sic)”.⁵⁰³ However, this was to be done under the direction of the Minister of Interior. It is important to note that the Chief Archivist’s control function was restricted to archives already transferred and in the care of government or provincial archive repositories. The control of records still in government offices was not under the Chief Archivist’s control or care and was a continuation of the recommendations made by the AC of 1876. The Act did make provision however for the Chief Archivist to “advise any Government department with reference to care, custody, and control of the public archives remaining in the custody of such department”,⁵⁰⁴ but as J. Davies puts it “[t]his advisory power proved very much a dead letter in practice and the Government Archives had little influence”.⁵⁰⁵ This situation only changed forty years later with the promulgation of the Archives Act

⁴⁹⁸ J.H. Esterhuysen, "Die Argiefkommissie (1909-1913)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 58-62.

⁴⁹⁹ J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 8.

⁵⁰⁰ J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 9.

⁵⁰¹ C.G. Botha, *Cape archives and records*, p. 11.

⁵⁰² P.A. Myburgh, *Die Geskiedenis van die Staatsargiefwese in Suid-Afrika, 1876-1910*, pp. 111-113; J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, pp. 8, 10, 13.

⁵⁰³ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv.

⁵⁰⁴ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv.

⁵⁰⁵ J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha, 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 16.

of 1962 which gave the Chief Archivist (then the Director of Archives) total control of all documents, current and non-current or closed, in government offices.⁵⁰⁶

The Act of 1922 further provided the Chief Archivist with the authority to acquire original records, documents, and “other things as he may deem necessary or desirable ... for the public archives”,⁵⁰⁷ but subject to the approval of the Minister. He was also authorised to acquire copies of such material and to pay for copying, transcribing, binding, and repairing such material as approved by Parliament. The funds used for acquiring were probably intended for the copying or reproduction of documents in Britain and the Netherlands that were of relevance to South Africa. The Act did not make provision for the purchasing of original material or for the authority to acquire material on loan.⁵⁰⁸

Access to public archives was subject to regulations and at the discretion of the Chief Archivist, who had the authority to withhold access to any specific document or a document relating to any particular event. According to the Act, the person desiring access, but denied by the Chief Archivist has the right to appeal to the Minister. Although access to public archives was allowed, the Act did not immediately stipulate which archives were accessible and which were closed to the public. Regulations published later on confirmed that archives up and to and including 1885 would be open to the public and every year after this date the archives for a further complete period of one year would be made available for access by members of the public.⁵⁰⁹

It would seem as if the Chief Archivist was limited in his professional capacity as an archivist to perform his duties. It is therefore important to look into the role the Act assigned to the responsible Minister. The archives Act of 1922 defined the Minister of the Interior as responsible for the administration of the archive service.⁵¹⁰ Although the Chief Archivist had the “care, custody, and control” of the public archives it was subjected to the direction of the Minister. The Minister also had to approve all acquisitions by the Chief Archivist that might be of interest to the public archives. Furthermore, the Minister had the power to appoint an AC which would serve primarily

⁵⁰⁶ J.H. Davies, “Colin Graham Botha, 1883-1973”, *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 16.

⁵⁰⁷ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. v.

⁵⁰⁸ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:4.

⁵⁰⁹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:4.

⁵¹⁰ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. v.

in an advisory capacity.⁵¹¹ The regulations published in 1922 concerning the AC gave the Minister the power to decide where and when it was to hold its meetings.⁵¹²

The 1922 Act stipulated that records that are no longer required by the various government departments for administrative purposes should be transferred “periodically” to archive depots, but no specific period was laid down. It was only in December 1926, with the publication of the “Regulations regarding the disposal of valueless records, and the transfer of public archives to archives depots”⁵¹³ that a period was specified, namely that records thirty years or older should be transferred to the archive depot.⁵¹⁴ The regulations specified the procedures concerning the transfer of records to an archive depot. It was also stipulated that the Minister (or administrator of the province) shall sign an order upon which these records may be transferred.⁵¹⁵ Importantly, the Chief Archivist who had the responsibility for the archive depots was not privy to the process to give input in the compilation of the transfer lists or to check if the preparation of the documents or files was according to specifications. The Act did not allow him to liaise with transferring offices regarding the size of the transfer, the availability of archival personnel, and notably, if sufficient space is available for the arrangement, storage, safekeeping, and preservation thereof.

In respect of the access to archives, an appeal could be lodged to the Minister if the Chief Archivist had withheld access to a particular document or a document relating to a specific event. The Minister’s decision would be final.⁵¹⁶ The Minister had the power to grant permission for access to public archive records that are transferred to a repository, but are not available or open yet. An application could be submitted to the Minister for permission to access, as issued in the regulations of 1923.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹¹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv.

⁵¹² Government Notice No. 1625, 28 September 1922, *Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 Oct 1922, p. 4.

⁵¹³ Government Notice No. 2279, 17 December 1926, *Government Gazette* No. 1595, 17 December 1926, pp. 730-731.

⁵¹⁴ J.H. Davies, “Colin Graham Botha, 1883-1973”, *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 15; J.H. Davies, “The Government Archives of South Africa and Record Management”, *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 12-13.

⁵¹⁵ Government Notice No. 2279, 17 December 1926, *Government Gazette* No. 1595, 17 December 1926, p. 731.

⁵¹⁶ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv.

⁵¹⁷ Government Notice No. 1195, 23 July 1923, *Government Gazette* No. 1334, 27 Jul 1923, p. 145.

The Governor-General served as a functionary to this Act of 1922 as he had the power to assign the administration of the Act to a specific Minister, in the case of the 1922 Act, the Minister of the Interior had the responsibility of the public archive. Furthermore, the Governor-General had the power to issue regulations concerning matters of public access to archival records, disposal of ephemeral records, transfer of archives to archival depots, and the procedures concerning the AC's meetings.⁵¹⁸ He exercised this power on three occasions, viz. in September 1922 regulations concerning the meetings of the AC⁵¹⁹ and members appointed to the Commission were published;⁵²⁰ in 1923 regulations were published stipulating which archives were accessible to the public and the provisions applicable to the consultation of documents in the reading rooms of archive repositories,⁵²¹ and lastly, regulations were published in 1926 which specified the procedures concerning the disposal of ephemeral records as well as the procedures for the transfer of documents to archival repositories.⁵²² Tariffs payable by members of the public for research done on their behalf by members of the Archives Service and for copies of documents were already published in 1918, before the promulgation of the Public Archives Act of 1922.⁵²³

The last functionary to be discussed is the AC and its responsibilities. Section five of the Public Archives Act of 1922 considered the appointment of an AC and described its proposed functions.⁵²⁴ The institution of an AC was nothing new or out of the ordinary for the Cape, at least. For almost half a century these commissions formed part of the archival history and development of the Cape Archive.⁵²⁵ The commissions established by the government consisted of members of the public appointed to advise

⁵¹⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, pp. iv-v.

⁵¹⁹ Government Notice No. 1625, 28 September 1922, *Government Gazette* No 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

⁵²⁰ Government Notice No. 1626, 28 September 1922, *Government Gazette* No 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

⁵²¹ Government Notice No. 1195, 23 July 1923, *Government Gazette* No. 1334, 27 July 1923, pp. 145-146.

⁵²² Government Notice No. 2279, 17 December 1926, *Government Gazette* No. 1595, 17 December 1926, pp. 730-731; J.H. Cilliers, "Die eerste Argiefwet in Suid-Afrika", *SA Archives Journal* 26, 1984, p. 32.

⁵²³ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:5.

⁵²⁴ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv.

⁵²⁵ The first of such Commissions was established in 1876 and concluded its business in 1877. J.H. Snyman, "Archives Commission 1876-1877 Early Beginnings", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, pp. 16-19. The second commission was appointed in 1909 and concluded in 1913. J.H. Esterhuyse, "Die Argiefkommissie (1909-1913)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 58-62. The third Archives Commission was constituted in 1918. J.F. Preller, "Archival development in South Africa (1876-1922)", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 46.

the government on archival matters, but there was an exception. The AC of 1909 was appointed not only in an advisory capacity, but to actually “have the custody on behalf of the Colonial Government of the Archives” as there was no archivist at the time to shoulder the responsibility because of financial constraints experienced by the government of the day.⁵²⁶

In terms of the Act, the AC became an established institution of the Archives Service as a whole⁵²⁷ and would remain so for many decades. The Act of 1922 authorised the Minister to appoint an AC to make recommendations as regards the custody and “improvement of the collection of public archives in the Union”.⁵²⁸ The Commission was to furthermore advise and recommend steps to be taken on the collection, preservation, and distribution of archives and accessions.⁵²⁹ In addition, it had to advise the Minister on appropriate steps to be taken to encourage historical writing, and also to supervise the publication of any portion of public archives as authorised by the Minister.⁵³⁰

Furthermore, the Commission had to submit a report to the Minister on its activities and proceedings at least once a year.⁵³¹ The terms under which the Act of 1922 provided for the AC strongly resembled those of the 1909 AC.⁵³² It can be said that the experience of past commissions informed the AC as instituted by the Public Archives Act of 1922.

Regulations published in 1922 stipulated that meetings would be convened at a time and place as determined by the Minister and that the Secretary would send out written notices to all members. Furthermore, it specified that the chairman would be appointed from among the members of the Commission, and who would together with any four other members form a quorum.⁵³³ It was expected that minutes be kept at all meetings.

⁵²⁶ J.H. Esterhuysen, “Die Argiefkommissie (1909-1913)”, *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 58.

⁵²⁷ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:5.

⁵²⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv.

⁵²⁹ J.H. Cilliers, “Die eerste Argiefwet in Suid-Afrika”, *SA Archives Journal* 26, 1984, p. 31.

⁵³⁰ J.H. Snyman, “Archives Commission 1876-1877. Early beginnings”, *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, pp. 16-19.

⁵³¹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:5.

⁵³² J.F. Preller, “Archival development in South Africa (1876-1922)”, *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 45, 47.

⁵³³ Government Notice No. 1625, 28 September 1922, *Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

The AC was authorised to resolve in committees of one or more members to inquire, investigate, or report on matters before them.⁵³⁴

The following gentlemen were appointed by the Minister to serve as members of the 1922 AC: Sir James Rose-Innes, Mr John X. Merriman, Mr A.C.G. Lloyd, Mr C.A. van Niekerk, Dr E.G. Jansen, Dr F.V. Engelenberg, Prof. L. Fouche, Mr C.T.M. Wilcocks, Prof. E.A. Walker, Prof. S.F.N. Gie.⁵³⁵ Botha (Chief Archivist of the Union and head of the Cape Archives) also served on the Commission and acted as its secretary.⁵³⁶ In addition, this regulation stipulated that members of the Commission will hold office for three years and will be eligible for a successive term of the same duration.⁵³⁷ This period was extended to five years in later legislation. Furthermore, should a member of the Commission be absent or incapacitated, the Minister was authorised to “appoint some fit and proper person to act in the place of that member during such absence or incapacity”.⁵³⁸

The Public Archives Act of 1922 did not consider or inform on the matter of disposal of ephemeral records in detail. The only provision made for the disposal of ephemeral records is found in section 6 which dealt with regulations that the Minister could issue, namely that steps could be taken for the examination and disposal of valueless records.⁵³⁹ A possible explanation for not addressing this matter can well be, as suggested by Davies, that “this aspect of the archivist's work did not loom as large [then]...as it does today”.⁵⁴⁰ It was only in 1926 that the published regulations assigned the authorisation of the destruction of ephemeral records to the AC.⁵⁴¹ There were two methods of the procedure provided for in the said regulation. The first entailed the appointment of a committee and was envisaged to safeguard against the risk of destroying historically important records.⁵⁴² However, this method was too cumbersome and delayed matters considerably as a committee had to be appointed each time an application for the disposal of documents was received. A second

⁵³⁴ *Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

⁵³⁵ *Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

⁵³⁶ Editorial, “The Archives Commission: Fortieth Anniversary”, *SA Archives Journal* 5, 1963, p. 9.

⁵³⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

⁵³⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

⁵³⁹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, pp. iv-v.

⁵⁴⁰ J.H. Davies, “The Government Archives of South Africa and Record management”, *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 12.

⁵⁴¹ J.H. Davies, “The Government Archives of South Africa and Record management”, *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 13; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:5.

⁵⁴² J.H. Davies, “Colin Graham Botha, 1883-1973”, *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 16.

method as described in the regulations stated that "... the AC may approve of schedules of documents of an ephemeral nature which may be destroyed by the department or provincial administration concerned without reference to the committee."⁵⁴³ This became the preferred method, but still rested on in-depth consultation with the department and/or provincial administration to guard against destroying documents of historical evidence or importance.⁵⁴⁴

For over three decades the Act of 1922 was in effect and prescribed the care, preservation and access of public archives in SA. However, two important factors played a role to effect changes on the archival front in the mid-twentieth century: firstly, the exponential increase in documents; and the ideological change that took place on the political front that would reduce the archive service to an almost exclusive state institution.

What is of relevance, is that this first legislation enhanced the male-centred nature of the fledgling archive. The legislation itself was heavily male focused in its lexicon and structure.

4.6 Archive Act No. 22 1953

The period from 1922 to 1953 in the development of archives in SA has been described as one of consolidation and expansion, of constant, and steady growth.⁵⁴⁵ The need to reconsider the Act of 1922 arose as existing practices needed to be regularised and provisions be made for increased activities.⁵⁴⁶ A survey done in 1960 indicated that official documents from the period of the mid-seventeenth century to 1910 comprised about 50 miles (+/- 80 kilometres) of linear documents. The period thereafter from 1910 to 1960 constituted around 300 miles (+/- 482 kilometres) of linear documents⁵⁴⁷ and confirms the enormous explosion of documents since the early part of the twentieth century. These figures are a good indication of the impact the mass of

⁵⁴³ J.H. Davies, "The Government Archives of South Africa and Record management", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 14.

⁵⁴⁴ J.H. Davies, "The Government Archives of South Africa and Record management", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, p. 14.

⁵⁴⁵ J.H. Esterhuysen, "Die ontwikkeling van die Republiek se argiefdiens gedurende die afgelope vyftien jaar", *SA Archives Journal* 11, 1969, p. 17; J.H. Davies. "The organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 14.

⁵⁴⁶ J.H. Davies. "The organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 14.

⁵⁴⁷ J.H. Esterhuysen, "Praktiese probleme in moderne navorsing", *SA Archives Journal* 13, 1971, p. 18.

documents in government registries and offices must have had on the archive service. The Act of 1922 as it stood became an anachronism and some believed it did not meet the purpose or requirements of a modern archival service anymore and that a new archives act was needed.⁵⁴⁸ A new act was duly promulgated in 1953.

The Act of 1922 comprised eight sections, whereas the new act of 1953 contained 18 sections of which one considered the definitions of terms, one section contained the provisions regarding the repeal of the old act, and one section confirmed the short title of the new act. In effect, the new act of 1953 was set out in 15 sections which also contained several subsections.⁵⁴⁹ As per the previous archives Act of 1922, this new Act regulated the duties of the three functionaries namely, the Chief Archivist, the AC, and the Minister. The Governor-General is not considered a functionary as such in the 1953 Act. The duty to publish regulations pertaining to the archive as assigned to the Governor-General in the Act of 1922, fell away as the new Act ascribed this power to the Minister. However, as the highest state official, the Governor-General still had a role to play as he had to sign the new Act.⁵⁵⁰ The new Act of 1953 also regulated matters central to any archive service for instance the transfer of records, disposal of records, acquisitions, accessibility to public archives by members of the public, regulations that may be issued, offenses and penalties, and the delegation of power.⁵⁵¹

Overall the Archives Act of 1953 envisaged to “consolidate and amend the law relating to the custody and control of the public archives of the Union, to provide for the custody and control of the public archives of SWA, and to provide for other incidental matters.”⁵⁵² This new Act did not contain any fundamental changes concerning archives as contained in the Act of 1922 except that the new act brought the archives of the territory of SWA into its scope of activities and responsibilities. This meant that the archive repository established in Windhoek in 1939 would fall under the direct control and custody of the Chief Archivist of SA.⁵⁵³

The newly promulgated Archives Act no. 22 of 1953⁵⁵⁴ was initiated and formulated by Dr Coenraad Beyers, who served as the Chief Archivist from 1944 to 1953. Beyers

⁵⁴⁸ W.B. van der Vyver, “Dr. Coenraad Beyers”, *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 35.

⁵⁴⁹ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:6.

⁵⁵⁰ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 2.

⁵⁵¹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2-8.

⁵⁵² *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 2.

⁵⁵³ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:6.

⁵⁵⁴ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 1.

studied at the University of Stellenbosch where he completed his doctorate in 1926, the first student to receive a PhD at a South African university. In 1944 he received the Hertzog prize for his thesis, the only historical work to be honoured as such.⁵⁵⁵ Beyers studied at the Rijks University of Leiden as well as the archive school in 's-Gravenhage Den Haag. By the time he was employed as Senior Archivist at the Transvaal Archive Repository in 1927 he was the highest qualified individual in the archive service. In 1932 a new post was created and Beyers was appointed as Assistant Chief Archivist, second in command of the archive service. When Botha retired in 1944, Beyers was promoted to the rank of Chief Archivist. Soon thereafter Beyers completed an LLB degree at the University of South Africa in 1946⁵⁵⁶ which stood him in good stead with the drafting of the Archives Act of 1953. In 1960 Beyers was appointed to the Heraldry Section of the Department of Education, Arts and Science which had taken over the responsibility of official heraldry from the Department of Interior. The Heraldry Act, prepared and drafted by Beyers, was promulgated in 1962 and Beyers became the first State Herald of SA.⁵⁵⁷ For administrative purposes, the Bureau of Heraldry was under the control of the Director of Archives.⁵⁵⁸

The organisation of the Archives Service as envisaged in the first Act was retained. The Chief Archivist remained the chief functionary with centralised control subject to ministerial direction. The principle of decentralisation of archives depots was kept intact too which implied that archives depots at the seat of government (Union public archives in Pretoria) and the seats of the various provincial administrations were retained. An important addition brought about by the new Act was the provision it made for a public archives depot in the territory of SWA.⁵⁵⁹ The inclusion of the archives of the territory of SWA was due to the ardour of Beyers.⁵⁶⁰

The Chief Archivist was appointed by the Minister under the laws governing the public service, thus he was accountable to the Minister for all his actions and duties. The

⁵⁵⁵ W.B. van der Vyver, "Dr. Coenraad Beyers", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 36.

⁵⁵⁶ W.B. van der Vyver, "Dr. Coenraad Beyers", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, pp. 33-34.

⁵⁵⁷ W.B. van der Vyver, "Dr. Coenraad Beyers", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 35.

⁵⁵⁸ The Bureau of Heraldry is currently a sub-programme of the NARSSA with the State Herald reporting to the Chief Director of the National Archives. Anon, 2016/n.d., <<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.za/node/58>>, access: August 2021.

⁵⁵⁹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

⁵⁶⁰ W.B. van der Vyver, "Dr. Coenraad Beyers", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 35.

Chief Archivist's duties as described in the first Act were redefined and expanded on in the Act of 1953, namely that he was charged with the custody, care, control, and administration of the public archives,⁵⁶¹ including the archives of SWA.⁵⁶² It further extended the Chief Archivist's authority in respect of the custody of state documents in all government offices.⁵⁶³ For the first time, the documents of the South African Railways and Harbour Administration came under his custody.⁵⁶⁴ The Act of 1953 extended the Chief Archivist's jurisdiction yet further in conferring upon him advisory powers in respect of non-public archives, for example, documents of local authorities, or bodies or persons in a semi-official capacity, and it included private collections.⁵⁶⁵ He could at the request of such a body or person inspect such archives and advise inter alia on the custody, preservation, and rendering available thereof to persons desiring access thereto.⁵⁶⁶

Similar to the Public Archives Act of 1922, the Act of 1953 made provision for the following archives depots: a Union public archives at the seat of government (Pretoria), as well as four provincial public archives at the seat of the provincial government of each of the provinces (Pretoria, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, and Pietermaritzburg). In addition, the new act allowed for an archives depot at the seat of the administration of SWA. The principle of the transfer of archives 30 years or older which is no longer required for the purposes of any government office⁵⁶⁷ was retained and made applicable to the territory of SWA.⁵⁶⁸

In respect of the transfer of archives to an archives depot, the Chief Archivist could postpone a transfer until in his opinion the transfer could conveniently be received. He

⁵⁶¹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 2.

⁵⁶² This referred to all the archives accumulated in any department or office of the Administration of SWA. This included the archives of the German colonial period from 1884 to 1915, as well as the accumulated archives in the departments or offices of the German Administration since 1915. W.B. van der Vyver, "Onder die soeklig: Privaatversamelings: Erns of statussimbool?", *SA Archives Journal* 16, 1974, p. 37; *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 2.

⁵⁶³ The definition of "government office" was new to the Act of 1953 and referred to any department or office of the Union government, and/or any provincial administration as well as the government offices of the administration of SWA. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 2.

⁵⁶⁴ *Debates of the House of Assembly (Hansard)* Vol 82-83, 3 July to 2 October 1953, p. 1020.

⁵⁶⁵ *Debates of the House of Assembly (Hansard)* Vol 82-83, 3 July to 2 October 1953, p. 1020.

⁵⁶⁶ See sections 2, 7 and 9 of the Archives Act of 1953. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2, 6.

⁵⁶⁷ This section of the Act (section 4 (2)) excludes those archives that are in terms of any law required to be kept in the custody of a particular person. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

⁵⁶⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

could also allow a transfer of records less than the prescribed 30 years old, and lastly, the Chief Archivist had the authority to temporarily transfer public archives from one public archives depot to another to meet the reasonable needs of researchers.⁵⁶⁹ Furthermore, with the consent of the Chief Archivist any records, documents, or other material of historical value not forming part of the public archives, may be acquired by way of donation or on loan for a temporary period or permanently, unconditionally, or subject to special conditions as he might have been approved of. In contrast to the first Act, no ministerial approval was needed for acquiring these materials. The purchasing of acquisitions was implicitly subject to the granting and availability of funds. However, the Chief Archivist had no authority to permit any purchasing of acquisitions.⁵⁷⁰ As the definition of acquisitions was implied in the formal definition of “public archives”⁵⁷¹ it meant that access to this material was regulated on the same basis as for archives unless otherwise specified under the conditions under which it was acquired.⁵⁷²

Provision was made in the Act of 1953 and the subsequent regulations issued in 1958 for the disposal of “valueless records”. This provision applied to archives already in the public archives depots, as well as archives in all government offices under the provision of the Act. The specific role and responsibilities of the Chief Archivist in respect of the destruction of valueless records were to receive applications for the disposal of records from government offices, to assess the nature and contents of the archives via the disposal schedule submitted to him, and if needed to require further information from the office and/or even request specimens of records, documents or material to be submitted. He may also request the filing system used in the case of correspondence files. Once the archives had been destroyed under the authority of the AC a certificate of destruction had to be sent to the Chief Archivist. Finally, the Chief Archivist may, in consultation with the government office, make recommendations to the AC.⁵⁷³ This provision together with the legal obligation (on the government departments and offices) to regularly transfer archives thirty years and

⁵⁶⁹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

⁵⁷⁰ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 13:8, 13:10.

⁵⁷¹ Public archives mean “archives accumulated in any government office and any records, documents or other material of historical value acquired for or deposited in a public archives depot”. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 2.

⁵⁷² State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 13:10-11.

⁵⁷³ Government Notice No, 1276, 5 September 1958, *Government Gazette* No. 6105, 5 September 1958, pp. 19-20.

older can be considered as the “first measures which assigned specific regulating powers to the Archives Service as far as archives in offices of origin were concerned.”⁵⁷⁴ The Chief Archivist could also, with the approval of the Minister and after consultation with the AC, dispose of unsuitable or redundant archives.⁵⁷⁵ He could do this by way of donation, exchange, or otherwise to any library, museum, or other body. This would however be subject to the fact that the disposal is not contrary to the conditions to which such archives were deposited in a public archives depot.⁵⁷⁶

The Act of 1953 laid down the principles regarding access to public archives by members of the public. However, it also vested discretionary powers in the Chief Archivist like the 1922 Act to refuse access to archives on the grounds of the fragility of the archives or pending the classification, repair, or other treatment of the particular archives.⁵⁷⁷ In addition, the Chief Archivist may refuse access to any person convicted of wilful or negligent damages to archives, or convicted of illegal removal or destruction of archives. This refusal of access to public archives would be for a period as he deemed fit, subject to an appeal to the Minister.⁵⁷⁸ However, the Minister could direct the Chief Archivist to withhold access on the ground of public policy.⁵⁷⁹ In contrast to the first archives Act, the Chief Archivist was now obliged to submit an annual report on his activities to the Minister.⁵⁸⁰

An important change in the legislation was that the Minister responsible for the administration and implementation of the Archives Act was now the Minister of Education, Arts, and Science.⁵⁸¹ The government archives had resorted under the Minister of the Interior as was evident in the Public Archives Act of 1922, however, this changed in 1948 when the government archives became a division of the Department of Education, Arts and Science.⁵⁸² This can be seen as a step backward for the archive service as it took lower priority in the hierarchy of government departments, as well as a lower rank in the new department. However, according to J.H. Esterhuyse, it was a

⁵⁷⁴ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:12.

⁵⁷⁵ This would be archives in excess of or unsuitable to the requirements of any public archives depot. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁷⁶ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 6.

⁵⁷⁷ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 6.

⁵⁷⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 8.

⁵⁷⁹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 6.

⁵⁸⁰ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 6.

⁵⁸¹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 2.

⁵⁸² J.H. Davies. “The organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa”, *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 14.

meaningful event as he argued that the government now accepted the principle and view that archives are closely related to education and specifically higher education. Furthermore, in his opinion, the archive service would become an institution that would make a bigger and more authentic contribution to the spiritual enrichment of society.⁵⁸³

As indicated earlier, the most important addition to the new Act of 1953 was the inclusion of the archives of SWA. In the instance where the Act of 1953 vested certain powers in the Minister and where the archives of the territory (SWA) are concerned, the Administrator of SWA was responsible to execute the duties prescribed by the Act.⁵⁸⁴

The specific duties of the Minister, as laid down in different sections of the Act, were: to exercise overall control and direction of the activities of the Chief Archivist; to appoint an AC; in addition to the already existing archives depots, the Minister could establish new archives depots when he deemed it necessary; he could direct that any public archives be deposited in any other archives depot (in the Union and the territory of SWA) than that determined by the Act; he could, with the approval of the AC, approve the transfer of unsuitable or redundant archives to any other institution if it was recommended by the Chief Archivist; he could make arrangements to ensure the custody of public archives, and he was authorised to cause archives to be repaired, bound or otherwise dealt with as he deemed necessary. In regards to the accessibility of archives, the Minister could direct the Chief Archivist to withhold access to particular public archives on the ground of public policy; he had to consider appeals against the Chief Archivist's rulings to withhold access to archives and archives depots. Furthermore, the Minister could upon application by a member of the public authorise access to public archives which were otherwise not accessible to the general public. The Minister also had to receive and submit annual reports by the Chief Archivist and the AC relating to their activities to Parliament. Finally, the Minister had the power to

⁵⁸³ J.H. Esterhuysen, "Op pad na 'n eie nasionale argiefdiens", *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, p. 39.

⁵⁸⁴ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:7.

issue regulations⁵⁸⁵ under the provisions of the Act.⁵⁸⁶ When the powers assigned to the Minister are taken into consideration, besides the responsibility of the archives as a government department, he also had powers that verged on that of a professional archivist.

Provisions regarding the accessibility of public archives were recorded as part of the Archives Act of 1953 and not separately published in regulations as with the previous Act. The previous Act of 1922 regulated that public archives would be accessible to members of the public up to and including the year 1885, with every year after this date archives for a further complete period of one year would be made available. Thus, by 1953 archives up to and including 1916 were accessible according to the 1923 regulations.⁵⁸⁷ The Act of 1953 retained this principle in terms of which archives were made accessible for an additional year on an annual basis. In contrast to the previous Act, the Act of 1953 stipulated that all public archives dated before the 31st of May 1910 shall be accessible to the public wherein the previous Act archives were in effect open and accessible until 1916. This divergence in the new Act of 1953 curiously pushed back the open period for archives. It also provided that all archives in any public archives depot that are fifty years or more shall be available to the public, subject to regulations.⁵⁸⁸ The consequence of this stipulation meant that archives of 1911 would only be open for access by members of the public in 1961.⁵⁸⁹

The accessibility to archives in the SWA territory was for the first time regulated by formal legislation. The Act of 1953 stipulated that the archives of SWA were open and accessible before 1915, the de facto date of termination of German rule in the territory. This constituted another inconsistency in the Act as archives in the Union of SA were

⁵⁸⁵ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2-8; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 13:7-8.

⁵⁸⁶ The regulations dealt with: the appointment of members and meetings of the Archives Commission and its subsequent elected committees; the disposal of and destruction of ephemeral archives; the procedure of transfer of archives in government offices to a public archives depot; the accessibility of public archives by the public; tariffs of fees and payment for copies or extracts of records or research undertaken by archive personnel. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 8; Government Notice No. 1276, 5 September 1958, *Government Gazette* No. 6105, 5 September 1958, pp. 17-23; J.H. Davies, "The organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 15.

⁵⁸⁷ Government Notice No. 1195, 23 July 1923, *Government Gazette* No. 1334, 27 July 1923, p. 145.

⁵⁸⁸ These regulations were for example in so far as is otherwise provided in any law, or subject to the conditions of deposit in respect of an acquisition. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 6.

⁵⁸⁹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 6; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:11.

accessible up to 1910. This resulted in a constant disparity between the Union and SWA and would only be changed with the new Archives Act of 1962.⁵⁹⁰ The Minister had the authority to delegate any of the powers vested in him to the Secretary for Education, Arts, and Science. Similarly, the Administrator of the territory of SWA could delegate any of his powers to the Secretary for SWA.⁵⁹¹ The delegation of power was new to the Act and did not form part of the Act of 1922.

The Archives Act of 1953 made provision for an AC to be established by the Minister, similar to the Act of 1922. However, a more comprehensive formulation of the Commission's duties was stipulated in the Act of 1953 than what was published in regulations concerning the previous Act. The only substantive duty assigned to the Commission was the function to authorise the destruction of valueless records, documents, or other material. For the rest, the AC was only allowed to make recommendations.⁵⁹² The Archives Act of 1953 legally defined definite provisions regarding procedures concerning authorisation for the destruction of ephemeral archives or valueless records. The regulations of 1926 laid down alternate procedures of which one had fallen to disuse, and "[i]t was, therefore, necessary to state specifically in the new act that the power to authorise the destruction of records was vested in the AC."⁵⁹³ It is important to note that the provision contained in the new Act did not only apply to archives already transferred to public archives depots, but included archives of all government offices that were under the provision of the Act. Destruction of documents could only take place by the prescribed regulations and only after authorisation had been granted.⁵⁹⁴ A disposal committee appointed by the AC of which the Chief Archivist would serve as chairman was appointed for this purpose. However, in practice, it had a different implication. The AC (and all its committees for that matter) had no personnel assigned to it or a permanent office from which to conduct their duties and responsibilities. It fell to the Chief Archivist and his personnel

⁵⁹⁰ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 6; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:11.

⁵⁹¹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2-8.

⁵⁹² *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2, 4; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:12.

⁵⁹³ J.H. Davies. "The organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 15.

⁵⁹⁴ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 13:12-13.

to, for example, conduct investigations into applications for the destruction of records.⁵⁹⁵

Davies described the transfer of records to an archive depot, and the responsibility of appraising records as “extramural activities”,⁵⁹⁶ and rightfully so as it placed significant pressure on the archive service and its limited personnel force. By 1957 the various archive depots performed this task in addition to all their other responsibilities, but the work by then increased to such an extent that a whole separate section had to be established to manage the influx of applications and the work to be done. The Liaison Section (later renamed Record Management Section) was created in 1957 which took full-time responsibility for the appraisal of records to be archived or otherwise disposed of, but also to ensure that a good working relationship existed between the archives service and government departments and offices.⁵⁹⁷

The AC could make recommendations to the Minister regarding the publication of portions of public archives and the publication of other works based on historical research. This stipulation confirmed the tradition of publishing sources which was contemplated by all the early Archives Commissions since 1876.⁵⁹⁸ However, the new Act ascribed not just a recommendatory, but also a supervisory responsibility concerning the publication of sources as well as the publication of the *Archives Yearbook for South African History*.⁵⁹⁹ Furthermore, the Commission could make recommendations to the Minister on the acquisition of records, documents, and other material of historical value for the public archives. Finally, the Commission could advise the Minister on all matters concerning public archives.⁶⁰⁰

⁵⁹⁵ J.H. Snyman, “Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962”, *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, p. 17.

⁵⁹⁶ J.H. Davies, “The Government archives of South Africa and Record Management”, *SA Archive Journal* 3, 1961, p. 7.

⁵⁹⁷ J.H. Davies, “The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa”, *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 18.

⁵⁹⁸ A.J. Böeseken, “Kaapse Bronnepublikasies.'n Terugblik oor vyftig jaar”, *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 20-28; J.H. Snyman, “Archives Commission 1876-1877. Early beginnings”, *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 17.

⁵⁹⁹ The *Archives Yearbook for South African History* was first published in 1938. Publication was resumed in 1948 after the Second World War interrupted the publication. H.B. Thom, “Die Argiefjaarboek – Ontstaan en Vroegste jare”, *SA Archives Journal* 13, 1971, pp. 9-15.

⁶⁰⁰ *Government Gazette Extraordinary*, No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:12.

Similar to the Act of 1922,⁶⁰¹ the new Archives Act of 1953 stipulated that the Commission had the authority to appoint committee/s from amongst its members and could delegate some of its powers to the said committee/s as it deemed fit. In addition, the AC and any of its committee/s had the authority to appoint any person as an assessor member to serve on either the Commission or an appointed committee in an advisory capacity.⁶⁰² An example of such a committee with delegated power was the committee appointed to consider the applications received from government offices regarding the destruction of records⁶⁰³ as discussed above.

It was also specified in the Act of 1953 that the AC would submit an annual report on its activities and responsibilities to the Minister who would table this in Parliament. In effect the Chief Archivist submitted this report in addition to his own as the AC did not have any administrative personnel at its disposal and the Secretary of the Commission was invariably a staff member of the Archives Service.⁶⁰⁴

The members of the AC (1953-1955) were: Prof H.B. Thom (chairman), Dr C.G. Botha (retired Chief Archivist), Prof. S.P. Engelbrecht, Prof. A.F. Hattersley, Prof. D.W. Kruger, Prof. G.S. Nienaber, Prof. A.N. Pelzer, Dr H.M. Robertson, Dr G.D. Scholtz, Rt. Hon Mr Justice F.P. van den Heever, Senator C.A. van Niekerk, Dr C. Beyers (Chief Archivist), and two Chief Assistant Archivists.⁶⁰⁵ In 1954 the following members were appointed to the Commission: Dr A. Kieser was appointed Chief Archivist in the place of Dr C. Beyers,⁶⁰⁶ Mr J von S von Moltke (MP), and Mr H.R. Moffat.⁶⁰⁷ The AC appointed committees from amongst its members, thus the trend continued, as with most previous Archives Commissions, that its appointed members were predominantly male.

The Archives Act of 1953 made provision for matters that were not dealt with or left to obscurity in the previous Act. For the first time wilful and negligent damage to archives,

⁶⁰¹ Government Notice No. 1625, 28 September 1922, *Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

⁶⁰² *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

⁶⁰³ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4; J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, p. 17.

⁶⁰⁴ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:12.

⁶⁰⁵ Government Notice No. 2369, 17 October 1952, *Government Gazette* No. 4393, 17 October 1952, p. 40.

⁶⁰⁶ J.F. Preller, "Dr. Allen Kieser", *SA Archives Journal* 11, 1969, p. 15.

⁶⁰⁷ Government Notice No. 829, 30 April 1954, *Government Gazette* No. 5270, 30 April 1954, p. 62.

as well as the illegal removal and destruction of any document, record, or any kind of archival material or article of historical value was declared an offense. The offender, once convicted could be fined up to but not exceeding £100. The Chief Archivist had the authority to refuse such a person admission to a public archives depot for such a period as he deemed fit, subject to an appeal to the Minister.⁶⁰⁸ It is of interest to note that this regulation not only referred to archives already transferred to a public archives depot, but also applied to archives "required in due course to be deposited therein".⁶⁰⁹ This is in line with the extension of the authority of the Chief Archivist as discussed above.

Some organisational changes in this period occurred outside the scope of legislation that are of equal importance to the archive as an institution and to the history of women archivists in the archive service. In 1957 the Office of the Chief Archivist was created. The Chief Archivist formerly doubled the roles of Chief Archivist and head of the Transvaal Archives Depot, but since 1957 these roles were separated and the Chief Archivist was responsible for overall control only. It has been argued that this was the most far-reaching organisational change the Government Archives had seen since its formation.⁶¹⁰ This development was brought about by the growth of the archive service and the consequent increase in its activities. Related to this was the formation of the Liaison Section (later renamed the Record Management Section) also in 1957. Since its inception, this section interested itself in filing or correspondence systems and gradually more government offices made use of the service to approve their filing systems. Another important and highly specialised function of the Record Management Section (former Liaison Section) was to investigate applications from government offices for the destruction of records and to report on that to the AC.⁶¹¹

The first chief of the newly created Record Management Section was Joan H. Davies who served as its chief from 1957 to 1962.⁶¹² The first woman in South African archival history to head up a section in the archives service. Another important organisational change took place in 1957. The Publications Section of the archive was formed earlier

⁶⁰⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 8.

⁶⁰⁹ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 13:12-13.

⁶¹⁰ J.H. Davies, "The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 17.

⁶¹¹ J.H. Davies, "The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 17.

⁶¹² J.H. Mienie. "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, pp. 51-53.

in the 1950s, but since 1957 it formed part of the Office of the Chief Archivist. Here too in the dusty annals of history, another woman is to be found whose influence on the archive and historiography would be felt for many decades to come. Anna J. Böeseken would serve as the head of the State Archives Service Publication Section from 1961 to 1970.⁶¹³ Another event of importance in this period was the establishment of the SA Society of Archivists in 1959. It was created based on professionalism and as B. Conradie argues, largely succeeded in promoting professional standards.⁶¹⁴ One of the founding members was Joan Davies and she served as a member of the board for a couple of years.⁶¹⁵ However, the Society was ultimately an “old boys’ club” comprising only government archivists and the office bearers were almost exclusively government archives executives. The first female chairman was only elected in 1992.⁶¹⁶

⁶¹³ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseken (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003 pp. 19-30.

⁶¹⁴ B. Conradie, "Taking stock: South African Society of Archivists from the 1960s to beyond the millennium", *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists* 45, 2012, p. 86.

⁶¹⁵ J.H. Mienie, "Joan Hoskyn Davies", *Pretoriana Tydskrif van die Genootskap Oud-Pretoria* 52, 1966, pp. 41-45.

⁶¹⁶ B. Conradie, "Taking stock: South African Society of Archivists from the 1960s to beyond the millennium", *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists* 45, 2012, pp. 86, 89.

Chapter 5: Legislating archives 1962 to 1996

5.1. Introduction

As indicated, this chapter considers the two key pieces of legislation that were promulgated in the latter half of the twentieth century. Coincidentally, this also falls into the period when SA underwent a political transformation - first from Union and a member of the Commonwealth⁶¹⁷ to a Republic in 1961,⁶¹⁸ and second, from a Republic to a democratic dispensation in 1994.⁶¹⁹ The two pieces of legislation that are of relevance are the Archives Act No. 6 of 1962 and the National Archives of South Africa Act No. 43 of 1996. Again, the gendered construction of the archive is consistently apparent.

5.2 Archives Act No. 6 1962

The promulgation of the Archives Act of 1962 must be seen in a wider political context. In 1961 the country left the Commonwealth of which it was a member since 1931 and became the Republic of South Africa.⁶²⁰ Consequently, the Union Archives was renamed the Republic of South Africa Government Archives Service and later changed to Government Archives Service.⁶²¹ The Archives Act of 1962 repealed the Archives Act of 1953 in its entirety. The period from 1953 to the 1960s was characterised by a rapid pace of growth⁶²² and it became necessary to extend the scope of and amend the Act of 1953 to be able to meet the needs of the archival and record management development that had taken place.⁶²³ The purpose of the new Act of 1962 was to “provide for the custody, care, and control of archives in the Republic and the territory of South-West Africa”.⁶²⁴ The new Act was approved in February 1962 and came into effect on the 14th of May 1962.⁶²⁵

⁶¹⁷ R.P. Mahaffy, “The Statute of Westminster”, *Royal United Services Institution. Journal*, 78(510), 1933, pp. 353-368.

⁶¹⁸ R. Ross, *A concise history of South Africa*, p. 149.

⁶¹⁹ R. Ross, *A concise history of South Africa*, pp. 174-213.

⁶²⁰ S. Dubow, “The Commonwealth and South Africa: From Smuts to Mandela”, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45(2), 2017, pp. 284-314.

⁶²¹ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analysis of South Africa’s national archival system, 2014*, pp. 22, 24. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁶²² J.H. Esterhuyse, “Die ontwikkeling van die Republiek se Argiefdiens gedurende die afgelope vyftien jaar”, *SA Archives Journal* 11, 1969, p. 17.

⁶²³ *Debates in the House of Assembly (Hansard)*, Vol 2, 12 February 1962, p. 983.

⁶²⁴ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 3.

⁶²⁵ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 239, 11 May 1962, p. 1.

Even though it was a new piece of legislation amendments to the Act came soon after its promulgation. Amendments were made in 1964, and again in 1969, 1977, and 1979. The original Act consisted of 16 sections of which one contained the definitions, another section confirmed the short title of the new act, and the second last section dealt with the administration of the act in terms of the territory of SWA, and the last section repealed the Act of 1953. The remaining twelve sections dealt with matters similar to those of the previous two pieces of archival legislation, however, it also added some provisions and aspects that were entirely new to the South African archival context. At the time, the Archives Act of 1962 was regarded to be of an exceptionally high standard and served as a model for the archive legislation to be passed in the various homelands/national states.⁶²⁶

Regarding the organisational structure and pattern of the Archives Service, the new Act did not affect any change. It retained that which was established since the Union and confirmed by the Acts of 1922 and 1953, namely the centralised control of the archives which accommodated the decentralised provincial archive repositories. The responsibility for the control, care, and administration of the Act was assigned to the Minister of Education, Arts, and Science (similar to the 1953 Act), but since 1969 it was allocated to the Minister of National Education, when the name of the portfolio changed and was so amended in the Archives Amendment Act, 1969.⁶²⁷

The Act of 1962 brought some important new aspects with it. One was the change in title of the chief functionary from Chief Archivist, as designated in the previous two Acts, to the Director of Archives.⁶²⁸ This followed the general trend worldwide.⁶²⁹ The specific duties of the Director will be discussed below. Another important aspect was the archives of local authorities (also applicable to SWA) were placed under the control and custody of the Archives Service for the first time.⁶³⁰ The term “local authority” as used in the Act comprised municipal institutions, divisional councils, and other local institutions with similar powers and functions. It also included institutions responsible for national health in specific areas.⁶³¹ Yet another important aspect was the extension

⁶²⁶ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:14. National states or homelands refer to areas designated by the apartheid government to so-called tribal groupings.

⁶²⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 2414, 28 May 1969, p. 2.

⁶²⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 3.

⁶²⁹ *Debates in the House of Assembly (Hansard)*, Vol 2, 12 February 1962, p. 985.

⁶³⁰ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 3.

⁶³¹ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:16.

of powers of the Director of Archives to include archives still in the custody of government offices of origin and the authority he had to perform inspections.⁶³² The above-mentioned, along with the fact that certain record management functions, for example, the use of filing systems were subject to the approval of the Director and gave the SAS unrestricted authority over active (or open) records of the state. These powers over state records “were amongst the most extensive of any national archive service in the world”.⁶³³ Under previous acts, the Chief Archivist only had an advisory function. This ensured among others a uniform policy over all levels of government regarding archival duties and the accessibility of records. The aspect of accessibility of records to the public was provided for in the new Act, but under new stipulations. Archival records would no longer be made available on an annual basis as per the previous Act of 1953, but in five-yearly periods. The principal Act of 1962 maintained a closed period of almost 50 years, but subsequently this was changed in 1979 to 30 years. Access to archives by the public was perceived as a privilege⁶³⁴ and was strictly regulated and could be restricted or denied by the Minister on the grounds of “public policy”, and/or by the Director due to the fragile condition of records or pending their classification or repair. Archives in the custody of the archives depot of the South African Defence Force (SADF) were closed and could only be consulted with the approval of the Minister of Education, in consultation with the Minister of Defence.⁶³⁵

Provisions made in previous archival legislation concerning archive depots were retained in the original principal Archives Act of 1962. Archive depots at the seat of government, at the seat of each provincial administration as well as at the seat of administration of SWA, were thus maintained. The Act of 1962 brought another important aspect with it by providing for the establishment of intermediate depots for

⁶³² *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, pp. 3, 5; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:14.

⁶³³ TRC Report Volume 1, p. 208. DOJ&CD, n.d./2022, <<https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%201.pdf>>, access: 17 August 2022.

⁶³⁴ TRC Report Volume 1, p. 207. DOJ&CD, n.d./2022, <<https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%201.pdf>>, access: 17 August 2022.

⁶³⁵ *Government Gazette* No. 6393, 5 April 1979, p. 6; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 13:24-25.

the temporary custody⁶³⁶ of records, as the Minister may approve. An important amendment to the Act was made in 1969 concerning the provision that an archives depot had to be established in a specific geographical area. This amendment gave the Minister, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, the power to establish an archives depot anywhere he determined, similar to his power concerning the intermediate depots. Since the passing of the 1962 Act, an archives depot for the SADF was established in 1967, and intermediate depots were established in Umtata (1963), Pretoria (1968), Cape Town (1972), Johannesburg (1985) and Port Elizabeth (1986).⁶³⁷

The establishment of the possibility to extend the application of the Act to include statutory bodies was brought about in the 1977 Amendment Act. The definition of “government office” as it appears in the principal Act of 1962 constitutes any office of the Government of the Republic including the South African Railways and Harbours Administration and the provincial administrations.⁶³⁸ However, the amendment as stated above made it possible for the Act to be applied to statutory bodies which meant “any board, fund, institution, company, corporation or other organization established or constituted by or under any law”.⁶³⁹ The Act as amended gave the Minister the power, in consultation with the Minister of Finance, on the application of such a body, to declare it a government office.⁶⁴⁰ In 1982, for example, MEDUNSA⁶⁴¹ was declared a government office for the purpose of the 1962 Act.⁶⁴²

Although the Act of 1962 as amended does not mention the homelands or national states and their archival development, it is important to consider these for the sake of a fuller picture of the archives service and its role. The apartheid government made provision for separate homelands (later national states) to be developed for “black

⁶³⁶ Intermediate depots were established to hold records which were no longer required by the office of origin but also which did not yet qualify to be transferred to an archive repository or be disposed of. In this way it was intended to save money because the office of origin would have to rent extra space to keep these records in office. Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analysis of South Africa's national archival system, 2014*, p. 22. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021; *Debates in the House of Assembly* (Hansard), Volume 2, 12 February 1962, p. 984.

⁶³⁷ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:15.

⁶³⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 3.

⁶³⁹ *Government Gazette* No. 5526, 27 April 1977, p. 2.

⁶⁴⁰ *Government Gazette* No. 5526, 27 April 1977, p. 2.

⁶⁴¹ Medical University of South Africa.

⁶⁴² N. Olivier, "The Archives Act in South Africa and Namibia - A critical comparison", *Historia* 38(1), 1993, p. 27.

indigenous groups” in SA. According to the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act of 1971, all legislation of the Republic of SA would apply to the homelands until they passed their own laws. This meant that the Archives Act of 1962 applied to these areas and the Government Archives Service was responsible to deliver an archival service⁶⁴³ until the homelands enacted their own archival legislation.⁶⁴⁴ This included record management functions regarding the creation and approval of filing systems and disposal plans that needed to be created and implemented, as well as archival personnel that needed to be trained. By the end of the twentieth century, only rudimentary archival services were implemented in eight of the ten homelands and these were totally inadequate regarding resources and quality.⁶⁴⁵

Another aspect not addressed in the Act of 1962 as amended was the National Film Archive. The National Film Board was established in 1964 and the National Film Archive was an integral part of it.⁶⁴⁶ By the late 1970s, the National Film Board ceased to exist and a decision on the future of the National Film Archive had to be made. A departmental committee consisting of members of the government archive service and the Department of National Education recommended that the National Film Archive falls under the SAS from 1 April 1982.⁶⁴⁷ This was seen as a milestone for the SAS as it widened its scope of archives and included not only paper records but now also films and videos. The Film Archive had in its possession as part of various collections photos, negatives, screenplays, posters, sheet music, and various artefacts, for example, old cameras and gramophones. The primary function of the Film Archive was to locate, restore, preserve and the making available of film media.⁶⁴⁸ In 1985 the name changed to the National Film, Video and Sound Archives.⁶⁴⁹ All of this development took place long after the principal Act of 1962 was promulgated, and it

⁶⁴³ See for instance: “Exchanging of notes relating to the institution and maintenance of an archival service”, *Government Gazette* No. 5823, 6 December 1977, p. 106.

⁶⁴⁴ Kangwane promulgated its archive act in 1980: Archives Act, 1980 (Act No.6 of 1980). *Government Gazette* No. 15813, 17 June 1994, p. 48.

⁶⁴⁵ D.J.J. Smith, "Argiefadministrasie in Bantoetuislande", *SA Archives Journal* 14, 1972, pp. 47-49; L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 37, 40.

⁶⁴⁶ Anon, n.d., <<http://www.national.archives.gov.za>>, access: March 2020.

⁶⁴⁷ J.H. Snyman, "Die Nasionale Filmargief", *SA Archives Journal* 24, 1982, p. 33.

⁶⁴⁸ J.H. Snyman, "Die Nasionale Filmargief", *SA Archives Journal* 24, 1982, p. 34.

⁶⁴⁹ Anon, n.d., <<http://www.national.archives.gov.za>>, access: March 2020.

would only be with the legislation of 1996 that reference would be made to include this type of record and media.

A change to the archival organisation was enacted in the late 1970s which was brought about by various political factors⁶⁵⁰ as a result of the projected independence of the territory of SWA.⁶⁵¹ The Archives Act of 1962, like the previous Act, applied to SWA as it made provision for the control, custody, and administration of the archives of the territory including the area known as the Eastern Caprivi Zipfel.⁶⁵² However, in 1979 the control and custody of the SWA archives were transferred to the South-West Africa Administration⁶⁵³ which brought an end to almost three decades of South African archival administration and influence in the area. The South West African Legislative and Authority Proclamation made by the South African State President on 17 June 1985 brought a measure of self-government to the territory of South-West Africa. This paved the road for the first archival legislation to be passed in South-West Africa, namely the South-West African Archives Act 62 of 1987 which was promulgated on 22 April 1987.⁶⁵⁴

Dr Allan Kieser acted as Chief Archivist in SA from 1953 (and from 1962 as the Director of Archives) until his retirement in 1969. He was responsible for the drafting of the bill which was promulgated as the Archives Act of 1962. It was emphatically stated by one of his colleagues that “[d]ie wet is sy werk – syne alleen ...” (this act is *his* work and *his* alone).⁶⁵⁵ The Director of Archives, as per the previous Acts, had to perform his functions under the directions of the Minister. His duties were fairly similar to those described in the previous Acts, but with a few minor changes. Overall the Director was responsible for the custody, care, and control of archives and accessions, and the Act of 1962 assigned to him a duty of inspection regarding archives and accessions. An important change was brought about in 1979 as the Amendment Act assigned the function of authorising the destruction of archives to the Director where previously it

⁶⁵⁰ K. du Pisani, “B.J. Vorster en afsonderlike ontwikkeling”, in F. Pretorius (ed.). *Geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika. Van voortye tot vandag*, pp. 358-359.

⁶⁵¹ Anon, n.d., <http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/SOUTH_AFRICA_1977_E.PDF>, access: 11 February 2022.

⁶⁵² *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 11.

⁶⁵³ M. Olivier, “Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa”, *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 6.

⁶⁵⁴ S.M. Cleary, “A Bill of Rights as a normative instrument: South West Africa/Namibia 1975-1988”, *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*, 21(3), Nov 1988, p. 292; N. Olivier, “The Archives Act in South Africa and Namibia - A critical comparison”, *Historia* 38(1), 1993, p. 35.

⁶⁵⁵ J.F. Preller, “Dr. Allen Kieser”, *SA Archives Journal* 11, 1969, p. 15. My emphasis and my translation.

was the responsibility of the AC. The Director would serve in an advisory capacity to a head of a government or local authority office concerning the custody, care, and filing of archives or such documents and records. He could, with the approval of the AC, publish or authorise the publication of archives and accessions or original sources. With the approval of the Minister, the Director could, by donation, exchange, or otherwise dispose of any archives or accessions in an archive depot or an intermediate; he could do research into archives or accessions and make copies thereof or extracts there from against payment of a fee determined by the Minister. The Director was granted the authority to approve filing systems of government offices and local authorities and he could determine and approve microfilm projects.⁶⁵⁶ The Act of 1962 stipulated that “the director shall perform such other duties in connection with archives and accessions as the Minister may direct”.⁶⁵⁷ The control over the transfer of archives to depots was divided between the Minister and the Director. The Director could defer transfer until such time as he deemed fit; he could grant permission that archives less than 30 years old may be transferred, and he could instruct to transfer any archives to an intermediate depot. The Director could also acquire any documents or records which in his opinion have or may have historical value, subject to conditions and terms (if any), and deposit them in an archive depot. This too applied to archives and records in SWA (up to 1979). The Director could also transfer any archives or accessions temporarily from one archive repository to another. However, the temporary transfer of archives or accessions from SWA to the Republic was not allowed without the permission of the Minister.⁶⁵⁸ The Director could again refuse access to archives or accessions on the ground of the fragility of documents, pending the classification, repair, or other treatment thereof. His decision could be taken on appeal to the Minister. Not unlike the previous legislation, the Director also had to submit an annual report to the Minister on his activities as well as those of the AC.⁶⁵⁹ Directors of Archive who served during the period 1962 to 1996 were: Dr A. Kieser (1953-1969),⁶⁶⁰ Dr J.H. Esterhuysen (1969-1977),⁶⁶¹ Mr J.F. Preller (1977-

⁶⁵⁶ *Government Gazette* No. 6393, 5 April 1979, pp. 2-8.

⁶⁵⁷ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, pp. 3, 5; *Government Gazette*, No. 6393, 5 April 1979, p. 4; N. Olivier, "The Archives Act in South Africa and Namibia - A critical comparison", *Historia* 38(1), 1993, pp. 29-30.

⁶⁵⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 6393, 5 April 1979, p. 6.

⁶⁵⁹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, pp. 7, 9; N. Olivier, "The Archives Act in South Africa and Namibia - A critical comparison", *Historia* 38(1), 1993, p. 30.

⁶⁶⁰ J.F. Preller, "Dr. Allen Kieser", *SA Archives Journal* 11, 1969, pp. 13-15.

⁶⁶¹ D.J.J. Smith, "Dr J.H. Esterhuysen", *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, pp. 43-44.

1985),⁶⁶² Dr J.H. Snyman (1986-1992),⁶⁶³ Dr J.H. Cilliers (1992-1993),⁶⁶⁴ Mr F. Nel (Acting Director 1993-1994)⁶⁶⁵ and Ms M. Olivier (Acting Director 1994-1996).⁶⁶⁶

The Minister of Education, Arts and Science⁶⁶⁷ was charged with control over the custody and care of archives and accessions. The Director of Archives, in his function, was subject to the directions of the Minister. The power and authority ascribed to the Minister were wide-ranging: he appointed the Director of Archives and could direct the Director of Archives to perform duties regarding archives and accessions that are not explicitly listed in the Act; he appointed members as well as the chairman of the AC, and the Commission made recommendations to the Minister and not the Director of Archives. The Minister determined the allowances of the members of the AC. The Minister's assigned powers also included: the disposal of archives and accessions only with his approval; the determination of archives and intermediate depots; specific powers regarding the granting of permission for the non-transfer and re-transfer of archives; withholding access to archives and accessions on the ground of public policy; the power to hear an appeal against a decision of the Director regarding the refusal of access to archives or accessions. The Minister may also on an application in his discretion authorise access to archives or accessions that were normally not accessible in terms of the 1962 Act. If a government office or an office of a local authority decided that access to archives be given, the Minister could subject such authorisation to his directions. The concurrence of the Minister, as well as the Minister of Defence, was also a prerequisite for access to the archives relating to the SADF. Reports needed to be submitted by the Director annually to the Minister who had to table them in Parliament. The Minister was also empowered to make regulations pertaining to: the inspection by the Director of Archives and accessions; the meetings of the commission and committee/s thereof; the transfer of archives from government offices or the offices of local authorities to archives depots or intermediate depots; the

⁶⁶² M.H. Buys, "Johann F. Preller Die nuwe Direkteur van die Staatsargief", *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, pp. 46-48.

⁶⁶³ J.H. Cilliers, "Dr. J.H. Snyman: Nuwe Direkteur van argiewe", *SA Archives Journal* 28, 1986, pp. 59-61.

⁶⁶⁴ A. Nel, "Uittredende en intredende voorsitters van die Vereniging", *SA Archives Journal* 34, 1992, p. 4.

⁶⁶⁵ National Archives and Records Service of South Africa (NARSSA) ARH File M17/2/2 Vol 4, Letter from M. Olivier dated 01 September 1994, p. 1.

⁶⁶⁶ NARSSA ARH File M17/2/2 Vol 5, Inligting oor SA Argiefwese. Besoeke van argivarisse anders as Staatsargiefdienspersoneel. Letter from C. Kirkwood to Dr Cook dated 30 September 1994, p. 1.

⁶⁶⁷ Since 1969 the Minister of National Education. J.H. Esterhuyse, "Op pad na 'n eie Nasionale Argiefdiens", *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, p. 39.

admission of the public to archives depots and intermediate depots, and government offices and offices of local authorities in which archives are kept, and the use of equipment for the making of copies of or extracts from any archives or accessions; the manner in which archives and accessions shall be handled by persons making use of them; and generally, the effective administration of this Act.⁶⁶⁸

The Minister may delegate powers, duties, or functions to the Director of Archives. As per the previous Act of 1953, the Minister could only delegate certain functions to the head of the controlling department.⁶⁶⁹ Ministers responsible for the archive portfolio appointed during the period 1953 to 1994 were: J.H. Viljoen (1953-1958),⁶⁷⁰ J.J. Serfontein (1958-1961),⁶⁷¹ J. de Klerk (1961-1969),⁶⁷² J.P. van der Spuy (1969-1976),⁶⁷³ P.G.J. Koornhof (1976-1978),⁶⁷⁴ W. Cruywagen (1978-1979),⁶⁷⁵ T.N.H. Janson (1979-1980),⁶⁷⁶ G. Viljoen (1980-1984),⁶⁷⁷ F.W de Klerk (1984-1989),⁶⁷⁸ G. Louw (1989-1990),⁶⁷⁹ L. Pienaar (1990-1992),⁶⁸⁰ and P. Marais (1992-1994).⁶⁸¹

The Act of 1962 provided for the Minister to appoint an AC consisting of at least seven people, and to designate one of the members as chairman. The Act ascribed the following functions to the Commission: to make recommendations to the Minister regarding accessions, and matters generally affecting archives; to grant or refuse approval for the destruction of archives or accessions; and lastly to grant or refuse

⁶⁶⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 9; *Government Gazette* No. 6393, 5 April 1979, p. 6.

⁶⁶⁹ *Government Gazette* No. 6393, 5 April 1979, p. 8; State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 13:26-27.

⁶⁷⁰ C.J. Beyers (ed.), *Dictionary of South African Biography Vol IV*, pp. 743-744.

⁶⁷¹ C.J. Beyers (ed.), *Dictionary of South African Biography Vol IV*, pp. 558-559.

⁶⁷² Inventory of personal papers kept at the University of the Free State: PV 35. Anon, n.d., <<https://www.ufs.ac.za/library/libraries-divisions/archive-for-contemporary-affairs-home/collections/political-collection#D>>, access: June 2022.

⁶⁷³ Inventory of personal papers kept at the University of the Free State: PV 871. Anon, n.d., <<https://www.ufs.ac.za/library/libraries-divisions/archive-for-contemporary-affairs-home/collections/political-collection#V>>, access: June 2022.

⁶⁷⁴ Inventory of personal papers kept at the University of the Free State: PV 476. Anon, n.d., <<https://www.ufs.ac.za/library/libraries-divisions/archive-for-contemporary-affairs-home/collections/political-collection#K>>, access: June 2022.

⁶⁷⁵ H. Zille, "Teachers' pay: R10m bungle", *Rand Daily Mail*, 26 May 1979, p. 1.

⁶⁷⁶ P.R. Coates, *The South African Library as a State-aided national library in the era of apartheid: an administrative history*, pp. 146, 158 footnote 20.

⁶⁷⁷ P. Kenny & A. Viljoen, "White man's hope – black man's burden", *Rand Daily Mail*, 1 October 1980, p. 9.

⁶⁷⁸ V. Granger, "Grounds for bitterness!", *Sunday Times*, 26 February 1984, p. 29.

⁶⁷⁹ K. Swart, "Cautious optimism over plans for open schools", *Sunday Times Extra*, 20 May 1990, p. 39.

⁶⁸⁰ L. Venter, "Cabinet post for Louis Pienaar in FW shuffle," *Sunday Times*, 11 November 1990, p. 1.

⁶⁸¹ K. Owen, "Cleverness is fine, but where's the leadership?," *Sunday Times*, 23 February 1992, p. 18.

approval for the publication of any archives, accessions or original sources or any other work based on a study of any archives, accessions or such sources.⁶⁸² In 1979 the function of the approval of the destruction of archives and accessions was removed from the Commission and assigned to the Director of Archives. The AC fulfilled thus a mainly advisory function to the Minister and not the Director of Archives. The previous Act (1953) provided a supervisory function to the AC regarding the publication of archivalia and theses. With the Act of 1962, this fell away, however, the Director of Archives had to obtain the permission of the Commission to still publish the material.⁶⁸³

There was a total of 19 members who served on the AC during this period: Prof. S.P. Engelbrecht (chairman), Prof. Dr A.F. Hattersley, the hon. Dr C.G. Hall, Mr L.W. Hiemstra, Dr A. Kieser, Prof. Dr D.W. Kruger, Prof. Dr G.S. Nienaber, Dr J.J. Oberholster, Prof. Dr A.N. Pelsler [sic], Mr J.F. Preller, Prof. Dr H.M. Robertson, Dr G.D. Scholtz, Commandant C.A. van Niekerk, Prof. Dr J. du P. Scholtz, Mr D.J.C. Steyn (chairman of the Public Service Commission), Prof. Dr H.J.J.M. van der Merwe, Prof. Dr P.J. van der Merwe, Mr J van S. von Moltke, M.P., Mr J.J. van Zyl.⁶⁸⁴

Although the Act of 1962 can be described as the most comprehensive of the three pieces of legislation, it had shortcomings. The most obvious was the fact that the Act was enshrined in political control rather than professional or administrative control. The decision-making power rested with the political structure as the Act vested vast powers in the Minister. The Director of Archives, the top archival professional position, was excluded from authority in terms of the Act and so was the administrative hierarchy, as delegation in the Act of 1962 was only provided for between the Minister and the Director.⁶⁸⁵ The Director was limited and handicapped in what he was able to do as a professional archivist.⁶⁸⁶

The political manipulation of the Act and the seeking of loopholes to challenge the validity of the Act were evident from early on. Shortly after the Act was passed it was

⁶⁸² *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 5.

⁶⁸³ State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, pp. 13:25-26.

⁶⁸⁴ *Debates in the House of Assembly (Hansard)*, Vol 2, 13 February 1962, p. 1023.

⁶⁸⁵ B. Lau, "Archives services in changing societies in Southern Africa: Namibia", *SA Archives Journal* 35, 1993, p. 47.

⁶⁸⁶ N. Olivier, "The Archives Act in South Africa and Namibia - A critical comparison", *Historia* 38(1), 1993, pp. 33-34.

challenged from various quarters.⁶⁸⁷ These challenges cut to the very heart of archives, namely what is considered to be archives. In the Act of 1962, the term was defined as:

‘archives’ means any documents or records received or created in a government office or an office of a local authority during the conduct of affairs in such office and which are *from their nature* [my emphasis] or in terms of any other law not required then to be dealt with otherwise than in accordance with or in terms of the provisions of this Act.⁶⁸⁸

The definition was perhaps the most clearly defined of the legislation up to that point, nevertheless, the Department of Justice challenged the Act by arguing that records kept by magistrates were “from their nature” not subject to the Act. Similarly, a public service inspector argued that current or active records of government bodies were excluded from the operation of the Act “from their nature”. However, these arguments were rejected by state legal opinions and confirmed that the Act applied to all government records from their creation or acquisition.⁶⁸⁹ The compilers of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of SA Report argued that even though the challenges were unsuccessful it exposed the susceptibility of the Act to conflicting interpretations of the definition of archives and specifically the phrase “from their nature”. The compilers further pointed out that in a speech in 1962 the Minister of Education, Arts and Science “indicated that the words (“from their nature”) were designed to accommodate the management of secret records.”⁶⁹⁰ This was a loophole that would, later on, be exploited by state bodies to avoid the constraints and limitations imposed by the Archives Act, and ultimately led to the destruction of records under guidelines issued by the Prime Minister.⁶⁹¹

⁶⁸⁷ TRC Report Volume 1, pp. 209-210. DOJ&CD, n.d./2022, <<https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%201.pdf>>, access: 17 August 2022.

⁶⁸⁸ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 3. My emphasis.

⁶⁸⁹ TRC Report Volume 1, pp. 209-210. DOJ&CD, n.d./2022, <<https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%201.pdf>>, access: 17 August 2022.

⁶⁹⁰ TRC Report Volume 1, pp. 209-210. DOJ&CD, n.d./2022, <<https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%201.pdf>>, access: 17 August 2022.

⁶⁹¹ TRC Report Volume 1, pp. 209-210. DOJ&CD, n.d./2022, <<https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/report/finalreport/Volume%201.pdf>>, access: 17 August 2022.

The access to archival records by members of the public as provided for in the Act of 1962 serves as an example of the power the Minister held. According to the 1962 Act, the Minister could withhold access to archives on the ground of “public policy”. The term “public policy” was not defined in the context of the Act itself or in subsequent amendments or in regulations published. The Minister could therefore restrict or deny access arbitrarily⁶⁹² as was evident during the state of emergency in the 1980s. L. Callinicos and A. Odendaal, convenors of the sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG), argued that pressure for such abnormal closure or restricting of archives came from outside the archives service without the consensus of professional archivists.⁶⁹³

The Act of 1962 stipulated that the Director of Archives may acquire documents or records which have or may acquire any historical value and is perceived as one of the more important functions of the archivist. Some of the private collections in the archive repositories which were acquired up to the mid-1970s include: J.B.M. Hertzog, J.C. Smuts, J.G. Strijdom, Harm Oost, N.C. Havenga, Thomas Boydell, F.H.P. Creswell, F.S. Malan, Richard Southey, Sir Benjamin D’Urban, Gustav Preller, P.J. Joubert, S.P. Engelbrecht, J.H. de la Rey, President M.T. Steyn, Abraham Fischer, Shepstone, Fynn, Colenso collections.⁶⁹⁴ Other private collections, such as the Cory, D.F. Malan, John X. Merriman and the J.H. Hofmeyr are preserved in various South African libraries.⁶⁹⁵ From the list above it is obvious that the collections acquired were predominantly from white males who featured in some way in South African politics. During the debate on the Archive Act of 1962 mention was made of personal documents, manuscripts, and letters of “*prominent literary men* of the past, prose writers and poets who ought to have a place in the archives”. The argument was made that not enough was being done to collect and acquire collections of “*prominent ... men*”.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁹² V. Harris & C. Merrett, "Toward a culture of transparency: Public rights of access to official records in South Africa", *The American Archivist* 57(4), 1994, p. 688.

⁶⁹³ L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 41.

⁶⁹⁴ W.B. van der Vyver, "Onder die soeklig. Privaat-versamelings: Erns of statussimbool?", *SA Archives Journal* 16, 1974, pp. 34-41.

⁶⁹⁵ W.B. van der Vyver, "Onder die soeklig. Privaat-versamelings: Erns of statussimbool?", *SA Archives Journal* 16, 1974, pp. 34-41.

⁶⁹⁶ *Debates in the House of Assembly (Hansard)*, Vol 2, 13 February 1962, p. 1022. My emphasis.

Another function of the archivist worth mentioning and of concern is appraisal. This function involves the assessment of a group of documents to determine what is worthy of preservation because of their archival value and what can be disposed of.⁶⁹⁷ This process up to the latter part of the twentieth century was highly Eurocentric and valuable material relating to the social history of black South Africans has been neglected and lost “because of ideologically informed decisions in the past.”⁶⁹⁸

The aspects mentioned above, namely the political power the Minister had regarding for example the access to archives; the rudimentary and neglected archives of the homelands; the fact that an archival function such as acquisition led to the collection and preservation of private collections of predominantly white males; and that the appraisal of documents and records caused the destruction of valuable material of black people’s experience points to the fact that the SAS was as much a product of its time as it was shaped and influenced by the ideology of the government of the day. Callinicos and Odendaal are of the opinion that:

[a]partheid in particular, grossly distorted the acquisition of records, access to records, the destruction of records and the administrative structures for the management of archives. Indeed, archives were part of the broader system which negated the experiences of black South Africans.⁶⁹⁹

The list above of private collections does not include collections of any woman or any person of colour. This does not negate the fact that they do exist. However, it elucidates the serious “memory loss” and gaps in the current archive and in the shared history of our people and country. This Act is again implicitly written in the male dominated format. Moreover, archival committees and commissions - listed at length above – are male dominated.

The Act of 1962 as amended became dated and was under review for some time. The early 1990s proved to be an appropriate time for an overhaul of SA archival legislation

⁶⁹⁷ V. Harris, *Exploring archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. 20.

⁶⁹⁸ L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 35.

⁶⁹⁹ L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 35.

as SA found itself politically in a new democratic dispensation. The scope of the archival legislation and the various structures and functions thereof were informed by the new democratic Constitution. It provided the opportunity to unify a fragmented organisation⁷⁰⁰ and to bring national unity as proposed in the Constitution closer to the citizens, namely to provide for a national archive service that would not only serve the purposes of the state, but serve SA and all its people.

5.3 National Archives Act No. 43 1996⁷⁰¹

Events in the latter part of the twentieth century are of significance to the South African archival development and must be considered in the context of its time. As SA entered a new political dispensation in the early 1990s the archival legislation promulgated in 1996 reflected the socio-political changes that took place. As the 1953 and 1962 pieces of archival legislation were moulded by and mirrored the government's apartheid policy, as could be seen in the establishment of separate archival structures and legislation in the so-called self-governing homelands,⁷⁰² and the collection of non-public records of the predominantly white population,⁷⁰³ so too the Act of 1996 echoed the values of the young democratic government, namely an open democratic society emphasising values such as equality, accountability, and transparency, which formed the core of the new legislation. The Act of 1996 ushered in a new era for the South African public archives as it provided a framework for a new archival system and brought an important change to the archival organisational structure⁷⁰⁴ which was in place since 1922. This section will consider aspects and events leading up to and which influenced the formulation of the 1996 Archives Act and will also analyse the provisions made in the Act and the regulations as published by the Minister.

The three preceding pieces of archival legislation were largely the work of the Chief Archivists, namely Botha, Beyers, and Kieser as discussed in the preceding chapter

⁷⁰⁰ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 6.

⁷⁰¹ The short title was amended in 2001 to read and is known as the "National Archives and Record Service of South Africa Act, 1996", *Government Gazette* No. 22911, 7 December 2001, p. 14.

⁷⁰² D.J.J. Smith, "Argiefadministrasie in Bantoetuislande", *SA Archives Journal* 14, 1972, pp. 47-49; L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 37, 40.

⁷⁰³ W.B. van der Vyver, "Onder die soeklig. Privaat-versamelings: Erns of statussimbool?", *SA Archives Journal* 16, 1974, pp. 34-41.

⁷⁰⁴ V. Harris, *Exploring archives: An Introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. v.

and the section above. In stark contrast to that, the new Act of 1996 was the product of a process of wide consultation with different stakeholders, experts, and activists over a period of almost four years. As early as 1992 the Commission for Museums, Monuments and Heraldry (CMMH) of the African National Congress (ANC, not elected to government yet) held a workshop intending to develop policies in the broad heritage field. The result was the appointment of an archives sub-committee of the CMMH with the duty to report on the state of management of archives; formulate a draft policy document on archives; formulate guidelines with regards to interim measures to be taken, and; finally make recommendations as regards to the transformation and democratisation of the archive.⁷⁰⁵ The CMMH's report and subsequent recommendations were echoed in the report on archives prepared by Callinicos and Odendaal for ACTAG.⁷⁰⁶ In 1994 the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology appointed the ACTAG to make recommendations on an arts and culture policy in line with the country's new democratic constitution. In view of this, the ACTAG Heritage Sub-committee was established to consider the matter of archives and prepare sector-specific recommendations. Even though ACTAG held public hearings across the country and convened a national conference to discuss and adopt recommendations, the opinion of those in the public archive service on the report published in July 1995⁷⁰⁷ was that it was "deeply flawed".⁷⁰⁸ The Heritage Sub-committee did not include a representative of the archival profession, and it was evident that the submissions and recommendations put forward by public archivists and SASA during meetings with the ACTAG Sub-committee, were blatantly ignored.⁷⁰⁹ One of the major shortcomings was the fact that the record management function of the SAS and the function's implication for efficient and transparent government administration were totally ignored. The report, it was further argued, presented "a fundamentally warped view of what a public

⁷⁰⁵ G. Dominy, "Archives in a democratic South Africa: The proposals of the ANC: An evaluation", *SA Archives Journal* 35, 1993, pp. 68-69.

⁷⁰⁶ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, p. 28. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷⁰⁷ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, p. 29. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷⁰⁸ V. Harris, "Editorial. Getting our ACTAG together: Musings on the challenges facing South African archivists, with special reference to the Arts and Culture Task Group's (ACTAG) report on heritage", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 2.

⁷⁰⁹ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, p. 29. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

archives service is".⁷¹⁰ It was significant (but maybe not that surprising) that the 1996 White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage, informed by the above-mentioned ACTAG report, failed to address the matter of archives.⁷¹¹

Simultaneously in 1994, Dr Ben Ngubane, Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, established the Council of Culture Ministers along with a Technical Committee for Culture to advise the Council. The SAS was represented by the acting Director of Archives, Marie Olivier, and from the outset, it was the SAS's position on both the Council and Technical Committee that consultation and participation on a broad scale were essential for the immediate and future planning regarding archival services. The Consultative Forum for Archival Management and Legislation (the Forum), established in 1995, was the result of a process of negotiation with the Minister, the Council, and the Technical Committee. The Forum which was to be managed by the SAS was mandated to negotiate the future management of public archives services and to draft new archival legislation. Participants in the Forum included professional archivists from national and provincial archives, representatives from ACTAG (national and provincial), professional associations (including associations of users of archives), as well as the Chairperson of the National Assembly's Portfolio Committee on Arts and Culture.⁷¹² A Working Committee for the Drafting of Archival Legislation was established and mandated amongst others to "investigate international archives legislation in order to determine guidelines with regard to scope, framework and content for the drafting of a new national archives act,⁷¹³ as well as guidelines for provincial archival legislation".⁷¹⁴ The ACTAG's special report on archives was received just in time by the Forum to be considered and at the

⁷¹⁰ V. Harris, "Editorial. Getting our ACTAG together: Musings on the challenges facing South African archivists, with special reference to the Arts and Culture Task Group's (ACTAG) report on heritage", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 2.

⁷¹¹ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, pp. 30-31. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷¹² M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, pp. 8-9; Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, p. 36. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷¹³ This is reminiscent of a similar situation C.G. Botha found himself in in the 1920s when he was instructed by the Minister of Interior to undertake a study tour of the archives in Europe, Britain and North America. His report not only foreshadowed the Public Archives Act of 1922 but laid down the lines on which the SA public archives service would develop. J.H. Davies, "The organisational development of the Government archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 9-12.

⁷¹⁴ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 9.

end of 1995, after seven months of intense endeavour, the Forum submitted the draft Bill and a draft set of Regulations to the Minister for consideration. The submission brought an end to the Forum's formal activities.⁷¹⁵

The draft Bill went through a series of revisions and approval before it was presented to the National Assembly's Portfolio Committee on Arts, Culture and Languages, Science and Technology in early 1996. Concerns were raised at this point that the Bill did not do enough and failed to obligate the National Archives to redress the archival imbalances of the past.⁷¹⁶ More concerns were raised by SASA when it became evident that certain functions of the AC as agreed upon by the Forum, drafted in the Bill, and endorsed by SASA, were changed by the Minister without any consultation.⁷¹⁷ Furthermore, the National Committee of SASA, gravely concerned and discomforted, wrote to the Minister concerning the omission of the matter of archives in the 1996 White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage.⁷¹⁸ To prevent further controversy the Portfolio Committee decided to put the Bill through a process of public debate in the form of public hearings where concerned parties also could make written submissions to the Committee. Archivists and members of the SASA participated in the hearings either in person or in written submissions to the Portfolio Committee.⁷¹⁹ In August 1996 the Portfolio Committee managed to secure consensus positions on disputed clauses of the Bill⁷²⁰ and on the 2nd of October 1996, President Mandela signed the National Archives of South Africa Act No. 43 of 1996 into law. This new Act came into effect on the 1st of January 1997⁷²¹ ushering in a new period of archival management and administration in SA.

⁷¹⁵ V. Harris, "Editorial. Transforming South African Archives: Discourse and delivery", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 1.

⁷¹⁶ V. Harris, "Editorial. Transforming South African Archives: Discourse and delivery", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 1.

⁷¹⁷ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, p. 37. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷¹⁸ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, pp. 30-31. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021. A White Paper is a more refined discussion document, and is a broad statement of government policy. (Anon, n.d., <<https://pmg.org.za/page/legislative-process>>, access: 7 June 2022.) Omitting archives from it did not bode well for the future of the soon to be National Archives of SA.

⁷¹⁹ See for example submissions made by SASA on various clauses of the draft Bill in: *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 110-122.

⁷²⁰ V. Harris, "Editorial. Transforming South African Archives: Discourse and delivery", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 1.

⁷²¹ C. de Wet, "Die nuwe Argiefwet van Suid-Afrika", *SA Archives Journal* 39, 1997, p. 44.

Since its inception in 1922, the archives department resorted under the Minister of the Interior.⁷²² However, in 1948 the year the National Party came to power in SA and after a Public Service Commission (PSC) inquiry, Cabinet concluded that “archives were by nature ‘educational and cultural material’”.⁷²³ The archive Acts of 1953 and 1962 placed the archives service under the Minister of Education, Arts and Science and since the late 1960s and early 1970s it fell under the Minister of National Education.⁷²⁴ In the new democratic political dispensation, the archives service found itself in familiar surroundings as it was placed (again) under the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. The justification for this is to be found in the departmentalisation models established by the PSC that classified archives as an aspect of culture.⁷²⁵ The findings of the PSC in the 1990s concurred with the principle of the Reconstruction and Development Programme initiated by the government that “the rediscovery of the nation’s historical heritage should be included in an arts and culture programme”.⁷²⁶

However, since the commencement of investigations into the state of archives in the early 1990s, there was not always agreement on the placement of public archives in the state hierarchy. The compilers of the ACTAG report indicated that the archives service has always been subordinate to other departments in government and that this low status of the SAS in the bureaucratic hierarchy enabled more powerful departments to defy the provisions made by the SAS. It was suggested that to function optimally and efficiently, the SAS (later the National Archives of SA) be granted independent agency with powers and functions in its own right and be directly answerable to Parliament. The writers of the report continued by stating that if this position is not achievable then the archives service needs to be positioned as close to the centre of government as possible and be granted full status to be able to enforce applicable legislation.⁷²⁷ However, an important point of critique and concern raised

⁷²² State Archives Service, *State Archives Service Handbook*, 1991, p. 13:2.

⁷²³ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa’s national archival system*, 2014, p. 21. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷²⁴ *Government Gazette* No. 2414, 28 May 1969, p. 2; J.H. Esterhuysen, "Op pad na 'n eie Nasionale Argiefdiens", *SA Archives Journal* 19, 1977, p. 39.

⁷²⁵ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 8.

⁷²⁶ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 8.

⁷²⁷ L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 41-44.

against the ACTAG report was the omission of the view held by many in the archival profession on the inappropriate placement of the archives service in “structures of government for ‘culture’”.⁷²⁸ The State of the Archive Report published in 2014 recounted that many of the archivists and record manager practitioners consulted agreed, namely that for the National Archives and Record Service of SA (NARSSA) to exercise its oversight function effectively a greater degree of autonomy is needed and that the NARSSA needed to be positioned in a more powerful department, for example, the Office of the Presidency.⁷²⁹

The debate on the positioning of archives in government is not new or unique to SA and is of concern to countries across the globe. There are two main arguments applicable, one argument places more emphasis on the administrative role of the archive over the historical and cultural, and would usually place national archives under the ministry of the interior; the second argument advocates that there are closer ties between archives, culture, and heritage and therefore places national archives under ministries responsible for arts and culture.⁷³⁰ The placement of the NARSSA in the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology⁷³¹ did not bode well for the NARSSA. It is considered by many as a “minor ministry” with low bureaucratic status. The effects of this point of view explain to some extent the lack of political will and support for archives.⁷³²

The previous pieces of legislation were analysed by considering the three functionaries as set out in the Acts, namely the Chief Archivist or later named the

⁷²⁸ V. Harris, “Editorial. Getting our ACTAG together: Musings on the challenges facing South African archivists, with special reference to the Arts and Culture Task Group’s (ACTAG) report on heritage”, *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 2.

⁷²⁹ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa’s national archival system*, 2014, pp. 149-180. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷³⁰ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa’s national archival system*, 2014, pp. 149-180. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷³¹ The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology split into two departments in 2004, namely Department of Arts and Culture, and the Department of Science and Technology. (Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa’s national archival system*, 2014, p. 55. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.) In 2019 the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture was established with the merger of the Department of Arts and Culture and the Department of Sport and Recreation. (Anon, n.d., <<https://nationalgovernment.co.za/units/view/430/department-of-sport-arts-and-culture-dsac>>, access: June 2022.)

⁷³² Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa’s national archival system*, 2014, pp. 149-180. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

Director of Archives, the Minister, and the AC. The same exploration will be followed with the 1996 Act.

The National Archives of South Africa Act, No. 43 of 1996 came into effect on 1 January 1997 and was purposed:

To provide for a National Archives; the proper management and care of the records of governmental bodies; and the preservation and use of a national archival heritage; and to provide for matters connected therewith.⁷³³

The Act of 1996 consisted of 20 sections and dealt with amongst others the objects and functions of the National Archives; the powers and duties of the National Archivist; the establishment and function of the National Archives Commission (NAC); access and use of public archives; transitional provisions; the repeal of previous archival legislation; and the short title and commencement of the new Act.⁷³⁴ A mere five years later the Cultural Laws Amendment Act No. 37 of 2001 came into effect and brought with it substantive changes. Interestingly, the Act of 1962 was amended four times,⁷³⁵ but the Act of 1996 has only been amended once. One change brought about by the Act of 2001 was the change in the title of the archive Act: it would be known as the National Archives and Record Service of South Africa Act, 1996.⁷³⁶

There are similarities to the previous archives Act of 1962, but the principal Act of 1996 brought with it significant changes too. The Act of 1996 established the National Archives of South Africa, a distinct change from the former SAS. This change is reflected in the objectives and mandate of the National Archives, namely to amongst others “collect non-public records with enduring value of national significance ... with due regard to the need to document aspects of the nation’s experience neglected by archives repositories in the past”.⁷³⁷ However, the most drastic and fundamental change brought about by the new Act of 1996 was on the organisational level. Up to 1996 the archives service was characterised by centralised control with geographically

⁷³³ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 2.

⁷³⁴ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, pp. 2-14.

⁷³⁵ Amendments were effected in 1964, 1969, 1977, and in 1979.

⁷³⁶ *Government Gazette* No. 22911, 7 December 2001, p. 8.

⁷³⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

decentralised provincial archive repositories.⁷³⁸ The new 1996 Constitution made provision for three spheres of government: national, provincial, and local and this change had to be accommodated in archival legislation which had to make provision for archival services on national as well as provincial levels.⁷³⁹ Schedule five of the Constitution listed functional areas of exclusive provincial legislative competence and it included “archives other than national archives”.⁷⁴⁰ This had a significant impact on and affected the regulation and mandate of archives. The Act of 1996 effectively decentralised and split the former centralised archives service into ten distinctive entities: the National Archives responsible for the records on the national level, in other words, records and archives of the national government departments and public institutions; and nine provincial archives and records services, responsible for the records and archives of provincial and local government.⁷⁴¹ The Act of 1996, however, also made provision for a transitional period, namely that the Act would apply to the provinces “[u]ntil such a time as a provincial legislator promulgates provincial legislation in terms of which a provincial archives service is established for that province”.⁷⁴²

Before the promulgation of the new Act, SASA made two submissions to the Constitutional Court pertaining to Schedule 5 of the new Constitution regarding the classification of provincial archives service as an exclusive provincial competence.⁷⁴³ It was argued that the classification of provincial archives as an exclusive provincial competency would deprive the provincial archives service of professional guidance, assistance, and support from the National Archive, and would muddle the relationship between the entities. SASA made it clear that the change in the function as reflected

⁷³⁸ M. Ngoepe, "Archives without archives: a window of opportunity to build inclusive archive in South Africa", *Journal of the South African Society of Archivists* 52, 2019, p. 153.

⁷³⁹ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 8.

⁷⁴⁰ It also included museums and libraries other than national museums and libraries. Anon, n.d., <<https://www.gov.za/documents/constitution-republic-south-africa-1996-schedule-5-functional-areas-exclusive-provincial>>, access: June 2022; Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, p. 35.

<<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷⁴¹ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, p. 35. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁷⁴² *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 14.

⁷⁴³ C. Kirkwood, "Submission two on South Africa's new Constitution", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 119-120; C. Kirkwood, "Submission three on South Africa's new Constitution", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 121-122.

in the legislation was done one-sidedly, and that the archival profession was not consulted.⁷⁴⁴ The National Committee of SASA believed that “archives should be retained as a concurrent national and provincial legislative competence”.⁷⁴⁵ If provincial archives are classified as an exclusive provincial competence the preservation of archives, and with that, the values of accountability and transparency, will be at great risk. They further pointed out that uniformity in critical archival functions is required and if the National Archive is not empowered to intervene in provinces where gross neglect of archival services is occurring⁷⁴⁶ it will defy the purpose of having any archival legislation if the legislation cannot deliver on its mandate.

Another important change occurred in the definition of archives. The Archives Act of 1962 defined archives as meaning:

any documents or records received or created in a government office or an office of a local authority during the conduct of affairs in such office and which are from their nature or in terms of any other law not required then to be dealt with otherwise than in accordance with or in terms of the provisions of this Act.⁷⁴⁷

The 1996 legislation⁷⁴⁸ provided a much broader and more detailed definition of archives than what was considered in previous legislation. The Act differentiated between “archives”, “record”, “public record”, and “non-public record”. As per the definition in the Act, a “record” is “recorded information regardless of form⁷⁴⁹ or medium”.⁷⁵⁰ Records already transferred to an archive repository are defined as

⁷⁴⁴ C. Kirkwood, “Submission three on South Africa’s new Constitution”, *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 121.

⁷⁴⁵ C. Kirkwood, “Submission two on South Africa’s new Constitution”, *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 120.

⁷⁴⁶ C. Kirkwood, “Submission three on South Africa’s new Constitution”, *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 122.

⁷⁴⁷ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 3.

⁷⁴⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, pp. 2-14.

⁷⁴⁹ Form refers to for example paper which are used in the form as correspondence files, registers, plans and maps. V. Harris, *Exploring archives: An Introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. 4.

⁷⁵⁰ Medium refers to for example paper, microfilm and electronic media. V. Harris, *Exploring archives: An Introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, p. 4; *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 2.

“archives”, and those records created or received by a governmental body as part of their activities are classified as “public records”.⁷⁵¹ “Non-public records” are “records created or received by a private individual or a body other than one defined as a governmental body in terms of this Act or a provincial law pertaining to records or archives”.⁷⁵² The detailed definition of archives and records (public and non-public) stipulated in no uncertain terms what are perceived as archives and minimised the possibility of finding loopholes in the definition⁷⁵³ which could put the care and custody of records at risk. The definition of archives (public and non-public records) as stipulated in the new Act conformed to international definitions and standards.⁷⁵⁴ Another first for the Act of 1996 was its definition of the term “appraisal”⁷⁵⁵ which is a vital archival function and precedes the transfer or disposal of records and archives. Although reference was made to the function of appraisal in previous archival legislation a definition was only to appear for the first time in the Act of 1996.⁷⁵⁶

As mentioned, the Act of 1962 changed the title of Chief Archivist to Director of Archives. A little over thirty years later the title was changed again and the person responsible for the government public archives in SA would be known as the National Archivist.⁷⁵⁷ According to the 1996 Act, the National Archives would be managed by the National Archivist who would be appointed by the Minister “on the basis of relevant professional experience and an appropriate archival qualification”.⁷⁵⁸ This ensured that professionalism and the principle of skilled and expert knowledge would be retained in the appointment of this important office. The provision as described above where the National Archivist is appointed by and managed the public archive under

⁷⁵¹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 2.

⁷⁵² *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 2.

⁷⁵³ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 8.

⁷⁵⁴ One definition of archives as referenced by the Society of American Archivists Dictionary is: “records created or received by a person, family, or organization and preserved because of their continuing value.” Anon, n.d., <<https://dictionary.archivists.org/entry/archives.html>>, access: June 2021.

⁷⁵⁵ Appraisal can be defined as the process of determining (assessing) whether records (recorded on any material) have any permanent archival value or if it can be destroyed. When it is decided that records do have archival value it will be prepared according to the prescribed regulations and be transferred to an archives repository. L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 35.

⁷⁵⁶ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 2.

⁷⁵⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁷⁵⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

the supervision of the responsible Minister was similar to that of the previous three pieces of legislation.

In the above section which dealt with the legislation of 1962 reference was made to the extensive power vested in the Minister responsible for the archive service by the archival legislation. The Minister had direct control over the archive as well as the Director of Archives to such an extent that the Director was limited in what he could do as a professional archivist.⁷⁵⁹ It was envisaged that the new Act of 1996 through the provision of framework autonomy regarding the administration of the National Archives, would provide the Minister with arms-length control⁷⁶⁰ and not the overall and direct power previous legislations allowed. The 1996 Act gave the Minister the authority to appoint the National Archivist (as referred to above); to establish a NAC; to establish archives repositories from time to time; to regulate and prescribe the terms and conditions concerning the transfer of records to an archives repository, and; to rule on unresolvable differences between the National Archivist and the NAC.⁷⁶¹ The Minister was also obliged to table the annual reports of the National Archivist and the NAC in Parliament.⁷⁶² Finally, the Minister had the authority to publish regulations concerning archival matters, amongst others the access and use of public records, the management of records, and regulations on the NAC.⁷⁶³ As regards to the NAC, the Minister had the authority to appoint a maximum of nine members who had to be knowledgeable of or have an interest in archival matters.⁷⁶⁴

The issue of delegation of power was absent in the new Act of 1996. It first appeared in the Act of 1953 which provided for the delegation of power from the Minister to the Secretary⁷⁶⁵ of the responsible department.⁷⁶⁶ The 1962 Act differed from this in that it provided for the delegation of power only from the Minister to the Director of

⁷⁵⁹ N. Olivier, "The Archives Act in South Africa and Namibia - A critical comparison", *Historia* 38(1), 1993, pp. 33-34.

⁷⁶⁰ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 13.

⁷⁶¹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁶² *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 8.

⁷⁶³ *Government Gazette* No. 17733, 24 January 1997, pp. 5-8.

⁷⁶⁴ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 6.

⁷⁶⁵ The post of Secretary of a government department back then could be seen as on the same hierarchy level as a Director-General in today's terms.

⁷⁶⁶ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 8.

Archives.⁷⁶⁷ In the 1996 Act the only reference to the delegation of power is between the National Archivist and his/her staff: the National Archivist has the authority “to delegate a power or assign a duty to a member of staff”.⁷⁶⁸ The absence of delegation of power between the functionaries may be due to the fact that the duties and responsibilities of the three functionaries were better defined and described in the Act of 1996.

The persons who served as Ministers of the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology in the period up to the end of the twentieth century were Dr Ben Ngubane (1994-1996 and again from 1999-2004)⁷⁶⁹ and Oswald Mtshali (1998-1999).⁷⁷⁰ The Minister, as his predecessors, still wielded great political power over the archive and archival matters. As is evident, even in the new political democratic dispensation the power was still predominantly in male hands.

According to the 1996 legislation, a National Archivist could be appointed by the Minister.⁷⁷¹ The duties assigned to the National Archivist by the new Act were similar as provided for in previous pieces of legislation, for example, to take measures to arrange, describe and retrieve records; to provide information; to consult with governmental bodies, and; to assist and conduct research.⁷⁷² The National Archivist would be assisted by officers and employees in the performance of his/her duties and as established above, could “delegate a power or assign a duty to a member of the staff”.⁷⁷³ However, the most significant insertion to the duties of the National Archivist was the obligation to initiate activities to reach out to less privileged parts of society to make records (archives) and information regarding records known to members of

⁷⁶⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 5526, 27 April 1977, p. 4.

⁷⁶⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁷⁶⁹ Anon, 12 Aug 2021, <<https://www.sahistory.org.za/people/baldwin-ben-sipho-ngubane>>, access: June 2022.

⁷⁷⁰ Anon, 8 Jan 2011, <[https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology](https://esat.sun.ac.za/index.php/Department_of_Arts,_Culture,_Science_and_Technology)>, access: June 2022.

⁷⁷¹ *Republic of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁷⁷² *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁷⁷³ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

society,⁷⁷⁴ in short, to take archives to the people⁷⁷⁵ through publications, exhibitions and making available, and by the loan of some records.⁷⁷⁶

Following the Act of 1962, the National Archivist was obliged to submit an annual report to the Minister. The report had to include financial details of the institution; “a complete list of disposal authorities issued”; an indication of cases of unauthorised disposal of public records; and also, a specified account of government bodies which failed to comply with the new Act.⁷⁷⁷

Following previous archival legislation, the National Archivist could defer a transfer of public records to an archives repository; he/she could grant permission for the transfer of any public records to an archives repository before the records reached the desired period for transfer, and; the National Archivist could in consultation with the head of a governmental body identify which records should remain with the office or should be transferred before they reached the designated period.⁷⁷⁸ The Act of 1996 also stipulated that the National Archivist is responsible and should take measures to preserve and restore records.⁷⁷⁹ Regulations, issued by the Minister in 1997, prescribed the terms and conditions of the transfer of public records and stipulated that amongst others written authorisation from the National Archivist was mandatory for the transfer of any public record to an archives repository.⁷⁸⁰ Similar to the previous Act of 1962, the National Archivist could determine which archives repository the public records were to be transferred to.⁷⁸¹

The Act of 1996, as with previous legislation, prescribed the access and use of archives. However, it brought with it a significant change as regards to when records with enduring value may be transferred to archives repositories and accessed by members of the public. The Act of 1962 made provision for the transfer of records

⁷⁷⁴ C. de Wet, "Die nuwe Argiefwet van Suid-Afrika", *SA Archives Journal* 39, 1997, p. 45.

⁷⁷⁵ E. Ketelaar, "Archives of the people, by the people, for the people", *SA Archives Journal* 34, 1992, pp. 5-16.

⁷⁷⁶ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁷⁷⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁷⁷⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 8.

⁷⁷⁹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 8.

⁷⁸⁰ *Government Gazette* No. 17733, 24 January 1997, p. 5.

⁷⁸¹ *Government Gazette* No. 17733, 24 January 1997, p. 5.

thirty years or older,⁷⁸² but the 1996 legislation reduced the period to twenty years.⁷⁸³ This was largely done to facilitate and promote greater access to public records. Acquisitions or non-public records were available to public access subject to the conditions agreed upon when they were acquired. The National Archivist could, when requested, permit access to records “of which a period of less than 20 years has elapsed since the end of the year in which the record came into existence”.⁷⁸⁴ Nevertheless, although access to public records was entrenched as a public right in the Act, access to records could be denied under certain circumstances. The National Archivist could refuse access to records on the condition of their fragility, but it also provided for the right to appeal to the NAC.⁷⁸⁵ This provision differed from the previous Act of 1962 (as amended) as it provided that access could be denied not just on the grounds of a record’s fragile condition, but also pending the archives or accessions’ “classification, repair or other treatment thereof”.⁷⁸⁶

The National Archivist was, following the previous archival legislation, charged with the responsibility of proper management and care of public records still in the custody of government bodies.⁷⁸⁷ The disposal of records, by transfer to an archival repository, destruction, or any other form of disposal, could not be affected without the written authorisation of the National Archivist and was subject to the appraisal policy as published by the National Archives.⁷⁸⁸

Furthermore, the National Archivist was charged to determine and approve the classification systems of records, also known as the file plan or filing system to be used by governmental bodies.⁷⁸⁹ This function is of significant importance and forms an integral part of the appraisal policy as the file plan normally includes what is known as a retention schedule which provides instruction for the disposal, retention or transfer of records. The National Archivist had the responsibility of determining the conditions under which microfilming may commence, as well as determining the conditions

⁷⁸² *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 197, 9 March 1962, p. 7.

⁷⁸³ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁸⁴ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁸⁵ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁸⁶ *Government Gazette* No. 2414, 28 May 1969, p. 4.

⁷⁸⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁸⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁸⁹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

subject to which the electronic records system should be managed.⁷⁹⁰ The introduction and definition of the term “electronic records system” was a new aspect of the Act of 1996 and referred to records “generated electronically and stored by means of computer technology”.⁷⁹¹ The implementation and use of electronic records systems by governmental bodies pose one of the biggest challenges the NARSSA and public archivists have to face.⁷⁹² The duty of inspection of public records as ascribed to the National Archivist in previous legislation was retained.⁷⁹³ A further new aspect of the Act of 1996 as amended was the issuing of directives and instructions by the National Archivist concerning the proper management and care of public records to heads of governmental bodies.⁷⁹⁴ Also new to the 1996 Act was the fact that it provided for the appointment of a records manager by the head of a governmental body. This person would be charged with the responsibility to ensure the compliance of the government body to all the requirements of the Act as well as any other relevant legislation.⁷⁹⁵

Finally, the National Archivist had the authority to on behalf of the government acquire non-public records (private or non-governmental records) “by purchase or donation or on loan for a temporary period or in perpetuity, either unconditionally or subject”⁷⁹⁶ to conditions as agreed upon. Non-public records were defined in the Act of 1996 as “a record created or received by a private individual or a body other than one defined as a governmental body ...”⁷⁹⁷ The National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 expanded on this definition by listing the following non-public records as also being part of the national estate: “books, records, documents, photographic positives and negatives, graphic, film or video material or sound recordings.”⁷⁹⁸ The acquisition function formed part of the objects and functions of the NARSSA⁷⁹⁹ which the National Archivist had to execute. The non-public records identified to be acquired had to firstly, be of “national significance”, secondly, had to be non-public records “which cannot be more

⁷⁹⁰ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁹¹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 2.

⁷⁹² V. Harris, *Exploring archives: An introduction to archival ideas and practice in South Africa*, pp. 33-37.

⁷⁹³ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁹⁴ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁹⁵ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁹⁶ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, pp. 10, 12.

⁷⁹⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 2.

⁷⁹⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 19974, 28 April 1999, p. 14.

⁷⁹⁹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

appropriately preserved by another institution”,⁸⁰⁰ and thirdly the collection of non-public records had to be done “with due regard to the need to document aspects of the nation’s experience neglected by archives repositories in the past”.⁸⁰¹ The non-public records so acquired would be deposited in the archives repository as determined by the National Archivist. Although previous legislation made provision for the Chief Archivist (later Director of Archives, now National Archivist) to acquire acquisitions it had a narrow mandate in the collection and preservation of private or non-public records. The tendency was to collect prominent white male politicians’ and literary men’s work with a disregard for and “exclusion of records that document the struggles against colonialism and apartheid or that give voice to African experiences”⁸⁰² and other marginalised groups, for example, women and their records and archives. This resulted in an uneven collection of non-public records. It was stipulated in the Act of 1996 that the National Archivist was also responsible for maintaining national registers of all non-public records in SA in consultation with the various institutions which had custody of these records.⁸⁰³ It is estimated that the non-public records preserved in the archive consist of about 5% of the holdings of the NARSSA.⁸⁰⁴ For the first time, the new legislation stipulated that the National Archivist could request the producer or distributor for a copy of a recording that in terms of the Act is a non-public record. The producers and or distributors had six months in which to respond with “a copy of the recording in such form as may be specified in the request” by the National Archivist.⁸⁰⁵ In the previous section containing the Act of 1962, mention was made of the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NFVSA). Since 1982 it constituted a sub-directorate of the NARSSA and as such all government-generated material falls under the Act of 1996 and is periodically transferred to the NFVSA.⁸⁰⁶

⁸⁰⁰ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 12.

⁸⁰¹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁸⁰² Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa’s national archival system*, 2014, p. 23. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁸⁰³ *Government Gazette*, No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 12.

⁸⁰⁴ Anon, n.d., <<http://www.national.archives.gov.za>>, access: March 2020. The figure (5%) according to the website was for the year 2010/2011. No new and updated information on this subject could be gathered from personnel employed at the National Archives or otherwise.

⁸⁰⁵ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 12.

⁸⁰⁶ Anon, n.d., <<http://www.national.archives.gov.za>>, access: March 2020.

The matter of the destruction, exportation or disposal of non-public records recorded on the national list is dealt with in section 14 of the principal Act of 1996. According to this section, a person or institution who has such a record in their possession and intends to dispose of such records should report their intent to the NAC, and also secure the approval of the NAC.⁸⁰⁷ If the person or institution contravened this section,⁸⁰⁸ the principal Act stipulated that they were liable to a fine.⁸⁰⁹ The fact that the Act of 1996 does not place any obligation of care and preservation of these records on individuals or organisations who own these collections, nor on the state and its role in respect of these non-public collections, ultimately makes these records vulnerable and open to abuse and/or loss.⁸¹⁰ The previously marginalised and neglected groups' records, for example, women in SA are especially at risk.

The last functionary provided for in the Act of 1996 is the NAC.⁸¹¹ The previous body, the AC, had a broad advisory function and was responsible for the publication of theses, dissertations and archival source documents. Members appointed to the AC were predominantly white male academics and typically in the history profession. Although a woman and a black history professor were appointed to the AC in the mid-1990s, no actual transparency regarding the appointment of members and the body's functions existed.⁸¹² The opportunity to establish a more representative and democratically appointed archives body with a clear mandate to perform its functions and ensure accountability arose with the Act of 1996.⁸¹³ The NAC would consist of the National Archivist and nine other members as appointed by the Minister.⁸¹⁴ The Regulations published in 1997 stipulated that the chairperson and the deputy chairperson would be appointed from amongst the members of the NAC.⁸¹⁵ The functions of the NAC were to "advise the Minister on any matter related to the operation

⁸⁰⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 12.

⁸⁰⁸ Section 14, paragraph 6 (a) and (b). *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 12.

⁸⁰⁹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 12.

⁸¹⁰ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa's national archival system*, 2014, p. 173. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁸¹¹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 6.

⁸¹² L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 35-37.

⁸¹³ V. Harris, "Editorial. Getting our ACTAG together: Musings on the challenges facing South African archivists, with special reference to the Arts and Culture Task Group's (ACTAG) report on heritage", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, pp. 1-3.

⁸¹⁴ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 12.

⁸¹⁵ *Government Gazette* No. 17733, 24 January 1997, p. 8.

of this Act; advise and assist the National Archivist in carrying out the objects and functions of the National Archives”.⁸¹⁶ Furthermore, the NAC could with the concurrence of the Minister and the National Archivist “exempt a governmental body from any provision of this Act”,⁸¹⁷ and would also hear appeals on the refusal of access to archives.⁸¹⁸

Moreover, primary functions of the NAC were to “promote the co-ordination of archival policy formulation and planning at national and provincial levels; approve the appraisal policy of the National Archives and monitor its implementation; maintain a national list of non-public records in South Africa which, in the opinion of the Commission, have enduring value.”⁸¹⁹ The principal Act ascribed the function of approving the appraisal policy of the National Archives and its consequent implementation as a function of the NAC. The motivation and reasoning behind this might have been concomitant to the view taken by the writers of the ACTAG report in 1996, namely that the appraisal policy of the previous government was Eurocentric and ideologically informed. These factors, according to the compilers of the report, led to the destruction and loss of valuable sources and material on the social history of people of colour in SA.⁸²⁰ The suspected illegal destruction of records⁸²¹ by government departments in the 1990s might have also informed this decision to mandate the NAC to oversee the appraisal policy and monitor its implementation. Although the NAC was charged with this important function it would seem that the decision and lawmakers considered the assigning of this function challenging. The principal Act of 1962 mandated the AC with the power to grant or refuse approval for the destruction of archives. However, with the amendment Act of 1979, this responsibility was removed and assigned to the Director of Archives.⁸²² The Act of 1996 revised this and again the appraisal function was assigned to the NAC which would, it was hoped, have greater overseeing power and say in the implementation of this policy. However, soon after its inauguration in 1998,

⁸¹⁶ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 6.

⁸¹⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁸¹⁸ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 10.

⁸¹⁹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 6.

⁸²⁰ L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 35.

⁸²¹ V. Harris, "The Archival sliver: Power, memory, and archives in South Africa", *Archival Science* 2(1-2), 2002, pp. 63-86.

⁸²² *Government Gazette* No. 6393, 5 April 1979, pp. 2-4.

the NAC found itself “in disarray, torn apart by internal and other disputes”.⁸²³ Furthermore, it lacked efficient funds and administrative infrastructure to support the role assigned to it by the Act. The NAC became for all intent and purposes dysfunctional.⁸²⁴

According to the 1996 legislation, a National Archivist could be appointed by the Minister.⁸²⁵ As part of the new democratic SA, the 1996 legislation was gender inclusive. This was the first South African piece of archival legislation to not be male centred. It makes this clearly apparent in the use of both male and female pronouns. On the 1st January 1997 Marie Olivier, the Director of Archives became the first National Archivist of SA,⁸²⁶ and the first woman in the history of the development of archives in SA to be appointed in this position. She served as acting Director of Archives since 1994 and was appointed Director of Archives in 1995.⁸²⁷ Olivier served as National Archivist until her retirement in 2000.⁸²⁸

⁸²³ V. Harris, “Editorial. Finding energy, finding direction”, *SA Archives Journal* 41, 1999/2000, p. 2.

⁸²⁴ Archival Platform, *State of the Archives: An analyses of South Africa’s national archival system*, 2014, p. 39. <<http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/connections/archival-platform>>, access: 27 August 2021.

⁸²⁵ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 4.

⁸²⁶ C. de Wet, “Die nuwe Argiefwet van Suid-Afrika”, *SA Archives Journal* 39, 1997, p. 45.

⁸²⁷ Anon, “Notes on contributors”, *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, pp. 157-158.

⁸²⁸ Annual report of the National Archivist 2000-2001, p. 1. Anon, n.d., <<http://www.national.archives.gov.za/AR%20ARCHIVES%202000-2001.pdf>>, access: August 2021.

Chapter 6: Epilogue: Gendered legislation, gendered language

6.1 Introduction

This chapter reflects on South African archival legislation, but does so through the lens of the position of the invisible voices. It considers how the archival domain was dominated by men, and even the women who were prevalent were relegated to the periphery.

6.2 Legislative gendering

6.2.1 Union to pre-Republic period

On reflection, the first two pieces of archival legislation were promulgated in the era after unification in 1910 and before SA became a Republic in 1961.⁸²⁹ The Union of SA united the former four colonies in one government and necessitated a uniform policy regarding the archival institutions of the former colonies. It took the best part of twelve years to appoint a Union Archivist and promulgate the first archival legislation in SA.⁸³⁰ The public archive during this time held the records of government offices, although both the Acts of 1922 and 1953 allowed the Chief Archivist to collect and acquire documents, records and other material of historical value⁸³¹ it was mostly those of white males that were collected. Other population groups and women were marginalised and neglected.⁸³²

In 1948 the political context in SA changed dramatically and brought a nationalist government to power who through its apartheid's policies would rule for more than forty years. It impacted the political, social and economic spheres of society and the public archive did not escape its effects. For example, apartheid policy dictated racially separated reading rooms and ablution facilities be provided for; job reservation

⁸²⁹ Public Archives Act, No. 9 of 1922: *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, pp. iv-v; Archives Act, No. 22 of 1953: *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2-8.

⁸³⁰ J.H. Davies, "The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 9, 11-12.

⁸³¹ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, pp. iv-v; *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2-8.

⁸³² W.B. van der Vyver, "Privaat-versamelings: Erns of statussimbool?", *SA Archives Journal* 16, 1974, pp. 34-41.

ensured that only whites were appointed to professional archivist positions.⁸³³ The political stance and ideology of society at the time held that a woman's place is at home and that men are in the public place of business and politics.⁸³⁴ This filtered through in legislation, as is evident in the fact that women had to resign once they got married.⁸³⁵

The section above on the history and development of archival legislation indicated that the South African archival scene from the late nineteenth century to the latter part of the twentieth century was largely male-dominated. The functionaries specified in the pre-democratic legislation, namely the Governors-General, the different Ministers responsible for the archives service, the Chief Archivists (later Directors of Archives), as well as the members of the AC were exclusively male. Women archivists were employed during this period under discussion and fulfilled certain positions as referred to earlier (and will be considered below), but were not allowed to progress beyond the rank of Archives Assistant.⁸³⁶ The focus of this section will be on the language used in the first two pieces of legislation. The question arises as to whether the language in the pieces of legislation (including amendments and regulations) is gendered and if so, how it may have affected women, specifically women archivists.

The first pieces of archival legislation were published in the official languages at the time, namely the 1922 Act in English and Dutch,⁸³⁷ and the 1953 Act in English and Afrikaans.⁸³⁸ Only the English versions of the acts were considered for this study. The table below (TABLE 1) sets out the Acts of 1922 and 1953 and the regulations published per year. The columns indicate the different pronouns as used in the Acts and regulations and the frequency of use.

⁸³³ L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 35.

⁸³⁴ E. Fox-Genovese, "Placing women's history in history", *New Left Review* 1/133, 1982, pp. 23-24.

⁸³⁵ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1330, 30 June 1923, p. xxi.

⁸³⁶ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 53.

⁸³⁷ Public Archives Act No. 9 of 1922 and in Dutch: Publieke Archiven Wet No. 9 van 1922. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, pp. iv-v.

⁸³⁸ Archives Act No. 22 of 1953 and in Afrikaans: Wet op Argiewe No. 22 van 1953. *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2-8.

TABLE 1 Use of gendered language in archival legislation 1922 and 1953

ARCHIVE ACTS, YEAR	HE/HIS/ HIM	Keeper of Archives / Officer in charge / CHAIRMAN (&/or Vice-Chairman)	HE or SHE / HIS or HER	GENTLE- MEN	PERSON
1922	4	0	0	0	0
1953	14	0	0	0	8
TOTAL	18	0	0	0	8
REGULATIONS, YEAR					
1918 (Deals with fees only)	0	0	0	0	0
1922	0	0	0	1	1
1923	21	4/5/0	2		14
1926	1	0/0/1			1
1958	53	0/0/18	0	0	10
TOTAL	75	4/5/19	2	1	26

An analysis of the two pieces of legislation revealed that the use of androcentric language prevailed. The male pronouns “he/his/him” were used 18 times while there was no reference to the female pronouns “she/her”. In the regulations published between 1918 and 1958 the male pronouns usage increased to 75, with the largest usage in 1958, namely 53 times. The only reference to the female pronouns “she/her” appeared in the regulations of 1923 and were used in tandem with the male pronouns “he/his”, namely “he or she/his or her” and were used to refer to members of the public visiting the archive’s reading room for research⁸³⁹ – it was not used to refer to personnel of the archive.

The usage of male designations such as “Keeper of the Archives”, “Officer in charge” and “Chairman” (including the use of “Vice-Chairman”) likewise revealed interesting statistics. As mentioned above women were not allowed to progress or be promoted to ranks higher than Archives Assistant, it can be argued that the designations above

⁸³⁹ Government Notice No. 1195, 23 July 1923, *Government Gazette* No. 1334, 27 Jul 1923, p. 145.

are referring to males only. These designations were referred to 28 times in both pieces of legislation.

According to sociolinguistics, language reflects the values and norms of society and the views and attitudes of its speakers. Language as a medium is used to transfer ideology from one generation to another. Afrikaans and English both developed in patriarchal societies, thus the languages are carriers mainly of the views and principles of men. The view that males define and dominate the public domain and society is enforced by the use of the generic “man” and pronoun “he”. This also imparts the notion that men have more worth and that the experiences and convictions of women (half of humankind) are inferior or of lesser value. The use of the generic “he” is interpreted as gender-specific and effects the invisibility of women.⁸⁴⁰ John Gastil is in agreement with this point of view when he stated that the seemingly generic use of he has allowed varying legal interpretations that often “exclude women but always include men” and that “[t]he generic he appears to bias the reader toward (sic) imagining male referents”.⁸⁴¹

Furthermore, it is generally accepted that reality is to a large extent linguistically constructed.⁸⁴² U. Wanitzek argues that language is a powerful medium for the construction and transmission of culture and expresses hidden notions of power. She continues her argument by stating that “cultures are [still] sympathetic to male dominance and female subservience”⁸⁴³ and should language as an expression of power not be recognised it will perpetuate women’s exclusion and maintain the status quo.⁸⁴⁴ It is in the light of this assessment that the archival legislation underscores the position of women as subservient and men as dominant.

6.2.2 Republic to democratic period

As shown, the 1960s saw the promulgation of new archival legislation, however, it was also the decade of H.F. Verwoerd - the architect of apartheid, the “hardening of

⁸⁴⁰ A. Vorster, *Taalseksisme en die vertaalpraktyk*, pp. 1-31.

⁸⁴¹ J. Gastil, "Generic pronouns and sexist language: The oxymoronic character of masculine generics", *Sex Roles* 23(11/12), 1990, p. 630.

⁸⁴² E. de Kadt, "Language, power and emancipation", *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory* 78, 1991, p.5.

⁸⁴³ U. Wanitzek, "The power of language in the discourse of women's rights: Some examples from Tanzania", *Africa Today* 49(1), 2002, p. 4.

⁸⁴⁴ U. Wanitzek, "The power of language in the discourse of women's rights: Some examples from Tanzania", *Africa Today* 49(1), 2002, pp. 4, 6.

apartheid rule”⁸⁴⁵ and its entrenchment of repressive laws. It was also the decade of the Sharpeville tragedy, the incarceration of N.R. Mandela,⁸⁴⁶ and the Rivonia Trial. The political context informed the archival domain and affected the nature, functions and service delivery of the Government Archives Service.⁸⁴⁷ The Minister had full political power over the archive and Director of Archives, in SA and SWA. The government policy of “grand apartheid”⁸⁴⁸ forced its way onto the archival landscape as the so-called homelands had to establish their own archives and legislation. In sum, the Act of 1962 extended the responsibility and power of the Government Archives Service to include local authorities’ records and archives; it gave the Director authority over all current records in government offices; it allowed for intermediate depots to be established of which the forming of the SADF archive was certainly the most significant.

The latest Act, the National Archives Act of South Africa was promulgated in 1996⁸⁴⁹ and under quite different circumstances when it came into effect under the first democratically elected government of SA. Expectations were high and so were the energy and drive to transform the public archive in SA into one that would serve all her citizens.⁸⁵⁰

A similar analysis (see TABLE 2) was conducted on the legislation of 1962 and 1996 as with the legislation of 1922 and 1953. In this case, the various amendment acts were also incorporated.

⁸⁴⁵ R. Ross, *A concise history of South Africa*, p. 144.

⁸⁴⁶ Ironically, Mandela was imprisoned the same year the new archive legislation was promulgated. He would sign the new democratically informed archive legislation into law in 1996. (H. Giliomee, *Die Afrikaners. 'n Biografie*, p. 486.)

⁸⁴⁷ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 6.

⁸⁴⁸ R. Ross, *A concise history of South Africa*, p. 126.

⁸⁴⁹ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, pp. 2-14.

⁸⁵⁰ V. Harris, "Editorial. Transforming South African Archives: Discourse and delivery", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 1-3.

TABLE 2 Use of gendered language in archival legislation 1962 and 1996

ARCHIVE ACTS, YEAR	HE/HIS/ HIM/HIMSELF	Chairman (& Deputy & Chairman of committee) /Chairperson (& Deputy & Chairperson of Committee)	HE or SHE / HIS or HER	PERSON/S
1962	19	0	0	1
1996	0	0	8	12
TOTAL	19	0	8	13
AMENDMENTS, YEAR				
1964	2	1/0	0	4
1969	4	0	0	2
1977	2	0	0	2
1979	9	0	0	0
2001 (Cultural Laws Amendment Act)	0	0	1	2
TOTAL	17	1/0	1	10
REGULATIONS, YEAR				
1963	74	23/0	0	4
1982	60	23/0	0	3
1997	0	0/11	8	4
2002	0	0/13	7	4
TOTAL	134	46/23	15	15

In the primary Act of 1962, the male pronouns “he/his/himself” appeared 19 times and in the Amendment Acts of 1964, 1969, 1977 and 1979 these pronouns were used 17 times, thus a total of 36 times. The female pronouns “she/her” do also not appear in these pieces of legislation. However, the Act of 1996 stands in stark contrast to the above. The combined pronouns of “he or she/his or her” were used eight times and in the Amendment Act of 2001 it was used once. In addition, the use of “person” was more frequent in the Act of 1996 (twelve times) and in the amendment act of 2001 (used twice). Interestingly, the frequency use of “person” appears to be much higher in the pieces of legislation and regulations in this period (1962 to current) than in the previous period. For example, it appeared eight times in the Act of 1953 and 26 times in the regulations published between 1922 and 1958 (see TABLE 1, last column), and in the period 1962 to current it was used twenty-three times in the Acts and Amendments Acts and fifteen times in the published regulations. It can be argued that the increased use of a generic form of pronoun “person” was deliberately done to ensure that the legislation is gender inclusive. The use of the designation “chairperson” instead of “chairman” also confirms this view. In the Amendment Act of 1964 and

regulations of 1963 and 1982 the designation “chairman” was used 47 times. However, in the regulations of 1997 and 2002 the preferred designation “chairperson” was used 23 times.

From the analyses above it is evident that gender exclusive language was used to a great extent in the South African archival legislation. In a discussion paper the South African Law Reform Commission stated that according to the Interpretation Act of 1957 “words importing the masculine gender include females”.⁸⁵¹ However, the Commission argued that the passing of legislation in androcentric or sexist language actually contributed “to the perpetuation of a male-oriented society in which women are seen as having a lower status and value”⁸⁵² and rendered women “invisible” in the law.⁸⁵³ The drafters of the Constitution saw the discrimination founded on gender or sex a serious concern and hence the use of both genders throughout the Constitution.⁸⁵⁴ The Bill of Rights enshrined the democratic value of equality and that there can be no discrimination on the grounds of, amongst others, gender, sex and/or marital status.⁸⁵⁵ These values of equality and gender neutral references or references to both sexes filtered through and are evident in the National Archive Act of South Africa Act of 1996 and the subsequent published regulations.

6.3 Articulated gendering

Legislation created the framework and space wherein the Government Archives Service was established and regulated. Similarly, the language used created a space that presented and asserted the male gender. In light of this, it is important to consider the development of the gendered archivist in the history of the South African archive and furthermore, how their writings and statements gave utterance to their perceptions and attitudes as regards gender. Moreover, through this articulated gendering they, to

⁸⁵¹ South African Law Reform Commission, Discussion Paper 112. Statutory Revision: Review of the Interpretation Act 33 of 1957 (Project 25), September 2006, p. 403.

<https://www.justice.gov.za/Salrc/dpapers/dp112_interpretation.pdf>

⁸⁵² South African Law Reform Commission, Discussion Paper 112. Statutory Revision: Review of the Interpretation Act 33 of 1957 (Project 25), September 2006, p. 403.

<https://www.justice.gov.za/Salrc/dpapers/dp112_interpretation.pdf>

⁸⁵³ South African Law Reform Commission, Discussion Paper 112. Statutory Revision: Review of the Interpretation Act 33 of 1957 (Project 25), September 2006, p. 405.

<https://www.justice.gov.za/Salrc/dpapers/dp112_interpretation.pdf>

⁸⁵⁴ South African Law Reform Commission, Discussion Paper 112. Statutory Revision: Review of the Interpretation Act 33 of 1957 (Project 25), September 2006, p. 403.

<https://www.justice.gov.za/Salrc/dpapers/dp112_interpretation.pdf>

⁸⁵⁵ Anon, n.d., <<https://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/constitution/saconstitution-web-eng.pdf>>, access: June 2021.

a degree, maintained the exclusion of women. This should provide a more informed indication of the status and position of women archivists in SA during the twentieth century.

Considering the historical and legal development of the South African archives through a gender lens elicits the question who preserved the records and archives and for whom were these preserved, regulated, and made accessible. From its commencement, the structures, functionaries, and personnel of what could be referred to as the archive during the earliest period of South African history were highly gendered and presented very much the same characteristics as those of the twentieth century. It was highlighted in the section on the VOC period at the Cape that the assistants, first clerks, and secretaries for the Political Council were all male employees. Likewise, the government of the Batavian Republic appointed male officials.⁸⁵⁶ The functionaries in the South African public archival domain for the period 1922 to 1953 also represented a predominantly all-male contingent from the Governors-General,⁸⁵⁷ Ministers responsible for the portfolio of the archive,⁸⁵⁸ Chief Archivists,⁸⁵⁹ chairmen of the AC,⁸⁶⁰ and members of the AC as listed above.

It has been argued that power is at play in the archive and its processes⁸⁶¹ and some of the conduits or vectors of this power and authority are amongst others, patriarchy, racism, apartheid⁸⁶² - and, colonialism can be added to the list. The power wielded by these vectors “determine[d] who is in and who is out, who gets heard and who does not, whose lives matter and whose don’t”.⁸⁶³ In the archive as far as whose archives

⁸⁵⁶ S.D. Naudé (ed.), *Kaapse Argiefstukke. Kaapse Plakkaatboek Deel VI (1803-1806)*, pp. 6, 10-11.

⁸⁵⁷ Prince Arthur of Connaught served from 1920 to 1923 (Anon, "Death of prince Arthur of Connaught", *Rand Daily Mail*, 13 September 1938, p.8.), and Dr E.G. Jansen served from 1951 to 1959. (Anon, "The King approves Dr. Jansen as next Governor-General", *Rand Daily Mail*, 21 September 1950, p. 1.)

⁸⁵⁸ Ministers of the Interior were Sir Patrick Duncan (1919-1924), D.F. Malan (1924-1933), J.F.H. Hofmeyr (1933-1938), Richard Stuttaford (1938-1943), C.F. Clarkson (1943-1948). Minister of Education, Arts and Science: J.H. Viljoen (1948-1958).

⁸⁵⁹ G.M. Theal was the first SA archivist and held the position until 1881 when he was replaced by H.C.V. Leibbrandt who served as the first full-time archivist until 1908. Dr C.G. Botha was appointed in 1919 and retired as Chief Archivist in 1944. Dr Coenraad Beyers served from 1944 to 1953.

⁸⁶⁰ During this period (1922-1953) the AC had four chairmen, namely Sir James Rose-Innes (1923-1931), Prof. A.A. Moorrees (1932-1937), Dr A.L. Geyer (1938-1950), and Prof. H.B. Thom (1950-1955). Editorial, "The Archives Commission: Fortieth Anniversary", *SA Archives Journal* 5, 1963, pp. 9-10.

⁸⁶¹ See for instance A. Mbembe, "The power of the archive and its limits", in C. Hamilton (eds), *Refiguring the archive*, pp. 19-26; A.L. Stoler, "Colonial archives and the arts of governance: On the content in the form" in C. Hamilton (eds), *Refiguring the archive*, pp. 83-100; C. Hamilton & N. Leibhammer, *Tribing and untribing the archive: Identity and the material record in Southern KwaZulu-Natal in the late independent and colonial periods*, pp. 22, 46.

⁸⁶² V. Harris, *Ghosts of archive. Deconstructive intersectionality and praxis*, p. 49.

⁸⁶³ V. Harris, *Ghosts of archive. Deconstructive intersectionality and praxis*, p. 49.

were preserved the power at play is evident in the power and responsibilities assigned to the functionaries, in this case, the Minister, Chief Archivist, and AC. It is evident that only the Government Archives Service were constituted by these Acts and that private archives fell outside the domain of the archive legislation. However, provision was made in both the 1922 and 1953 pieces of legislation for the acquisition of records, documents, and other material of historical value other than public archives, in other words, private archives as the Chief Archivist with the approval of the Minister may deem important; while the AC could make recommendations to the Minister on this matter in the 1953 Act.⁸⁶⁴ Acquisition and preservation of (some) private archives were thus in the hands of the Chief Archivist, the Minister, and AC. The functionaries as mentioned were ostensibly all-male institutions and embedded in patriarchy and colonialism. The effect of this is quite evident in the uneven content of private archives held in the Government Archives. These holdings presented the documents of those who would be considered to be “in”, who are “heard”, and whose lives were considered to “matter”, and they were predominantly the records of white male politicians.⁸⁶⁵ The AC and later the Chief Archivist wielded similar power as regards the destruction of records, albeit public records and not private. The appraisal policy had a Eurocentric tendency and led to the destruction of valuable records relating to black people in SA.⁸⁶⁶ The view one gets from the archive during this period is one where power wielded by predominantly white male politicians excluded, silenced, and marginalised the voices of those who were considered secondary or less important.

Members of some of the Archive Commissions from the first established Commission in 1876 up to the 1950s were intentionally listed in the respective chapters⁸⁶⁷ to illustrate that the institution was principally male. It is notable that when reference is made to the members they are referred to as “gentlemen”.⁸⁶⁸ Furthermore, the legislation made provision for “*men with outstanding and exceptional qualifications*” to

⁸⁶⁴ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1236, 27 May 1922, p. iv; *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, p. 4.

⁸⁶⁵ W.B. van der Vyver, "Onder die soeklig. Privaat-versamelings: Erns of statussimbool?", *SA Archives Journal* 16, 1974, pp. 34-41.

⁸⁶⁶ L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, p. 35.

⁸⁶⁷ The Archives Commissions listed were: 1876, 1909-1913, 1918, 1922 and 1953.

⁸⁶⁸ Government Notice No. 1626, 28 September 1922, *Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 October 1922, p. 4.

be co-opted.⁸⁶⁹ However, contrary to belief and a report of well-known historians⁸⁷⁰ that members appointed to the AC were exclusively male, and that women and black people were appointed only from the mid-1990s,⁸⁷¹ sources revealed the name of a woman who did serve on the AC. Her name was first encountered in a 1963 article in the *SA Archives Journal*, but with no dates from when she was appointed.⁸⁷² It was procedure for the Minister to publish the names of appointed members in a government publication and the name of Mrs Mabel Jansen was found in these publications.⁸⁷³ On further investigation it was discovered that Mrs Jansen had been appointed more than two decades earlier – she served on the AC from 1931 to 1951.⁸⁷⁴ Her husband, Dr E.G. Jansen who served on the AC between 1922⁸⁷⁵ and 1929⁸⁷⁶ was inaugurated as Governor-General in 1951 and that might be the reason for her

⁸⁶⁹ *Debates of the House of Assembly (Hansard)* Vol 82-83, 3 July to 2 October 1953, p.1032. My emphasis.

⁸⁷⁰ Luli Callinicos is a social historian, lecturer and scholar at the University of the Witwatersrand. Anon, 17 October 2017/n.d., <<https://theconversation.com/profiles/luli-callinicos-416446>>, access: September 2022. André Odendaal is an historian, author, honorary professor in History and Heritage Studies at the University of Western Cape. Anon, n.d., <<https://za.linkedin.com/in/andre-odendaal-91644024>>, access: September 2022.

⁸⁷¹ L. Callinicos & A. Odendaal, "Report on archives in South Africa by Luli Callinicos and André Odendaal, convenors of the Archives sub-committee of the Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)", *SA Archives Journal* 38, 1996, pp. 35-37.

⁸⁷² Editorial, "The Archives Commission: Fortieth Anniversary", *SA Archives Journal* 5, 1963, p. 11.

⁸⁷³ See for example: Government Notice No. 308, 10 February 1950, *Government Gazette* No. 4327, 10 February 1950, p. 293.

⁸⁷⁴ T. Jacobs, *Martha Mabel Jansen (1889 tot 1979) - 'n Kultuuroorsig*, p. 5; Anon, "Archives Commission", *Rand Daily Mail*, 27 October 1934, p. 11; Government Notice No. 317, 18 February 1938, *Government Gazette* No. 2507, 25 February 1938, p. 567; Government Notice No. 321, 20 February 1941, *Government Gazette* No. 2866, 28 February 1941, p. 485; Government Notice No. 283, 21 February 1944, *Government Gazette* No. 3306, 25 February 1944, p. 244; M.K. Jeffreys (ed.), *Kaapse Argiefstukke Kaapse Plakkaatboek Deel II (1707-1753)*, 1948, n.p.

⁸⁷⁵ Anon, "Archives Commission", *Rand Daily Mail*, 10 October 1922, p. 4.

⁸⁷⁶ Government Notice No. 1760, 9 October 1928, *Government Gazette* No. 1732, 12 October 1928, p. 80; Government Notice No. 1668, 16 September 1929, *Government Gazette* No. 1819, 20 September 1929, p. 854.

resignation from the AC in 1951.⁸⁷⁷ Although Mrs Jansen was not an archivist⁸⁷⁸ and therefore falls outside the parameters of this study, her role in the AC as a female member should not be underestimated. The fact that she is to a great extent invisible in the literature on the archive is not her doing, but indicative of the prevailing gender ideology of the times she lived in and underscores the effort taken by patriarchal society to ignore and downplay the role played by women and effectively conceal their names and contributions.

The gendered archivist found articulation through various functionaries as described above. It is then of equal importance to consider the writings of the first male incumbents who served as “Keeper of the Archives” (Theal) and later Chief Archivist (Botha) as it echoed society’s male gaze on and masculine domination of the archive in terms of the space of women archivists in this early period of South African archival development. Theal put it bluntly that in his opinion archival work cannot be trusted to just anyone, but only to “competent persons”.⁸⁷⁹ He explained that “[a] young intelligent *man*, with an inclination for research, and not only willing but eager to make the task *his* life work, should be selected ... [*h*]e would have an eminently useful career before *him* ...”.⁸⁸⁰ Theal saw his primary responsibility as archivist and historian “to bring the (archive of the) Cape Colony up to the level of other countries in the eyes of *literary men*”⁸⁸¹ as assumed users and readers of the archive. Theal further gendered users of the archive as “[a] *man* bent on serious research”.⁸⁸² The notion of exclusivity is

⁸⁷⁷ Government Notice No. 2259, 31 August 1951, *Government Gazette* No. 4685, 31 August 1951, p. 38.

⁸⁷⁸ Mabel Jansen, trained as a teacher, was one of the best known women in Afrikaner circles. She actively participated in nationalist cultural organisations either as founding member and/or as part of the leadership of these organisations. She was also a keen writer and published numerous books and articles. It can be said that her participation in women’s politics was the most important endeavour of her career. She was co-founder of the Vroue Nasionale Party (VNP) (Women’s National Party) in Natal in 1924 and together with other branches of the VNP worked for the vote to be extended to women in SA. In 1930 they succeeded but had to agree to the amalgamation of the VNP branches with the male National Party structures. Mabel Jansen served as deputy leader of the NP in Natal in 1933. However, in 1939 she stepped out of active political life, one of the reasons being that her difference of opinion (she supported Strijdom and Malan) to her husband’s (a stern Hertzog and United Party supporter) led to tension in their house. L. Vincent, “The power behind the scenes: The Afrikaner Nationalist Women’s Parties, 1915 to 1931”, *South African Historical Journal* 40(1), 1999, pp. 51-73; T. Jacobs, *Martha Mabel Jansen (1889 tot 1979) - 'n Kultuuroorsig*; I. Glorie, “Sterke vrouwen! De institusionele posisie van de eerste Afrikaanse schrijfsters”, *Literator* 26(2), 2005, pp. 39-57.

⁸⁷⁹ Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Council, 1895, G. 58, pp. 6-7. (Blue Books).

⁸⁸⁰ Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Council, 1895, G. 58, p.7 (Blue Books). My emphasis.

⁸⁸¹ Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Council, 1905, G. 38, p. 2. (Blue Books). My emphasis.

⁸⁸² Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Council, 1895, G. 58, p. 7. (Blue Books). My emphasis.

evident – archival work is that of competent men, and by the same token Theal excluded women as users of the archive. He saw his life's work, the archive, as being available to those in the public space, namely men.

The tone in Theal's writings on gender and the archive resonated through to Botha. From his early writings, the male gaze was prominent. It can be said that in his writings Botha referred to the male gender when he used terminology such as "scholars", "historical researcher", and "student" as these nouns were used with the male pronouns "he", "himself" and "his".⁸⁸³ Accordingly, this also applied to terms referring to "Chief Archivist", "archivist", and "historian".⁸⁸⁴ Botha's writings were informed by some important ideological concepts of society at the time in terms of gender, patriarchy, and the consequent sexual division of labour. In an article on historical research in the Cape Archive, he argued that a primary aim of teaching history at school "is the making of good citizens, and without a knowledge of history no one can be a good citizen".⁸⁸⁵ These "good citizens" were to "lay the foundation of a sound national life, and be inspired with high and noble aims for building up a nation able to take its place among the first nations of the world."⁸⁸⁶ A "good citizen" in this context can be argued to be male, as "[c]itizenship has always been constructed in masculine terms"⁸⁸⁷ and based on the exclusion of women. The concept of women and national citizenship was almost unimaginable as citizenship was highly gendered and seen as part of the horizontal relationships (brotherhoods) between men and based on the idea of public citizenship.⁸⁸⁸ Furthermore, Botha wrote that "good citizens" lay the foundation of a sound national life, and with their high and noble aims build the nation. This was a further entrenchment of gendered spaces or separated spheres. While citizenship and nation-building were considered public spheres of justice, politics, and

⁸⁸³ C.G. Botha "Historical research in South Africa: With special reference to the Cape Archives", *South African Journal of Science* 16(3), 1919, pp. 177-185.

⁸⁸⁴ C.G. Botha, *Cape archives and records*, pp. 1-81; C.G. Botha, "The public archives - their value to scientific research", *SA Journal of Science* 21(11), 1924, pp. 120-130.

⁸⁸⁵ C.G. Botha "Historical research in South Africa: With special reference to the Cape Archives", *South African Journal of Science* 16(3), 1919, p. 177.

⁸⁸⁶ C.G. Botha "Historical research in South Africa: With special reference to the Cape Archives", *South African Journal of Science* 16(3), 1919, p. 178.

⁸⁸⁷ C. McEwan, "Engendering citizenship: gendered spaces of democracy in South Africa", *Political Geography* 19, 2000, p. 630.

⁸⁸⁸ C. McEwan, "Engendering citizenship: gendered spaces of democracy in South Africa", *Political Geography* 19, 2000, p. 630.

economics they excluded women and expected them to fulfil their roles as mothers and caregivers in the private sphere of the home.⁸⁸⁹

Botha viewed the archives of a country as a national asset, a rich treasure. He argues that through the archives the life of a nation is to be read and by reading them (in a certain way) all prejudices and misunderstandings should be dispelled. In the same article, he listed the important records in the archive which included the records of the: VOC, two British occupations, and the Batavian Republic – the sum of which were records of a political, military, and judicial nature, and highly gendered. Moreover, Botha applied the quote of the Canadian “Dominion Archivist and Keeper of the Records” to the South African archive, namely that the “true history of men” can be fully appreciated in the records in the archive.⁸⁹⁰ However, Botha took it a step further by stating that there is still much to be done in this digging up or unearthing of records, and thus, using the archives in historical research and writing it will “bring forth the fruits for the benefit of *mankind*”.⁸⁹¹

In 1937 Botha was elected the president of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science,⁸⁹² the first (and last) archivist to be so elected. In his presidential address, he presented: “The science of archives in South Africa”⁸⁹³ wherein he argued that the work of archives is a science in terms of functions performed, and by implication, he considered the archivist a scientist. This viewpoint, he continued, is in agreement with international trends as it is similarly recognised in European countries.⁸⁹⁴ The concept of the archive as a space can be understood to be male in Botha’s presentation as the language he used again is gendered with only male pronouns. All the more so, by presenting the archive as a science and the archivist as a scientist, he placed the archive and the higher positions of power and authority out of the reach of women. His views played into the sexual division of labour

⁸⁸⁹ C. McEwan, “Engendering citizenship: gendered spaces of democracy in South Africa”, *Political Geography* 19, 2000, p. 630.

⁸⁹⁰ C.G. Botha “Historical research in South Africa: With special reference to the Cape Archives”, *South African Journal of Science* 16(3), 1919, pp. 181-182.

⁸⁹¹ C.G. Botha “Historical research in South Africa: With special reference to the Cape Archives”, *South African Journal of Science* 16(3), 1919, p. 182. My emphasis. It must be noted that the term “mankind” was the general terminology of the time.

⁸⁹² Later known as the Southern Africa Association for the Advancement of Science. See: Anon, n.d., <<http://s2a3.org.za>>, access: August 2021.

⁸⁹³ C.G. Botha, “The Science of archives in South Africa”, *South African Journal of Science* 34(11), 1937, pp. 1-17.

⁸⁹⁴ C.G. Botha, “The Science of archives in South Africa”, *South African Journal of Science* 34(11), 1937, pp. 1-2.

in which men were attributed with characteristics of being rational, logical, and operating on pure reason, hence they were more suitable to be scientists and not women.⁸⁹⁵ He perpetuated the gendering of the archival space by stating that for the archive as an institution to grow and claim recognition as an integral part of the government, it is of importance that “its personnel be men with a certain standard of education and an aptitude for the work”.⁸⁹⁶ Furthermore, he related the advance of science since the beginning of the twentieth century with the start of a new historical record. He argued that the motion picture and the recording of sound (the advance of science) are new methods of “recording the thoughts, actions ... and emotions of men”.⁸⁹⁷ The concept of the archive as masculine culminated in Botha’s wish for it, namely that the archive would overcome its obstacles “and pass on to *manhood*”.⁸⁹⁸ Through his writings and use of gender-exclusive language, as well as the assertion of discriminatory concepts and ideologies dominant in society, Botha perpetuated the prejudices, bias, and subordination of women.

J.M. Koopman is perhaps correct when she stated that Botha envisaged the users of archives “as being a young white *male* university student, or an older white male university lecturer, researcher, or historian”.⁸⁹⁹ Furthermore, Koopman argued that although there was no explicit exclusion of women, people of other race groups, or less educated people from the archive, Botha “probably simply assumed that they (women) would not be interested in visiting archives”.⁹⁰⁰ Further to this, if women were not “interested” (expected) in visiting the archive, the question to be asked is if they would be interested in seeking employment in the archive. As in Botha’s other writings, the suggestion is quite obvious that men with a certain standard of education were deemed the preferred applicants and candidates.⁹⁰¹ In his 1921 report, Botha made recommendations regarding adequate staff for the different archive repositories and highlighted the hierarchy of posts that existed in the Cape Archive at the time. They

⁸⁹⁵ F. Ginwala, “Women and the elephant. The need to redress gender oppression”, in S. Bazilli, *Putting women on the agenda*, p. 63.

⁸⁹⁶ C.G. Botha, “The Science of archives in South Africa”, *South African Journal of Science* 34(11), 1937, p. 6.

⁸⁹⁷ C.G. Botha, “The Science of archives in South Africa”, *South African Journal of Science* 34(11), 1937, p. 4.

⁸⁹⁸ C.G. Botha, “The Science of archives in South Africa”, *South African Journal of Science* 34(11), 1937, p. 7. My emphasis.

⁸⁹⁹ J.M. Koopman, *Staff attitudes to access and outreach in KwaZulu-Natal archives*, p. 19.

⁹⁰⁰ J.M. Koopman, *Staff attitudes to access and outreach in KwaZulu-Natal archives*, p. 19.

⁹⁰¹ See for example: C.G. Botha, “The Science of archives in South Africa”, *South African Journal of Science* 34(11), 1937, p. 6.

were: a Chief Archivist, a first-grade clerk, a second-grade clerk, a second-grade female clerical assistant, and a clerical assistant.⁹⁰² Unfortunately, no indication was given if females were appointed in positions other than the “second-grade female clerical assistant”. It is almost not expected as the “traditionally gendered equations of archive as public and male and domesticity as private and female”⁹⁰³ were deeply entrenched in society and institutional structures.

Some writings of the Directors of Archives up to the latter part of the twentieth century were similarly considered, though restricted to their articles published in the *SA Archives Journal* it affirmed and sustained the patriarchal ideology. The articles were published in both official languages, namely Afrikaans and English. In contrast to the writings (articles and reports) considered above, the Directors of Archives to some extent were not as industrious writers as for example Botha was. Nevertheless, the articles published in the *Journal* allow a certain view on the world of an archivist, especially on women archivists in the mid-twentieth century. It came as no surprise, however, that the analysis of the articles written from the early 1960s up to the 1980s was in the same gendered vein as Theal’s and Botha’s: an “archivist”,⁹⁰⁴ “archive official”,⁹⁰⁵ “candidate” (to undergo archival training),⁹⁰⁶ “researcher” and by implication historian,⁹⁰⁷ were all used with male pronouns such as “he”, “his”, and “him”. It can be said that the language used in the writings of Theal and Botha presented an obsessive use of gendered language, whereas the articles considered between the 1960s and 1980s were a bit less pronounced. Nonetheless, it confirmed the male-centred worldview and the biased use of gendered language that “reinforce[d] ideas about the secondary status of women, culturally, legally, and politically”⁹⁰⁸ and likewise in the workplace.

The question at the beginning of this section, namely who preserved the records and archives was answered: the scribes, clerks, and later “Keeper of the Archives” and the

⁹⁰² C.G. Botha, *Cape archives and records*, p. 20.

⁹⁰³ A. Burton, “Introduction. Archive fever, archive stories”, in A. Burton (ed.), *Archives stories. Facts, fictions and the writing of history*, p. 14.

⁹⁰⁴ J.H. Cilliers, “The new Archives Act”, *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, pp. 25-28. See also: W.B. van der Vyver, “Dr. Kieser laat die argiewe praat”, *SA Archives Journal* 11, 1969, pp. 23-29.

⁹⁰⁵ J.H. Snyman, “Keuring van argiewe in argiefbewaarplekke”, *SA Archives Journal* 7, 1965, pp. 25-29.

⁹⁰⁶ J.H. Cilliers, “Die Nasionale Diploma in Argiefwetenskap”, *SA Archives Journal* 24, 1982, pp. 23-32.

⁹⁰⁷ J.H. Cilliers, “Rekenarisering en navorsing”, *SA Archives Journal* 20, 1978, pp. 22-26.

⁹⁰⁸ P. Martin & P. Papadelos, “Who stands for the norm? The place of metonymy in androcentric language”, *Social Semiotics* 27(1), 2017, p. 53.

Chief Archivist, together with the other functionaries as mentioned. The question for whom it was preserved and to whom it was made accessible was answered above by investigating the writings and statements of Theal and Botha: both preferred men to be appointed in archivist positions, and men were also the audience to whom they wrote and performed their archival functions.

6.4 In practise gendering: The visible invisible voices

In the section above mention was made of two women archivists in the 1950s that had a marked impact on the South African public archive, they were Joan Davies and Anna Böesecken. However, a woman archivist appeared much earlier in the public archives and more specifically in the Cape Archive. Marie Kathleen Jeffreys became the first woman to be appointed to the South African public archive and by all accounts the first women archivist in the South African archive. This section will make the three invisible voices visible.

6.4.1. Marie Kathleen Jeffreys

Marie Kathleen Jeffreys was born in 1893 in Cape Town and matriculated at the Huguenot Seminary in Wellington in 1912. She completed a teacher's course in Bloemfontein in 1913 and taught at Kroonstad (Orange Free State Province) between 1914 and 1915. The money she earned from her teaching career enabled her to enrol at Rhodes University College in 1916⁹⁰⁹ where she completed her final B.A. Honours degree exam early in 1919 - the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918 prevented the exams from being completed earlier.⁹¹⁰ She also attained a Master's degree in Modern Languages from Rhodes University College in 1921.⁹¹¹ Whilst preparing for her final exam in 1919, Jeffreys applied for a post at the Cape Archive as assistant to the Chief Archivist.⁹¹² The AC, in a meeting held in February 1919, decided to appoint Jeffreys⁹¹³ and in March 1919 she became the first woman to be appointed to a public archive in

⁹⁰⁹ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 M.K. Jeffreys. Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service. Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book, n.p.

⁹¹⁰ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 43, Anon, "Snuffelaar van naam", *Sarie Marais*, 4 Julie 1951, pp. 4-5.

⁹¹¹ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 M.K. Jeffreys. Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service. Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book, newspaper article: Anon, "Persoonlik", *Die Burger*, 13 Julie 1948, n.p.

⁹¹² WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 43, Anon, "Snuffelaar van naam", *Sarie Marais*, 4 Julie 1951, p. 5.

⁹¹³ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 1 Minute Book of the Cape Archives Commission, Minutes of meeting held on 20 February 1919, n.p.

SA.⁹¹⁴ Jeffreys was appointed to translate and transcribe documents of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the Cape Archive. This effected one of the 1918 Archives Commission's original objectives, namely to supervise the publication of any portion of the archive⁹¹⁵ and thus, to continue the work started by Theal in the late 1800s.⁹¹⁶ In her archival career that stretched over almost three decades, Jeffreys became an expert on documents and the history of this early period in South African history.⁹¹⁷

In those early years, the personnel of the Cape Archive consisted of only Botha (Chief Archivist of the Cape Archives and the Union Chief Archivist) and Jeffreys. Although Jeffreys approached the task of translation and transcription of documents with eagerness she could not give it her undivided attention as Botha was sent on a study tour for a year (1920-1921) to Europe and North America. Jeffreys had to take full responsibility for all archival matters and in addition, she was designated to act as Secretary for the AC in Botha's absence.⁹¹⁸ It was a demanding and challenging responsibility and in July 1920 she requested assistance as the workload was too much for one person.⁹¹⁹ Even after Botha's return, Jeffreys could not give her full attention to the task of source publications as she would have liked. However, during her years at the archive, Jeffreys was responsible for the publication of at least ten volumes of documents. The *Kaapse Archiefstukken* were the first volumes to be published of which the first was printed in 1926⁹²⁰ and others appeared in 1927, 1928, 1930, 1931, 1935 and 1938.⁹²¹ It was later decided to commence a new series, namely the *Kaapse Plakkaatboek* and the first publication too was edited by Jeffreys and published in 1944. The second in this series appeared only in 1948 – it was transcribed

⁹¹⁴ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 2 First Report Archives Commission 27 March 1920, p. 2.

⁹¹⁵ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 2 First Report Archives Commission 27 March 1920, p. 1.

⁹¹⁶ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 1 Minute Book of the Cape Archives Commission, Minutes of meeting held on 26 September 1918, n.p.

⁹¹⁷ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 M.K. Jeffreys. Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service. Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book, newspaper article: Anon, "Persoonlik", *Die Burger*, 13 Julie 1948, n.p.

⁹¹⁸ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 1 Minute Book of the Cape Archives Commission, Minutes of meeting held on 18 March 1920, n.p.

⁹¹⁹ WCARS ACB Archive of the Archives Commission Vol 1 Minute Book of the Cape Archives Commission, Meeting of the Archives Commission held on July 13th 1920, n.p.

⁹²⁰ M.K. Jeffreys, *Kaapse Archiefstukken 1778, 1926*.

⁹²¹ A.J. Böeseken, "Kaapse Bronnepublikasies. 'n Terugblik oor vyftig jaar", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 25.

by Jeffreys but because she reached retirement age in 1948 the volume was co-edited by two of her colleagues.⁹²² Jeffreys was also responsible for the translation and transcription of *The memorandum of Commissary J.A. de Mist*, volume 3 of the Van Riebeeck Society which was published in 1920.⁹²³ After her retirement in 1948, she undertook the transcription of Van Riebeeck's journals.⁹²⁴

From the above it can be deduced that Jeffreys was mostly concerned with source publications, however, it is not the full picture. Preserved in her collection at the Western Cape Archives and Records Service in Cape Town an undated document, presumably a presentation she prepared, was found in which she meticulously explained the duties and responsibilities of an archivist.⁹²⁵ It must be reiterated that no formal tertiary degree or training course concerning archives existed in SA at that stage. Jeffreys's knowledge of archives would have come from Botha as they were the only archive personnel in the Cape Archive for some time. Botha himself did not receive any formal training as regards archival practise and preservation. However, Botha had a keen interest in history and archives and brought with him from his overseas trip in 1911 a manual that would greatly transform the South African public archive. The Dutch Manual,⁹²⁶ as referred to in the chapter above, was regarded by many as the starting point of archival theory and methodology in the Western world. For the first time, archival terminology and practice were standardised and it was soon translated and printed in almost all European languages.⁹²⁷ All South African archivists became intimately acquainted with the Dutch edition which was later replaced by the American translation of 1940.⁹²⁸

⁹²² A.J. Böeseken, "Kaapse Bronnepublikasies. 'n Terugblik oor vyftig jaar", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 26-27.

⁹²³ K.M. Jeffreys, *The memorandum of Commissary J.A. de Mist*, Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1920.

See also: Anon, n.d., <<https://hipsa.org.za/publication/de-mist-j-a-memorandum-containing-recommendations-for-the-form-and-administration-of-government-at-the-cape-of-good-hope-1802/>>, access: June 2021.

⁹²⁴ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 M.K. Jeffreys. Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service. Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book, n.p.

⁹²⁵ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 35 "The work of an archivist", n.d., pp. 1-14.

⁹²⁶ Please refer to chapter 3 where the influence of the three Dutch archivists are discussed. The Dutch Manual refers to: S. Muller, J.A. Feith, R. Fruin, *Handleiding voor het ordenen en beschrijven van archieven*, 1898.

⁹²⁷ M. Duchein, "The history of European archives and the development of the archival profession in Europe", *The American Archivist* 55(1), 1992, p. 21.

⁹²⁸ J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 9.

The document found in Jeffreys's collection as referred to above, is of significance as it provides a glimpse into how Jeffreys understood the archive, as well as the archivist's functions and responsibilities to be. She lists the preservation of records, the arrangement and cataloguing of records, and the accessibility of archives to members of the public as critical functions of an archivist. It is not surprising that her exposition of the definition of an archive concurred with that of the writers of the Dutch Manual. She defined archives as follows: "Archives are the documents assembled by any official or body in the course of his or its activities. They consist of matters received, despatched or recorded by the person or body itself."⁹²⁹ Also of importance was her understanding of the arrangement function of the archivist – she explicitly stated that "[t]here is no "Dewey" system possible for archives",⁹³⁰ confirming that the nature of archives radically differs from that of libraries. The significant archival principles as described in the Dutch Manual were pronounced in her writings too, namely the principles of provenance and original order. Her writing on the archive provides some evidence that the archival principles had been adapted to the South African situation or point of view. Jeffreys mentioned in the case where volumes (or records) were misplaced and/or alienated from their original place, the internationally accepted practise was to leave the volumes (or records) where they were found. However, according to Jeffreys, the South African method deviated from this in that the volumes (or records) should be placed back in their original order and the necessary notes be made on the catalogue concerning these records.⁹³¹ Other aspects Jeffreys considered in her writing were the threats to records and archive buildings; different types of document series; transfer of government records to an archive repository, and; lastly Jeffreys interestingly pointed out that the archivist should make a study of the department or body who formed the archive, study its history, administrative and filing system to appropriately arrange the archive.⁹³² Jeffreys had a sound understanding of archival theory and practice as it was practiced then.

Jeffreys's archival work extended beyond source publications and the arranging of archival groups. Acknowledgements of her assistance to researchers and students were found in issues of the *Archives Year Books of South African History* until the

⁹²⁹ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 35 "The work of an archivist", n.d., pp. 1-14.

⁹³⁰ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 35 "The work of an archivist", n.d., p. 2.

⁹³¹ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 35 "The work of an archivist", n.d., pp. 8-9.

⁹³² WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 35 "The work of an archivist", n.d., pp. 1-14.

1940s, and similarly in many early Van Riebeeck Society volumes. Furthermore, she provided the synopsis of each chapter as well as the detailed index to the incomplete volume VI of Cory's *Rise of South Africa* which was published in 1940.⁹³³ Her experience and vast knowledge of the archive were well known and respected.⁹³⁴

It can be said that outside of the archive, Jeffreys likewise played a significant role in the developing and preservation of South African history and heritage with specific reference to the Cape. Three aspects are worth mentioning, the first concerned the establishing of the Historical Society of South Africa (HSSA) in 1937⁹³⁵ in which Jeffreys played a leading role. She also served as its honorary secretary⁹³⁶ with Botha as the president of the Society.⁹³⁷ The HSSA was sometimes referred to as the South African Historical Society, however, the name was officially recorded in its constitution as HSSA.⁹³⁸ The main objective of the HSSA was to foster the study and research of the South African history, to consider matters of antiquarian interest⁹³⁹ and "to encourage the publication of a South African Historical Magazine".⁹⁴⁰ Jeffreys's contribution did not end with the establishment of HSSA or her administrative functions, she contributed to the HSSA further by writing articles along with others who belonged to the Society.⁹⁴¹ The HSSA failed to establish a journal for publishing these articles and thus not much has survived the passage of time, except for only a few of the papers in manuscript form, such as Jeffreys's in her archival collection.⁹⁴² Despite

⁹³³ R. Vigne, "Reminiscences: Those who inspired me and influenced me: the three who led me to history", *Historia* 53(1), 2008, p. 231.

⁹³⁴ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 M.K. Jeffreys. Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service. Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book. Letter K.A. 1/2 dated 18 August 1948.

⁹³⁵ C. Saunders & B. le Cordeur, "The South African Historical Society and its antecedents", *South African Historical Journal* 18, 1986, p. 7.

⁹³⁶ K.L. Harris, "Warring societies? Towards a community of historians HASA and SAHS (1956-2014)", *Historia* 59(2), 2014, p. 347.

⁹³⁷ Anon, "To promote interest in S.A. history. Society formed at Cape", *Rand Daily Mail*, 4 March 1937, p. 13.

⁹³⁸ Anon, "To promote interest in S.A. history. Society formed at Cape", *Rand Daily Mail*, 4 March 1937, p. 13.

⁹³⁹ Anon, "To promote interest in S.A. history. Society formed at Cape", *Rand Daily Mail*, 4 March 1937, p. 13.

⁹⁴⁰ C. Saunders & B. le Cordeur, "The South African Historical Society and its antecedents", *South African Historical Journal* 18, 1986, p. 7.

⁹⁴¹ C. Saunders & B. le Cordeur, "The South African Historical Society and its antecedents", *South African Historical Journal* 18, 1986, p. 8.

⁹⁴² C. Saunders & B. le Cordeur, "The South African Historical Society and its antecedents", *South African Historical Journal* 18, 1986, pp. 7-8.

efforts to maintain interest in the HSSA, it ceased to exist in 1940.⁹⁴³ On her retirement in 1948,⁹⁴⁴ Jeffreys wrote that she undertook the resuscitation of the South African Historical Society,⁹⁴⁵ but it was not successful.

The second aspect of interest was her prolific writing specifically concerning Cape Town as a historical and cultural space. Jeffreys, as a member of the Cape Natural History Club and later president for three years,⁹⁴⁶ published between 1934 and 1939 a series of articles in the *Cape Naturalist* (magazine of the Cape Natural History Club) on "The Malay tombs of the holy circle".⁹⁴⁷ These articles explored Islam, its history and its presence at the Cape since the seventeenth century and are a testament to her authoritative knowledge of the subject.⁹⁴⁸ M. Samuelson argued that Jeffreys's writings on Islam present a "counter-archive to those produced by contemporary white intellectuals ... and comprises a print legacy that has informed the work of subsequent generations of scholars exploring the history of Islam at the Cape".⁹⁴⁹ Jeffreys immersed herself in the archive and history of the early Cape and her gaze as an archivist and amateur historian increasingly turned towards the East and is substantiated by her writings on Cape slavery, Islam and creolisation.⁹⁵⁰ In her writings on Islam, she primarily made use of archival sources, but interestingly she also used oral history. Twice she sent out appeals to the Coloured or Malay community for "reliable information"⁹⁵¹ which she then scrupulously verified against archival sources. However, she bemoaned the fact that the oral sources were vague and full of discrepancies and contradictions. By signing the articles as "Miss Jeffreys, The

⁹⁴³ J.S. Bergh, "Historiese verenigings en tydskrifte in Suid-Afrika: Verlede, hede en toekoms", *Historia* 38(2), 1993, pp. 33-49.

⁹⁴⁴ Saunders and Le Cordeur incorrectly stated that Jeffreys retired in 1984 (C. Saunders & B. le Cordeur, "The South African Historical Society and its antecedents", *South African Historical Journal* 18, 1986, p. 8.) – her retirement date was August 1948. WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 M.K. Jeffreys. Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service. Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book, n.p.

⁹⁴⁵ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 M.K. Jeffreys. Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service. Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book, n.p.

⁹⁴⁶ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 M.K. Jeffreys. Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service. Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book, n.p.

⁹⁴⁷ M. Samuelson, "Orienting the Cape: a 'white' woman writing Islam in South Africa", *Social Dynamics* 37(3), 2011, pp. 377-378.

⁹⁴⁸ M. Samuelson, "Orienting the Cape: a 'white' woman writing Islam in South Africa", *Social Dynamics* 37(3), 2011, p. 365.

⁹⁴⁹ M. Samuelson, "Orienting the Cape: a 'white' woman writing Islam in South Africa", *Social Dynamics* 37(3), 2011, p. 364.

⁹⁵⁰ M. Samuelson, "Re-imagining South Africa via a Passage to India: M.K. Jeffreys's Archive of the Indian Ocean World", *Social Dynamics* 33(2), 2007, pp. 61-85.

⁹⁵¹ M. Samuelson, "Orienting the Cape: a 'white' woman writing Islam in South Africa", *Social Dynamics* 37(3), 2011, p. 372.

Archives”⁹⁵² she perpetuated the view held about the archive at the time, namely that the archive and primary sources were the authority and truth on the subject researched.

The third aspect is Jeffreys’s interest in Africana. After her retirement, she was appointed manager of the Africana Room at Maskew Miller (a publisher) for approximately ten years. One of her responsibilities was to attend auctions where Africana items were sold and to purchase specific items for the company. There were times when she attended such auctions on behalf of private persons (sometimes from overseas) to acquire Africana, and sure enough, she would return with books, porcelain and silver she bought for her own collection.⁹⁵³ Her interest in Africana started from a young age and by 1935 her private Africana collection “enjoyed a considerable reputation”.⁹⁵⁴ After her time at Maskew Miller, she became an independent Africana dealer and consultant. Furthermore, she became the Africana and antique critic for the *Cape Times*⁹⁵⁵ and was considered one of South Africa’s best-known authorities on Africana.⁹⁵⁶ Jeffreys bequeathed all her books, pamphlets and manuscript notes to the Cape Archives Department after her death in 1968.⁹⁵⁷ The books alone were estimated to be more than 20,000.⁹⁵⁸ By 1972 the Cape Archive was still busy with the arrangement of the Jeffreys Bequest as Jeffreys bequeathed her large photo collection to the Cape Archives too. At that stage 7000 of a total of 13,000 photos were indexed.⁹⁵⁹ The Jeffreys collection had been described as of great value and its potential usefulness to researchers, to the Cape Archives, and also to the Government Archives Service is huge.⁹⁶⁰

Jeffreys’s private archive gives a rare and intimate glimpse into the life of a woman archivist at the start of and up to the mid-twentieth century. She retired in 1948 the

⁹⁵² M. Samuelson, "Orienting the Cape: a 'white' woman writing Islam in South Africa", *Social Dynamics* 37(3), 2011, p. 372.

⁹⁵³ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 43, Anon, "Snuffelaar van naam", *Sarie Marais*, 4 Julie 1951, p. 7.

⁹⁵⁴ J.H. Davies, "The Jeffreys Bequest", *SA Archives Journal* 10, 1968, p. 11.

⁹⁵⁵ J.H. Davies, "The Jeffreys Bequest", *SA Archives Journal* 10, 1968, p. 11.

⁹⁵⁶ Anon, n.d., <<https://hipsa.org.za/publication/de-mist-j-a-memorandum-containing-recommendations-for-the-form-and-administration-of-government-at-the-cape-of-good-hope-1802/>>, access: June 2021.

⁹⁵⁷ J.H. Davies, "The Jeffreys Bequest", *SA Archives Journal* 10, 1968, p. 12.

⁹⁵⁸ J.H. Davies, "The Jeffreys Bequest", *SA Archives Journal* 10, 1968, p. 13.

⁹⁵⁹ Anon, "Chronicle. Projects. Cape Archives Depot. Jeffreys-fotoversameling", *SA Archives Journal* 14, 1972, p. 67.

⁹⁶⁰ J.H. Davies, "The Jeffreys Bequest", *SA Archives Journal* 10, 1968, pp. 18-19.

same year the National Party came to power in SA and set in motion their apartheid policies.⁹⁶¹ Through her writings, she engaged with aspects of the South African past and present which were occluded in her time. For example, her writings on Islam as mentioned above were significant, as were her articles on Eva (Krotoa),⁹⁶² and miscegenation in SA.⁹⁶³ Her writings were brave “insistent efforts to throw light on lacunae”⁹⁶⁴ in the South African past for which she was lambasted and ridiculed on the one side and encouraged and supported on the other.⁹⁶⁵ As an archivist and writer Jeffreys believed in “the primacy of archival sources, the ultimate authority of the records, and the duty to follow them scrupulously”.⁹⁶⁶ She was a prolific writer, poet, and collector of Africana and importantly she was a pioneer of the Government Archives Service.⁹⁶⁷

6.4.2. Joan Hoskyn Davies

Reference was also made to Joan Hoskyn Davies concerning her appointment as head of the newly established Liaison Section in 1957 and the first ever woman to be appointed as head of an archive repository in 1966. She was the longest serving archivist of the three women archivists discussed here as her career in the South African archive spanned over thirty-nine years from 1935 to 1974.

Joan Hoskyn Davies was born in 1909 on Robben Island where her father practised as a medical doctor. She attended primary school on Robben Island, and part of her high school in Sea Point before the family moved to King William’s Town where she matriculated.⁹⁶⁸ Like Jeffreys, Davies also studied at Rhodes University College where

⁹⁶¹ R. Ross, *A concise history of South Africa*, pp. 122-153.

⁹⁶² N. Distiller & M. Samuelson, "'Denying the Coloured Mother': Gender and race in South Africa", *L'Homme.Z.F.G* 16(2), 2005, pp. 28-46.

⁹⁶³ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 34 A brief report on investigations into the origins and incidence of miscegenation in South Africa during the 17th and 18th centuries, dated May 1939. See also her second article submitted to the *Drum* magazine in 1959: WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 34 Miscegenation in South Africa. The growth of a colour prejudice.

⁹⁶⁴ M. Samuelson, "Re-imagining South Africa via a Passage to India: M.K. Jeffreys's Archive of the Indian Ocean World", *Social Dynamics* 33(2), 2007, p. 62.

⁹⁶⁵ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 44 Anon, "Miss Kathy's probes into 'Whites' strike fear", *Daily Mail*, 28 August 1959, p. 2.

⁹⁶⁶ R. Vigne, "Reminiscences: Those who inspired me and influenced me: the three who led me to history", *Historia* 53(1), 2008, p. 232.

⁹⁶⁷ J.H. Davies, "The Jeffreys Bequest", *SA Archives Journal* 10, 1968, p. 11.

⁹⁶⁸ J.H. Mienie, "Joan Hoskyn Davies", *Pretoriana Tydskrif van die Genootskap Oud-Pretoria* 52, 1966, p. 41.

she successfully attained a B.A. degree⁹⁶⁹ in History.⁹⁷⁰ From 1930 onwards she regularly applied for posts at the Cape Archives, but without success and to make ends meet she taught English at the Kokstad High School for a couple of years.⁹⁷¹ Other opportunities did come her way, but as she stated in a letter to Botha her “training was chosen with the view of doing archival work.”⁹⁷² In 1935 she was successful in her application and was appointed in July of the same year at the Cape Archives as an Archives Assistant Grade II.⁹⁷³ In 1936 she applied for a degree allowance as she intended to complete her M.A. degree, also in History at the Rhodes University College, but was subsequently informed that she was not eligible as her current post was not classified as clerical. A year later she renewed her request but was once more denied.⁹⁷⁴ Despite the setbacks, Davies persevered and completed her M.A. dissertation in History in the early 1940s and it was published in the *Archives Yearbook for South African History*, in 1942.⁹⁷⁵

Davies also received meticulous training under Botha, the Chief Archivist of the Cape Archives as well as the Union Chief Archivist and was greatly influenced by his enthusiasm and zeal for the preservation of the South African documentary heritage.⁹⁷⁶ Botha held the Dutch Manual in high regard and followed the principles as set out in the Cape Archive. The Dutch Manual also became her “bible” and guideline for archival work as all the government archivists who trained under Botha were trained using the Manual.⁹⁷⁷ However, in her later years, she would object to the use and application of the Manual in public archives.⁹⁷⁸

It would seem where Jeffreys’s contribution was mostly recognised in the years after she retired from the Cape Archive, Davies’s input was recognised almost immediately.

⁹⁶⁹ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 51.

⁹⁷⁰ NARSSA ARH Vol 37 File S.A. 5/12 Regrading and revised salary scales. Archives, Cape Town and 3 dépots. Letter dated 30 June 1937, p. 1.

⁹⁷¹ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 51.

⁹⁷² NARSSA ARH Vol 37 File S.A. 5/12 Regrading and revised salary scales. Archives, Cape Town and 3 dépots. Letter dated 30 June 1937, p. 2.

⁹⁷³ NARSSA ARH Vol 37 File S.A. 5/12 Regrading and revised salary scales. Archives, Cape Town and 3 dépots. Letter dated 30 June 1937, p. 1.

⁹⁷⁴ NARSSA ARH Vol 37 File S.A. 5/12 Regrading and revised salary scales. Archives, Cape Town and 3 dépots. Letter C.1/A/82/14 dated 25 October 1937, p. 1.

⁹⁷⁵ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 51.

⁹⁷⁶ J.H. Davies, "The Government archives of South Africa and Record Management", *SA Archive Journal* 3, 1961, p. 15; J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 51.

⁹⁷⁷ J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, p. 9.

⁹⁷⁸ NARSSA ARH box 192 File 30/4 Konferensie van Argivarisse. Notule. 19/1-21/1/1959, pp. 6-7.

In a letter marked “confidential” P.J. Venter, Archivist at the Cape Archive under whom Davies was working, wrote that she was an excellent and conscientious worker, rendered valuable service and had a knack for archival work.⁹⁷⁹ Furthermore, in a memorandum in regards to the reorganisation of the office, it was stated that Davies “ha[d] proved that she [wa]s any day equal to a man in her work.”⁹⁸⁰ This positive feedback resulted in Davies’ promotion to Archives Assistant Grade I only two years after her appointment.⁹⁸¹ Following the post of Archives Assistant Grade I in the professional ranks was that of Assistant Archivist, but even if such a post was available neither Jeffreys nor Davies was considered for it as they, in the words of Botha and Venter, lacked the necessary skills and experience.⁹⁸² In his letter, Botha appealed to the Secretary for the Interior “that the right type of officer be appointed”⁹⁸³ in the post of Assistant Archivist which, in this case, was a junior male officer.⁹⁸⁴ It was deemed undesirable to appoint “women to posts where they will exercise control over men. Neither was it the general practise in the Public Service.”⁹⁸⁵ A build-up of female staff was seen as dangerous as they would be in competition with male candidates, hence the abandonment of the policy to appoint women⁹⁸⁶ in the higher ranks. However, the Conference of Archivists in 1944 resolved that consideration be given to the admission of women to the post of Assistant Archivist, but women should not be allowed to progress beyond this.⁹⁸⁷ This can be seen as firm action taken to keep women out of positions of policy making and power and to effect their secondary positions in the archive.

⁹⁷⁹ NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/1 Vol 2 Appointment of Asst Archivist. Letter dated 7 August 1937, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁰ NARSSA ARH box 37 File S.A. 5/12 Regrading and revised salary scales. Archives, Cape Town and 3 dépôts. Memorandum on reorganisation of office dated 24 August 1936, p. 3.

⁹⁸¹ NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/6 Vacant posts in Archives Cape Town and 3 dépôts. Letter S.I. 7/7 dated 12 Nov 1937, p. 1.

⁹⁸² NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/1 Vol 2 Appointments. Archives, Cape Town. Letter dated 7 August 1937, pp. 1-3.

⁹⁸³ NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/1 Vol 2 Appointments. Archives, Cape Town. Letter dated 25 August 1937, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁴ NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/1 Appointments. Archives, Cape Town. Memorandum on the admission of women to the post of Assistant Archivist, signed 16 March 1944, pp. 1-2.

⁹⁸⁵ NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/1 Appointments. Archives, Cape Town. Memorandum on the admission of women to the post of Assistant Archivist, signed 16 March 1944, p. 1.

⁹⁸⁶ NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/1 Appointments. Archives, Cape Town. Memorandum on the admission of women to the post of Assistant Archivist, signed 16 March 1944, p. 2.

⁹⁸⁷ NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/1 Appointments. Archives, Cape Town. Memorandum on the admission of women to the post of Assistant Archivist, signed 16 March 1944, p. 2.

Botha retired as Archivist of the Union and of the Cape Archive in 1944 and with the appointment of Coenraad Beyers as the new Chief Archivist,⁹⁸⁸ the Archive's Head Office was moved from Cape Town to Pretoria. Davies was also transferred to Pretoria and was attached for some time to the Transvaal Archives Depot.⁹⁸⁹ It was during her time in Pretoria that her career took an upward trajectory. With his appointment in 1950 as Assistant Chief Archivist at the Transvaal Archives Depot, Kieser⁹⁹⁰ implemented regular meetings with senior members of the archive staff to discuss archival matters. During these discussions guidelines regarding archival policy were formulated and as a senior member of the staff, Davies formed part of this small group.⁹⁹¹ Throughout her career, she was involved in most aspects of archival work. It was not uncommon to find senior members of archival staff, such as Davies, carrying archives from strong rooms (storage facilities) to the reading room for researchers because of the shortage of personnel. Furthermore, her time at the Cape Archive was mostly spent in the arrangement and description of archives. She was firmly grounded in the principles of arrangement and description⁹⁹² especially as she studied and worked under Botha with the Dutch Manual as a guideline. Davies was convinced from early on in her career that the archivist's responsibility was not limited to the documents and records in their custody, but had to take cognisance of records outside the public archive still in the custody of government offices.⁹⁹³ Although Davies received meticulous training under Botha who was in favour of the archive having more control over records in government offices it was the events in the late 1950s and the promulgation of the Archives Act of 1962 that effected greater control of the State Archives Service over current records still in the custody of government offices.⁹⁹⁴

In the exploration of the archival legislation above, mention was made of the destruction of ephemeral records and the provisions allowed for it in the different pieces of legislation. Although no mention was made regarding the disposal of records

⁹⁸⁸ W.B. van der Vyver, "Dr. Coenraad Beyers", *SA Archives Journal* 18, 1976, p. 34.

⁹⁸⁹ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 51; NARSSA ARH box 36 File S.A. 3/6 Vacant posts in Archives Cape Town and 3 dépôts. Letter S.A. 3/6 dated 19 August 1944.

⁹⁹⁰ Kieser was the Archivist of the Bloemfontein repository between 1930 and 1950; appointed as Assistant Chief Archivist to the Transvaal repository in 1950, and from 1953 until his retirement in 1969 he was the Chief Archivist of the Union and since 1962 the Director of Archives. J.F. Preller, "Dr. Allen Kieser", *SA Archives Journal* 11, 1969, pp. 12-15.

⁹⁹¹ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 51.

⁹⁹² J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 52.

⁹⁹³ J.H. Davies, "The Government archives of South Africa and Record Management", *SA Archive Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 7-17.

⁹⁹⁴ J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, pp. 16-24.

in the original Public Archives Act of 1922, the regulations published in 1926⁹⁹⁵ dealt with the matter. The 1953 Archives Act made specific provision for an AC whose primary function was to examine applications and approve the disposal of records in any public archive or any government office.⁹⁹⁶ However, the Archives Act of 1962 brought important changes and ascribed this responsibility to the Director of Archives.⁹⁹⁷ It may be said that events towards the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s informed this decision. Far-reaching organisational changes took place in the Government Archives Service in 1957 of which the formation of the Office of the Chief Archivist was certainly the most important. In the past, the Chief Archivist was also the head of the Transvaal Archives,⁹⁹⁸ but since 1957 the Chief Archivist was no longer identified with any repository and responsible for the over-all control of the Union Archives only. The Office of the Chief Archivist was responsible for archival policy and issuing instructions on professional and administrative matters.⁹⁹⁹ These organisational changes brought into existence two new sections of which the Liaison Section was one.¹⁰⁰⁰ Davies who initially formed part of the Transvaal Archives personnel was promoted¹⁰⁰¹ to head this newly established unit.¹⁰⁰² Furthermore, these changes gave permanent shape to the discussions of the 1950s between the then Assistant Chief Archivist and a small circle of senior archivists mentioned above. This newly formed section was primarily responsible for investigating applications for the disposal of records, but also to liaise and establish good relations between the Archives Service and government departments and offices.¹⁰⁰³

For the first time since its inception, the Government Archives Service had personnel assigned specifically to attend to the challenge of the disposal of ephemeral records.

⁹⁹⁵ Government Notice 2279 17 Dec 1926, *Government Gazette* No. 1595, 17 December 1926, pp. 730-731.

⁹⁹⁶ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 5157, 7 October 1953, pp. 2-8.

⁹⁹⁷ J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, p. 17.

⁹⁹⁸ The Chief Archivist was from 1919 to 1944 based at the Cape Archives and officiated as the head of the Cape Archives. After Botha's retirement in 1944 the new Chief Archivist was stationed in Pretoria and likewise became the head of the Transvaal Archives Depot.

⁹⁹⁹ J.H. Davies, "The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 17.

¹⁰⁰⁰ J.H. Mienie, "Joan Hoskyn Davies", *Pretoriana Tydskrif van die Genootskap Oud-Pretoria* 52, 1966, p. 42.

¹⁰⁰¹ From 1 August 1957 she was promoted to the rank of Senior Archivist and from 1 October 1957 she was made head of the newly formed Liaison Section. ARH box 216 File S1/29 Vol 1 (no subject). Letter 13 May 1961.

¹⁰⁰² J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, p. 18.

¹⁰⁰³ J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, p. 18.

The launching of the Liaison Section proved to be challenging and something of this nature had never been undertaken in SA. The work needed to be systemised, procedures standardised and placed on a scientific footing¹⁰⁰⁴ to be able to deliver a proper and efficient service to government offices. It was soon realised that the proper development and maintenance of filing systems used in government offices were crucial to the task of disposing of records. A well-developed filing system had advantages for the office where the records were created for its day-to-day administration, but also for the archive repository where the records were transferred after a period of time. Ideally, an approved filing system allowed for disposal authority on every type of record described in the filing system. This lessened the pressure on the office of origin as it would enable them to dispose of records before they were transferred to an archive repository for preservation. The archive repository should receive fewer records to process, arrange and describe. The Liaison Section¹⁰⁰⁵ realised it was an impossible task and therefore the different government offices were made responsible for the designing of their filing systems while the Record Management Section would provide support in terms of guidelines, comments and critique of the systems.¹⁰⁰⁶ The Public Service Commission was previously responsible for the composition of filing systems for government offices, but due to the unique efforts of the Record Management Section to standardise procedures regarding the destruction of records it was subsequently decided in 1960 to delegate this function to the Chief Archivist who in turn delegated it to the Record Management Section.¹⁰⁰⁷ The Record Management Section consisted of merely three members and was responsible for the entire Public Service's applications for disposal of records as well as to provide support as regards the filing systems of government offices. As head of the new section, Davies played a major role in its success and "[m]ethods which were developed and policies initiated in those formative years are still followed and in

¹⁰⁰⁴ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 52; J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, pp. 18-19.

¹⁰⁰⁵ The name change was to properly reflect its role and functions. J.H. Davies, "The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 18; J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, pp. 18-20.

¹⁰⁰⁶ J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, p. 20.

¹⁰⁰⁷ J.H. Snyman, "Rekordbeheer in Suid-Afrika, 1950-1962", *SA Archives Journal* 4, 1962, p. 19.

some instances adhered to".¹⁰⁰⁸ Davies, as the first woman in the history of the South African archive history to be head of a section, held the post until 1962.

The organisational changes of 1957, alluded to above, included the source research work overseas – this section was henceforth administered by the Office of the Chief Archivist.¹⁰⁰⁹ In 1962 Davies was sent overseas as Archivist for Source Research in England.¹⁰¹⁰ On her arrival, she received detailed instructions regarding her work in London from the Director of Archives, amongst others that "[g]enerally speaking, all documents pertaining to the Cape have to be microfilmed".¹⁰¹¹ The instruction referred to documents of the nineteenth century period up to the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) as regards the Cape Colony, but was later extended to include Southern Africa.¹⁰¹² However, taking into consideration the immense amount of records available in different repositories it was decided to focus mainly on records in the PRO.¹⁰¹³ Davies worked alone in London and was responsible for researching specific series of documents in the PRO, arranging for the microfilming of the files and records, and forwarding the microfilms to SA. Davies was also responsible for the financial administration of this project.¹⁰¹⁴ In addition to her source research activities, she was requested by Kieser (Director of Archives at the time) to assist the Department of External Affairs and Treasury in London with their schedules of records that were earmarked for disposal.¹⁰¹⁵ Although Davies had no previous experience in source research, the sheer amount of microfilms made¹⁰¹⁶ and sent back to SA is proof of the excellent work performed by her. The source research project was to last for a

¹⁰⁰⁸ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 52.

¹⁰⁰⁹ J.H. Davies, "The Organisational development of the Government Archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archive Journal* 2, 1960, p. 18.

¹⁰¹⁰ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 52.

¹⁰¹¹ NARSSA ARH box 1801 File M14/2E/4 Vol 1 Bronnenavorsing. Buitelands. Engeland. Letter dated 6 March 1962, p. 1.

¹⁰¹² J.H. Davies, "Some aspects of source research in the United Kingdom", *SA Archives Journal* 8, 1966, p. 11.

¹⁰¹³ J.H. Davies, "Some aspects of source research in the United Kingdom", *SA Archives Journal* 8, 1966, p. 14.

¹⁰¹⁴ NARSSA ARH box 1801 File M14/2E/4 Vol 1 Bronnenavorsing. Buitelands. Engeland. Letter dated 6 March 1962, pp. 1-2; J.H. Davies, "Some aspects of source research in the United Kingdom", *SA Archives Journal* 8, 1966, pp. 9-22.

¹⁰¹⁵ NARSSA ARH box 1801 File M14/2E/4 Vol 1 Bronnenavorsing. Buitelands. Engeland. Letter dated 6 March 1962, p. 2.

¹⁰¹⁶ See for instance: A. Kieser, "Extracts from the Annual report of the Director of Archives, 1965," *SA Archives Journal* 8, 1966, pp. 63-64.

minimum period of five years, but as abruptly as she was sent to London, she was summoned back to SA in 1966.¹⁰¹⁷

In a letter to a friend, Davies wrote that she has been offered the position as head of the Cape Archives and would return to SA by end of March or beginning of April 1966.¹⁰¹⁸ On her return to SA, she was appointed head of the Cape Archives from April 1966 until her retirement in December 1974. Her acceptance of the post as head of the Cape Archives made her the first woman in the South African archival history to be the head of an archive repository.¹⁰¹⁹

Davies was a founding¹⁰²⁰ and later honorary¹⁰²¹ member of SASA which was established in 1960. Membership was open to all archivists, nationally and internationally, but at that point, members consisted mostly of personnel of the State Archives Service.¹⁰²² Davies served for many years as a board member and contributed various articles to SASA's journal (*SA Archives Journal*).¹⁰²³ Her life outside of the South African archive was equally remarkable. She joined the Public Servants Association of South Africa (PSA) early on in her career and was for many years an active member of the Association. Davies was elected as the chairperson of the PSA Women's Section and also served as a member of the Central Committee of this section.¹⁰²⁴ Amongst other matters Davies felt strongly about discrimination against women in the workplace and would spend most of her time in the PSA

¹⁰¹⁷ J.H. Davies, "Some aspects of source research in the United Kingdom", *SA Archives Journal* 8, 1966, pp. 11, 22.

¹⁰¹⁸ WCARS A.J. Böeseke Collection A2643 Vol 33 Correspondence Friends C-G Joan Davies (1944-1969). Letter dated 30 December 1965.

¹⁰¹⁹ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, pp. 52-53.

¹⁰²⁰ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 53.

¹⁰²¹ WCARS A.J. Böeseke Collection A2643 Vol 118 Organisations. South African Society of Archivists 1973-1996. Notule van die Stigtingsvergadering van die Kaapse tak van die Vereniging van Argivarisse – 28 Februarie 1984, p. 2.

¹⁰²² A. Kieser, "Voorwoord", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 5.

¹⁰²³ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 53. For her articles please refer to: J.H. Davies, "The organisational development of the Government archives of the Union of South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 7-19; J.H. Davies, "The Government Archives of South Africa and Record Management", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 7-17; J.H. Davies, "Some aspects of source research in the United Kingdom", *SA Archives Journal* 8, 1966, pp. 9-22; J.H. Davies, "The Jeffreys Bequest", *SA Archives Journal* 10, 1968, pp. 11-19; J.H. Davies, "Colin Graham Botha, 1883-1973", *SA Archives Journal* 15, 1973, pp. 7-20.

¹⁰²⁴ J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, p. 53. As example of her participation please refer to: NARSSA SDK box 4290 File 83/35 Vol 14 Public Servants Association. Women's Central Committee. Minutes of a meeting held on 28 October 1948.

Women's Section and Central Committee remonstrating against the unequal treatment of women in the public service.¹⁰²⁵

When her career is carefully examined, what Davies achieved is nothing short of remarkable for a woman at that time in the Public Service. Her career was characterised by many firsts, namely, she was the first woman to be promoted to the Archives Assistant Grade I rank which had been a purely male post before, and was thereby placed on the same footing as the male staff.¹⁰²⁶ She was the first woman to be promoted to Senior Archivist and the first to be the head of a section in the South African archive.¹⁰²⁷ In 1962 she was sent to London as Archivist for Source Research, the first woman to be sent as previously it was only males who were sent, namely, Theal, Muller (source research in the United States of America), De Kock (source research in Europe), Steytler (source research in England), and Wypkema (source research in the Netherlands).¹⁰²⁸ As indicated above, Davies was on her return to SA in 1966 appointed head of an archives repository, the first woman to be so appointed in the history of the South African archival history. The "firsts" do not end there, Davies was also the first woman to be appointed vice-chairperson of the Old Pretoria Society in 1960.¹⁰²⁹

The same spirit of dedication and pride in service of the archive that she so admired in Botha was present in her archival career. Her thorough planning, strength and persistence, and above all her love and passion for the archive and documentary heritage of SA contributed to her success, but most of all to the archival legacy she left behind. Joan Hoskyn Davies can be described as a trail blazer and indeed a pioneer in the South African archive service.

¹⁰²⁵ NARSSA SDK box 4290 File 83/35 Vol 14 Public Servants Association. Minutes of a meeting of the Executive Committee held on Monday 9th February 1948, p. 4.

¹⁰²⁶ NARSSA ARH Vol 37 File S.A. 5/12 Regrading and revised salary scales. Archives, Cape Town and 3 dépots. Letter dated 30 June 1937.

¹⁰²⁷ NARSSA ARH box 216 File S1/29 Vol 1 (no subject). Letter 13 May 1961; J.H. Mienie, "Miss J.H. Davies", *SA Archives Journal* 17, 1975, pp. 51-53.

¹⁰²⁸ M.H. Buys, "Duplisering van Britse argivale bronne vir navorsing", *Historia* 16(1), 1971, pp. 47-49.

¹⁰²⁹ J.H. Mienie, "Joan Hoskyn Davies", *Pretoriana Tydskrif van die Genootskap Oud-Pretoria* 52, 1966, p. 45.

6.4.3. Anna Jacoba Böeseke

The third pioneering women in archives, Anna Jacoba Böeseke was born on 23 October 1905 in Pretoria and passed away in June 1997 in Cape Town.¹⁰³⁰ Böeseke published and was fluent in three languages namely, Afrikaans, English and Dutch which was also her mother tongue. She started school in Bloemfontein and matriculated at the Good Hope Seminary in Cape Town in 1924.¹⁰³¹ She attained a B.A. degree, majoring in English and History at the University of Cape Town in 1928. In 1930 she attained a B.Ed degree and was appointed as a teacher in Prince Albert.¹⁰³² She also taught in Rondebosch, Cradock, Paarl and Cape Town.¹⁰³³ In 1937 Böeseke attained a Master's degree from the University of Stellenbosch¹⁰³⁴ with the dissertation *Nederlandsche Commissarissen aan de Kaap* which was published by the well-known Dutch publisher Marthinus Nijhoff in 1938.¹⁰³⁵ In 1943 she attained her Ph.D. in History also from the University of Stellenbosch.¹⁰³⁶ Böeseke resigned from her teaching post and started work at Nasionale Pers (National Press) as a publisher, where she was employed from 1944 to 1955.¹⁰³⁷ It was during this period that her paths crossed with that of Kieser, the Chief Archivist. Böeseke, Kieser and D.W. Krüger were commissioned to write the 300-year history of SA from 1652 to 1952.¹⁰³⁸ The completed work consisted of five volumes of which Böeseke wrote the whole part I and three chapters of part II.¹⁰³⁹ Kieser was instrumental in her joining the Cape Archive¹⁰⁴⁰ when she was appointed Assistant Archivist in June 1955.¹⁰⁴¹ After fifteen years, Böeseke retired in 1970 from the Government Archives Service. She delivered work of the highest quality and was well-known for her source publication and research

¹⁰³⁰ I. Oggel, "Dr Anna Böeseke (1905-1997). An epitaph", *Vuka* 2(4), 1997, p. 22.

¹⁰³¹ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 20.

¹⁰³² R. Shell, "Interview with A.J. Böeseke", *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 20, 1993, p. 111.

¹⁰³³ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 21.

¹⁰³⁴ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48, 2, 2003, p. 21.

¹⁰³⁵ R. Shell, "Interview with A.J. Böeseke", *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 20, 1993, p. 112.

¹⁰³⁶ I. Oggel, "Dr Anna Böeseke (1905-1997). An epitaph", *Vuka* 2(4), 1997, p. 23.

¹⁰³⁷ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48, 2, 2003 p. 22.

¹⁰³⁸ R. Shell, "Interview with A.J. Böeseke", *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 20, 1993, p. 113.

¹⁰³⁹ A.J. Böeseke, D.W. Kruger & A. Kieser, *Drie Eeue: die verhaal van ons vaderland. Part I to V. Kaapstad: Nasionale Boekhandel, 1952-3.*

¹⁰⁴⁰ R. Shell, "Interview with A.J. Böeseke", *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 20, 1993, p. 113.

¹⁰⁴¹ WCARS A.J. Böeseke Collection A2643 Vol 120 Newspaper cuttings. Anon, "Geskietskryfster in Kaapse Argief aangestel", *Die Burger*, 19 Mei 1955, n.p.

locally and internationally. A colleague and friend wrote that there was probably no one who could surpass Böeseke's knowledge of the history of the VOC period.¹⁰⁴² However, her contribution was not restricted to archival source publication, she was considered one of the most influential female historians in SA and made an exceptional contribution to South African historical writing.¹⁰⁴³

Böeseke was appointed to the Cape Archives Depot in 1955 and in 1957 she was promoted to Editor of documents in the Cape Archives. However, in 1961 she was promoted to Editor-in-chief of the Government Archives Service, responsible for source publications of all four provincial archive repositories.¹⁰⁴⁴ As far as could be determined she was the first woman to be appointed as Editor for the Cape Archives and later the first woman to hold the position of Editor-in-Chief of the Government Archives Service. As a historian, Böeseke appreciated the fact that one is never done conversing with the past. Historical works are transient, however necessary at the time, as every generation with its own experiences, interests, and problems asks different questions, "[m]aar de bronne blijven"¹⁰⁴⁵ (but the sources/archives remain). The preservation of archives is one of the functions of society and Böeseke was convinced that the best way to accomplish the preservation of archives of the early South African history was the publication thereof to as wide a public as possible.¹⁰⁴⁶

Her historical contribution can be divided into two sections: firstly, her archival source publication, and secondly her historical writing. In the relatively short period of her fifteen years at the Government Archives Service, she left an impressive legacy and an extensive volume of work. In following Theal, Leibbrandt and Jeffreys, Böeseke was the driving force behind the comprehensive series of archival source publications of the VOC period, including various articles.¹⁰⁴⁷ She was responsible for the publication of four volumes of the *Resolusies van die Politieke Raad 1651–1715*¹⁰⁴⁸

¹⁰⁴² W. Coolhaas, "Het wetenschappelijke werk van dr. Anna Böeseke", *SA Archives Journal* 12, 1970, pp. 29-33.

¹⁰⁴³ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003 pp. 19-30.

¹⁰⁴⁴ WCARS A.J. Böeseke Collection A2643 Vol 59 Biographical information. Pligstaats/Duty Sheet, n.d., p. 2.

¹⁰⁴⁵ A.J. Venedaal as quoted in A.J. Böeseke, "Kaapse Bronnepublikasies. 'n Terugblik oor vyftig jaar", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 21.

¹⁰⁴⁶ A.J. Böeseke, "Kaapse Bronnepublikasies. 'n Terugblik oor vyftig jaar", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, p. 21.

¹⁰⁴⁷ P. Kapp, "Die VOC-tydperk as navorsingsterrein vir historici", *Historia* 46(2), 2001, p. 374.

¹⁰⁴⁸ A.J. Böeseke (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke Kaap, Resolusies van die Politieke Raad 1651-1715, Deel I-IV*, Kaapstad, 1952-1967.

(Resolutions of the Political Council). In 1966 a new series of the VOC period was embarked upon and the first part, the *Belangrike Kaapse Dokumente, Memoriën en Instructiën 1657-1699* was published in the same year,¹⁰⁴⁹ with two more volumes published after her retirement.¹⁰⁵⁰ Böeseke commenced preparatory work for a fourth volume in the series which would have consisted of the records of the Deeds Office in Cape Town, but unfortunately, it was never completed.¹⁰⁵¹ However, it is possible to say that her research and writings in her later years regarding the slaves and free blacks at the Cape filled this void to a degree as these records in the Deeds Office were her primary sources and until that time hardly accessed by researchers.

In her historical writing, Böeseke's focus shifted later on to the slaves and free blacks at the Cape and her comprehensive study and publication in this regard are of importance.¹⁰⁵² Through her work, she focused attention on slavery as it has not been done before in SA: slaves were studied in their own right and she also questioned the generally accepted theory regarding the "mildness" of slavery at the Cape.¹⁰⁵³ She was the foremost researcher to carry out pioneering work into the origins of slaves and the first researcher to quantify the slaves at the Cape.¹⁰⁵⁴ Böeseke relied on unpublished material in the Deeds Office in Cape Town and revealed until then relatively unknown details of the slaves and free blacks at the Cape – their trials and tribulations were soberly and movingly sketched in her work.¹⁰⁵⁵ Böeseke's book on slaves and free blacks was her first to be written in English and made her research accessible to readers internationally.¹⁰⁵⁶ She received wide recognition for this work and was the first recipient of the Recht Malan Prize.¹⁰⁵⁷

¹⁰⁴⁹ A.J. Böeseke (ed.), *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke, Belangrike Kaapse Dokumente, Memoriën en Instructiën 1657-1699*, Kaapstad 1966.

¹⁰⁵⁰ A.J. Böeseke (ed.), *Belangrike Kaapse Dokumente II, Dagregister en briewe van Zacharias Wagenaer 1662-1666*, (Pretoria, 1973); A.J. Böeseke (ed.), *Belangrike Kaapse Dokumente III, Uit die Raad van Justisie, 1652-1672*, (Pretoria, 1986); C de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 23.

¹⁰⁵¹ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 23.

¹⁰⁵² A.J. Böeseke, *Slaves and Free Blacks at the Cape, 1658-1700*, Tafelberg Publishers, Cape Town, 1977.

¹⁰⁵³ N. Southey, "From the periphery to core: The treatment of Cape slavery in South African historiography", *Historia* 37(2), 1992, pp. 19-20.

¹⁰⁵⁴ P. Rama, *A forgotten diaspora: Forced Indian migration to the Cape Colony, 1658 to 1834*, pp. 23, 131.

¹⁰⁵⁵ R. van Rensburg, "Our Dr B.", *Vuka* 2(4), 1997, p. 24.

¹⁰⁵⁶ H.F. Heese, "Mortaliteit onder VOC-slawe, 1720-1782", *Kronos* 11, 1986, p. 7.

¹⁰⁵⁷ WCARS A.J. Böeseke Collection A2643 Vol 120 Newspaper cuttings. W.O. Kühne, "Sy gaan na die bron", *Die Burger*, 6 September 1978, n.p.

As the case was with Jeffreys, Böeseke's contribution to source publications of the VOC period was not restricted to her official work at the Government Archives Service. Böeseke revised Leo Fouché's *The Diary of Adam Tas: Het dagboek van Adam Tas* (1914) for a new edition published by the Van Riebeeck Society in 1970.¹⁰⁵⁸ Furthermore, she was responsible for the English summary of the letters of Hendrik Swellengrebel (Junior) between 1778 and 1792 which was published by the Van Riebeeck Society in 1982.¹⁰⁵⁹

As a historian, Böeseke was a product of her time and academic training.¹⁰⁶⁰ As the political tide started to change in SA a new generation of historians with new questions and approaches to history came to the fore. In retrospect, in her research Böeseke did not keep track of the changes in South African historical writing and it can be counted as a loss to South African historiography that she did not give more attention to the history of the local people.¹⁰⁶¹ However, this might be a rash judgement and a disservice to her work as she explored this theme in chapters in her books on Simon van der Stel, Jan van Riebeeck and most particularly in her work on slaves and free blacks.¹⁰⁶² Her contribution lies in the fact that she opened new avenues in researching the history of slaves and free blacks and laid the foundation for other researchers to expand on it. This could be seen especially in the small-scale studies which were to a large extent taken up by the Institute for Historical Research at the University of the Western Cape and published in the journal *Kronos*.¹⁰⁶³

Böeseke, like Davies, contributed various articles¹⁰⁶⁴ to the *SA Archives Journal*, but only became a member of SASA when the Cape Town Branch was launched in

¹⁰⁵⁸ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 23.

¹⁰⁵⁹ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 23.

¹⁰⁶⁰ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 27.

¹⁰⁶¹ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 28.

¹⁰⁶² R. van Rensburg, "Our Dr B.", *Vuka* 2(4), 1997, p. 24; C de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 28.

¹⁰⁶³ N. Southey, "From the periphery to core: The treatment of Cape slavery in South African historiography", *Historia* 37(2), 1992, p. 20.

¹⁰⁶⁴ See for instance: A.J. Böeseke, "Theal as baanbreker (11 April 1837-17 April 1919)", *SA Archives Journal* 1, 1959, pp. 33-42; A.J. Böeseke, "Kaapse Bronnepublikasies. 'n Terugblik oor vyftig jaar", *SA Archives Journal* 2, 1960, pp. 20-28; A.J. Böeseke, "Die staat en bronnepublikasie in Nederland", *SA Archives Journal* 3, 1961, pp. 48-54; A.J. Böeseke, "Die Nasionale Argief in Parys", *SA Archives Journal* 6, 1964, pp. 48-53.

1984.¹⁰⁶⁵ Like the other two women archivists discussed above, Böeseke's life outside the archive proved to be as significant. As discussed above, Jeffreys was involved in establishing the Historical Society of SA to encourage studies in South African history, however by the 1940s it ceased to exist.¹⁰⁶⁶ After her retirement in 1948, Jeffreys and others were again trying to bring the Historical Society to life, but this too was unsuccessful. Eventually, the South African Historical Society¹⁰⁶⁷ was established in February 1956.¹⁰⁶⁸ Böeseke with her formidable reputation as a historian and archivist was the only woman present among the founding members of the Society.¹⁰⁶⁹ Although there was no formal discrimination against women, they participated in the biennial conferences and actively contributed to the *South African Historical Journal*, "but until 1985 no women held any office on the Council"¹⁰⁷⁰ of the Society. Like Jeffreys, Böeseke had a keen interest in genealogy and was a founding member of the Genealogical Society of South Africa (GSSA) in 1964. She also served on its board until 1986 when she was awarded honorary membership.¹⁰⁷¹

Böeseke was recognised as an advocate for women's rights, especially for women in the church.¹⁰⁷² The position of women in the church was of concern to her as she firmly believed that men and women were created equal and that women should be able to serve in the same positions as men in the church.¹⁰⁷³ It was largely through Böeseke's persistent engagement with church leaders, her speeches and her writing of articles on the subject that women in the *Gereformeerde Kerk* (Reformed Church) in the 1980s got the right to vote.¹⁰⁷⁴ However, women were still not allowed to serve

¹⁰⁶⁵ WCARS A.J. Böeseke Collection A2643 Vol 118 Organisations. South African Society of Archivists 1979-1996. Naamlys van ingeskrewe lede van die S.A. Vereniging van Argivarisse woonagtig in die Kaapprovinsie, n.p.

¹⁰⁶⁶ WCARS M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657 Vol 10 Letters, telegrams and cards received on retirement from the Government Archives Service Jun-Aug 1948. Autographs Book, n.p.; J.S. Bergh, "Historiese verenigings en tydskrifte in Suid-Afrika: Verlede, hede en toekoms", *Historia* 38(2), 1993, p. 37.

¹⁰⁶⁷ The South African Historical Society was renamed the Southern African Historical Society in 2005. Anon, n.d., <<https://www.sahs.org.za/history>>, access: June 2022.

¹⁰⁶⁸ C. Saunders & B. le Cordeur, "The South African Historical Society and its antecedents", *South African Historical Journal* 18, 1986, p. 11.

¹⁰⁶⁹ C. Saunders & B. le Cordeur, "The South African Historical Society and its antecedents", *South African Historical Journal* 18, 1986, p. 17, footnote 103.

¹⁰⁷⁰ C. Saunders & B. le Cordeur, "The South African Historical Society and its antecedents", *South African Historical Journal* 18, 1986, p. 17.

¹⁰⁷¹ Anon, n.d., <<https://genza.org.za/index.php/en/gssa-founders1>>, access: August 2022.

¹⁰⁷² I. Oggel, "Dr Anna Böeseke (1905-1997). An epitaph", *Vuka* 2(4), 1997, p. 23.

¹⁰⁷³ A.J. Böeseke, "Die vrou in die kerkgeskiedenis", *In die Skriflig* 14(53), 1980, pp. 33-40; R. Pieterse & H. van Deventer, "Die 'vroue-kwessie' in die GKSA", *In die Skriflig* 36(4), 2002, p. 705.

¹⁰⁷⁴ I. Oggel, "Dr Anna Böeseke (1905-1997). An epitaph", *Vuka* 2(4), 1997, p. 23.

in the same positions as men, but they had the right to vote for men to serve in specific offices in the church.¹⁰⁷⁵

Anna Böeseke can “without contradiction be rated as one of the greatest authorities on the history of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape”.¹⁰⁷⁶ Through her source publications and monographs,¹⁰⁷⁷ she made the history of the early part of South African history accessible to the academic community and those with an interest in history. She left an astounding legacy that is still relevant today and there is no authoritative work published on the Cape-VOC period that does not mention her or have her publications in the bibliography.¹⁰⁷⁸ Her work has been described as “pioneering research”,¹⁰⁷⁹ “authoritative”,¹⁰⁸⁰ “thorough and meticulous scholarship”,¹⁰⁸¹ and “important, path-breaking”.¹⁰⁸² According to F.A. van Jaarsveld, a South African historian, Böeseke will be remembered in the South African historiography for her productivity, scientific thoroughness and the love and zeal she had for the history of SA.¹⁰⁸³

As a women archivist and historian, she experienced the inequality between men and women firsthand. In 1992 in an interview with a fellow historian, she stated: “I have always published under my initials (A.J. Böeseke) because women still are not taken seriously.”¹⁰⁸⁴

6.4.4 Marie Olivier

Above mention was made to Marie Olivier who became the National Archivist of SA when the new National Archives of South Africa Act was promulgated in 1996.¹⁰⁸⁵ She

¹⁰⁷⁵ R. Pieterse & H. van Deventer, "Die 'vroue-kwessie' in die GKSA", *In die Skriflig* 36(4), 2002, p. 707.

¹⁰⁷⁶ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 30.

¹⁰⁷⁷ See for instance: A.J. Böeseke, *Simon van der Stel en sy kinders*, Nasou, Kaapstad, 1964, and A.J. Böeseke, *Jan van Riebeeck en sy gesin*, Tafelberg Uitgewers, Kaapstad, 1974.

¹⁰⁷⁸ C. de Wet, "Dr. Anna Böeseke (1905-1997): Kenner van die Kaapse VOC-geskiedenis", *Historia* 48(2), 2003, p. 29.

¹⁰⁷⁹ H.F. Heese, "Cape of Good Hope? Meeting place of unwilling migrants from Africa, Asia and indigenous people", *Insights of anthropology* 4(1), 2020, p. 271.

¹⁰⁸⁰ I. Oggel, "Dr Anna Böeseke (1905-1997). An epitaph", *Vuka* 2(4), 1997, p. 23.

¹⁰⁸¹ R. van Rensburg, "Our Dr B.", *Vuka* 2(4), 1997, p. 24.

¹⁰⁸² N. Southey, "From the periphery to core: The treatment of Cape slavery in South African historiography", *Historia* 37(2), 1992, p. 19.

¹⁰⁸³ R. Hepburn, "Sy laat die verlede lewe", *De Kat* 4(8), 1989, p. 40.

¹⁰⁸⁴ R. Shell, "Interview with A.J. Böeseke", *Kronos: Journal of Cape History* 20, 1993, p. 114.

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, pp. 2-14.

was appointed Director of Archives in 1995¹⁰⁸⁶ and as the new Act of 1996 made provision for the former Director of Archives to continue under the new Act as National Archivist,¹⁰⁸⁷ she became the first National Archivist of the National Archives in SA. Olivier was to a degree the transitional figure between the “old” and the “new”. She was in a unique position when the transition from a nationalist minority government to a democratic dispensation took place - she was well acquainted with the structures and workings of the previous Government Archives Service as she was employed in the Archives Service since 1970.¹⁰⁸⁸ From the early 1990s, she formed part of the executive structures of the Archives Service that negotiated new legislation, “functions, structures, and levels of connection between central and provincial services”.¹⁰⁸⁹ Olivier played a crucial role in these negotiations as she formed part of the Technical Committee for Culture to advise the Council of Culture Ministers on the process of structuring a new archival service.¹⁰⁹⁰ As part of the delegation of the Government Archives Service, Olivier’s starting point “was that consultation and participation were essential”¹⁰⁹¹ for the planning framework of the country’s public archival services. The consultation and participation were conducted on a wide spectrum, namely co-operation between national and provincial services was sought, different stakeholders in archives were approached, and also the right of civil society to participate was regarded. This led to the establishment of the Consultative Forum for Archival Management and Legislation in 1995 through which the Government Archives Service, under the leadership of Olivier, could initiate and manage the “interim management of archives services and the drafting of new legislation”.¹⁰⁹² After thirty years of service to SA’s public archival service, Olivier retired in 2000.¹⁰⁹³

Marie Olivier in many aspects concludes almost a century of history of women archivists in the South African archive and their contribution to the South African

¹⁰⁸⁶ Anon, "Notes on contributors", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 157.

¹⁰⁸⁷ *Government Gazette* No. 17471, 2 October 1996, p. 12.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Anon, "Notes on contributors", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, pp. 157-158.

¹⁰⁸⁹ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 6.

¹⁰⁹⁰ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 8.

¹⁰⁹¹ M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 9.

¹⁰⁹² M. Olivier, "Continuity amid change: The process of establishing a new archival dispensation for South Africa", *SA Archives Journal* 37, 1995, p. 9.

¹⁰⁹³ Annual Reports of the National Archivist and the State Herald 2000-2001. Anon, n.d., <<http://www.national.archives.gov.za/AR%20ARCHIVES%202000-2001.pdf>>, access: August 2021.

Archive Service. Olivier straddled the divide – she was the first woman archivist to attain the position of Director of Archives under the previous government and the first woman to serve as National Archivist in the new democratic dispensation.

Except for Olivier, who might be considered to be more visible as the political changes in SA are relatively still recent, it can be argued that the other three key women archivists were the invisible voices of the South African archive. They lived and experienced in practice gendering of the archive and archivist. All three were teachers before they entered either postgraduate studies or the archive. At the time becoming a teacher was the only option available to women to enter the professional workforce, along with nursing and clerical work.¹⁰⁹⁴ Jeffreys, Davies, and Böeseken completed post-graduate studies; had a passion for history and the archive and to make it accessible to others and through that contributed to the knowledge of the archive; interesting that two of three women were experts on life in the 17th and 18th century at the Cape; one of the women became the first female record manager; all were single – this might be because of a personal choice. It might also have something to do with the fact that women were not allowed to continue working in the Public Service once they married.¹⁰⁹⁵ They also experienced gendered inequality and discrimination by not receiving the same remuneration and benefits as their male counterparts and they were not allowed to progress beyond a certain professional level.¹⁰⁹⁶ All three were concerned with the rights of women; all three women left a remarkable legacy that is preserved in the Western Cape Archive and Record Service in Cape Town, SA. Table three below gives a short summary of these three key women archivists.

¹⁰⁹⁴ L. Vincent, "Bread and Honour: White working class and Afrikaner Nationalism", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 26(1), 2000, p. 62.

¹⁰⁹⁵ *Government Gazette Extraordinary* No. 1330, 30 June 1923, p. xxi.

¹⁰⁹⁶ PSA Centenary Book, pp. 71-72. Anon, n.d., <<https://www.psa.co.za/docs/default-source/default-document-library/psa-centenary-book.pdf>>, access: October 2021.

TABLE 3 Summary of three key women archivists

	M.K. JEFFREYS	J.H. DAVIES	A.J.BÖESEKEN
Occupation	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
Education	Post-graduate studies	Post-graduate studies	Post-graduate studies
Marital status	Single	Single	Single
Archival position	Archivist	Records Manager	Archivist / Editor in Chief
Expertise	17 th & 18 th century South African history	Records Management	17 th and 18 th century South African history

6.5 Conclusion

This study presented a historical account of archival legislation in SA with reference to the gendering of archivists in the public archive. The historical development of archives in SA is contextualised by a broader exploration of archives from antiquity to the modern era as a general background. It explored the roots of the South African archive since the time of the VOC (Netherlands) and British occupations of the Cape of Good Hope. It aimed to illuminate the invisible voices in the South African archival domain in the twentieth century.

It can be argued that the archive was a male-constructed and a male-dominated entity since ancient times. While archival legislation created the space wherein public archives were regulated it is evident that the language used was of an androcentric nature, thus creating an almost male-only space. It confirmed the view that “it is acceptable for women to be subsumed within men linguistically”¹⁰⁹⁷ and contributed to the invisibility of women. Language as a powerful medium in transferring and articulating prevailing values, norms and ideologies in society, perpetuated the view that women were of less value than men. The legislative gendering left women almost no conceptual space to articulate their presence.¹⁰⁹⁸ A selection of writings of senior

¹⁰⁹⁷ South African Law Reform Commission, Discussion Paper 112. Statutory Revision: Review of the Interpretation Act 33 of 1957 (Project 25), September 2006, p. 403.

<https://www.justice.gov.za/Salrc/dpapers/dp112_interpretation.pdf>, access: August 2022.

¹⁰⁹⁸ P. Martin & P. Papadelos, "Who stands for the norm? The place of metonymy in androcentric language", *Social Semiotics* 27(1), 2017, p. 54.

archivists in the twentieth century were considered and found to validate this point. The view throughout the writings was to a degree forcefully male-centred. These writers were Chief Archivists (later Directors of Archives) and in their senior position personified and articulated the essence of patriarchal society as is evident in their writings.

The legislation as a gendering factor culminated in the articulated gendering of male archivists in their writings.

The voices recognised in archival literature are for the most part those of the Chief Archivists Botha, Beyers, and Kieser and other senior male archival officials. This is not to say that it is untoward, but maybe just a gentle reminder that the hands of the aforementioned were held up by their female colleagues. Although they (women archivists) were in the eyes of society only the supporters of their male counterparts, the study revealed the opposite - that their contribution to the South African archive proved to be both pivotal and left a lasting legacy. The experiences of the three key women archivists augmented the historical development of the South African gendered archivist.

It would seem that archival specialist and academic Terry Cook's assertion that "women were largely invisible in the historical memory, relegated to being the silent and usually unrecognised supporters of male accomplishment"¹⁰⁹⁹ holds true for women archivists during the twentieth century in the South African archival context. It can be argued that by recognising women archivists, their experiences, and their contributions they become more visible, and a more complete picture of the archive is achieved. Even though the South African archive as a reflection of society can be seen as a "man's world", these women archivists were at the centre of its development and history.

¹⁰⁹⁹ T. Cook, "The archive(s) is a foreign country: Historians, archivists, and the changing archival landscape", *The Canadian Historical Review* 90(3), 2009, p. 506.

7. SOURCE LIST

7.1 Archival sources

Western Cape Archives and Records Service ACB, Archive of the Archives Commission

Western Cape Archives and Records Service A.J. Böeseken Collection A2643

Western Cape Archives and Records Service C.G. Botha Collection A1813

Western Cape Archives and Records Service J.H. Davies Collection A1514 (2314)

Western Cape Archives and Records Service M.K. Jeffreys Collection A1657

National Archives and Records Service of South Africa ARH, Archive of the Archive

National Archives and Records Service of South Africa SDK

7.2 Government publications

Government Notice No. 1589, 25 November 1919, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 1013, 5 December 1919.

The Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary No. 1236, 27 May 1922.

Government Notice No. 1625, 28 September 1922, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 1269, 6 October 1922.

Government Notice No. 1626, 28 September 1922, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No 1269, 6 October 1922.

The Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary No. 1330, 30 June 1923.

Government Notice No. 1195, 23 July 1923, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 1334, 27 Jul 1923.

Government Notice No. 2279, 17 December 1926, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 1595, 17 December 1926.

Government Notice No. 1760, 9 October 1928, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No, 1732, 12 October 1928.

Government Notice No. 1668, 16 September 1929, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 1819, 20 September 1929.

Government Notice No. 317, 18 February 1938, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 2507, 25 February 1938.

Government Notice No. 321, 20 February 1941, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 2866, 28 February 1941.

Government Notice No. 283, 21 February 1944, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 3306, 25 February 1944.

Government Notice No. 308, 10 February 1950, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 4327, 10 February 1950.

Government Notice No. 2259, 31 August 1951, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 4685, 31 August 1951.

Government Notice No. 2369, 17 October 1952, *The Union of South Africa Government Gazette* No. 4393, 17 October 1952.

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Republic of South Africa Government Gazette No. 2414, 28 May 1969.

Republic of South Africa Government Gazette No. 5526, 27 April 1977.

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Republic of South Africa Government Gazette No. 6393, 5 April 1979.

Republic of South Africa Government Gazette No. 15813, 17 June 1994.

Republic of South Africa Government Gazette No. 17471, 2 October 1996.

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Cape of Good Hope, Legislative Council, 1905, G. 38 (Blue Books)

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7.3 Acts of Parliament

Public Archives Act, No. 9 of 1922.

Archives Act, No. 22 of 1953.

Archives Act, No. 6 of 1962.

Archives Amendment Act, No. 12 of 1964.

Archives Amendment Act, No. 63 of 1969.

Archives Amendment Act, No. 54 of 1977.

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7.4 Journals

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