

Research article

MUSEUMS AS DARK TOURISM DESTINATIONS: THE KGOŠI MAMPURU CORRECTIONAL SERVICE PRISON MUSEUM

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ABSTRACT

Dark tourism is one of the fastest-growing tourism industries around the world, inextricably linked to museums with dark pasts. These museums are attractions and destinations associated with death, tragedy or suffering, and highlight some of the darkest human histories. For decades, much research on dark tourism in South Africa has focused on Robben Island as a prison that is most notorious with detailed literature. However, a lesser-known unique museum serves as a dark tourist destination in South Africa's capital city. The Kgoši Mampuru II Museum (referred to as the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area), formerly the Pretoria Central Prison, is a museum with a dark heritage that interprets the tragedy that took place during the apartheid regime. This paper gives a brief historical background of the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison and includes the major political execution that took place from 1961 to 1989 during apartheid. The paper examines the operation of the South African Department of Correctional Services and how it managed to convert this Pretoria-based prison into a museum, on the premise that it remains a current correctional centre for prisoners. It remains unclear how the transition from prison as a site of capital punishment developed into a museum. This paper explores these challenges and discussions from a dark tourism and museum experience perspective. Conclusions suggest that this research has the potential to occupy a critical niche, since prison museums, as a form of dark tourism, are largely unknown and can fill a major gap in South African museology.

Keywords: Prisons; Museums; Dark Tourism; Kgoši Mampuru II; South Africa.

INTRODUCTION

This article presents the Kgoši Mampuru II Museum from the perspective of dark tourism as a research niche, thus considering prisons as dark tourism destinations and tourist attractions, even though they serve as places of suffering and violence (Aslan 2015; Motena 2019; Strange & Kempa 2003). Dark tourism is tourism that involves travel to places historically associated with death, tragedy and suffering (Ashworth & Isaac 2015; Ryan 2005; Stone 2011). Lennon and Foley (2000), both professors in the Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Management at Glasgow Caledonian University Scotland (Hartmann, Lennon, Reynolds, Rice, Rosenbaum, & Stone 2018), coined the term 'dark tourism' in 1996. Dark tourism is typically associated with sites of grief, such as cemeteries, battlefields, concentration camps, prisons, execution sites, memorials and museums (Lennon & Foley 2000; Strange & Kempa 2003).

This article focuses on the South African Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum, now called the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area (previously known as Pretoria Central Prison) in Pretoria, the capital city of South Africa (Motena 2019). One of the major exhibits at the museum is the gallows, which focuses on the apartheid political prisoners' executions by hanging, from 1961

to 1989, among other displays and themes in the museum, such as the history of the prison (Correctional Service Museum [sa]).

The purpose of this study is based on a museum that serves as a dark tourism destination, covering aspects such as the prison, execution site (the gallows) and the museum, which are presently associated with the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison. These aspects are highlighted in the paper, while it also provides context to the historical background of the former Pretoria Central Prison. The execution period of 1961–1989 serves as a foundation for the research. The prison is still operational as a notorious South African prison, but disconcertingly, the gallows were converted into a museum. Considering the abovementioned context, it is crucial to understand the foundation of the conversion of the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison into a museum. Lastly, the paper considers the potential of the site in enabling a dark tourism niche for South Africa and adds to research for future studies on the histories of penal and criminal museology or prison museums (Anderson 2018; Strange & Kempa 2003).

The discussion highlights the challenges and significance of preserving and maintaining the Kgoši Mampuru II Museum, while currently operating it as a prison. Conclusions suggest

the potential of a prison site for heritage purposes and the significance of looking at the prison site as a unique tourist attraction in the city of Pretoria in South Africa. This paper also aims to fill the gap in the literature on prison museology in South Africa. In addition, it aims to encourage more rigorous debate on difficult subject matters such as dark tourism as museum experiences (Gilmore & Magee 2015). This includes the relevance of prisons as museums or sites of dark memory in the present, particularly at a time when South Africa is characterised by extreme political dynamics and a disruptive democracy, including its reputation as a country rated for high levels of crime. Prisons are generally perceived to be or have evolved into places of rehabilitation, yet are they suitable spaces for a museum? The question is whether these prison museums and dark tourist sites in South Africa provide viable transformative tourist experiences.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Pretoria Central Prison, presently known as the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area, dates back as far as the late 19th century. The prison was originally built as the first of its kind in the former Transvaal Colony and served as the only location for capital punishment at the time. Like many other prisons in the world, it was built with the sole intention of confinement and 'punishment' for convicted criminals or inmates to serve the purpose of corporal punishment (Morris & Rothman 1997; Correctional Service Museum [sa]).

According to the Crime Museum (2021), the original purpose of confining an individual to prison was not to punish them. Yet, prisons served as a means of keeping the perpetrator of a crime detained until the actual punishment could be carried out. In South Africa, there was a distinction between criminal crimes and political crimes, and the punishment was selective during the apartheid era. One of the most brutish capital punishments, "... considered a relic of a barbarous past ..." was execution or the death penalty, which was abolished by a landmark decision by the Constitutional Court of South Africa in June 1995 (Bae 2005:49). Consequently, the gallows at Pretoria Central Prison's death row were dismantled and renovated as a museum. It was notably used for political prisoners in apartheid-related crimes:

The Gallows Memorialisation Project, first announced in December 2011, involves the renovation and restoration of Pretoria Central Prison's death row, as well as the gallows that were dismantled in 1996 after the death penalty was abolished in South Africa. The former death-row facility (located in what has since been officially renamed the Kgoši Mampuru II Correctional Facility) has been reimagined as the Gallows Memorial Museum, and it commemorates the 134 political prisoners who were hanged by the apartheid state between 1960 and 1989 (Van Laun 2018:12).

Considering the history of the prison, it was built for Pretoria, previously located on the corner of Pretorius and Paul Kruger streets, behind Church Square. Today, the location is the Ditsong Cultural History Museum, formerly the location of the Pretoria Mint. The colossal, unassuming architectural style served the vision of a prison, but was not deemed adequate nor a safe stronghold, so a second prison site was built (SAHO 2020).

The second prison was built in 1873 on the corner of Bosman and Visagie streets. In the second prison, houses were built for the wardens, and the gallows were built in the garden for public executions, which took place every Saturday, for people to witness. The prison was also not strong or safe, as several escapes occurred. The prison commissioner demanded that a better prison be built. The new project of building a better prison was disturbed by the outbreak of the South African War between 1899 and 1902 (Warwick 1980:59). The project was stopped by the government of the South African Republic. Later, in 1904, the British government suggested that the prison should be built far from Pretoria's central business district, hence the current location of the prison in the outlying area of Pretoria Central near Salvokop. This elevated landscape was established as a small neighbourhood to house white employees who worked at the nearby railway station and bus depot between 1890 and 1930. Construction of the prison by the firm Prentice and Mackey took place over four years between 1904 and 1907 (Correctional Service Museum [sa]; SAHO 2020).

WHO WAS KGOŠI MAMPURU II?

In April 2013, the Pretoria Central Prison was renamed the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area (Moll 2019:69). The renaming was a result of Kgoši Mampuru II being declared a national hero for the Bapedi and not a murderer, as he had been historically labelled (Davenport & Saunders 2000:164). According to former President Jacob Zuma's speech in April 2013 on the renaming of the prison, it is stated that, "He was one of the many outstanding kings and chiefs who were killed and squeezed ... they had no voice" (Hlahla 2013). Zuma described the renaming of the prison as part of the process of reconciliation and forgiveness, and healing of the wounds of the past.

In the mid-19th century, Kgoši Mampuru II (1824–1883) was the half-brother of King Sekhukhune I (1861–1882). Mampuru II was accused of killing King Sekhukhune for claiming that he was the lawful and paramount king of the people of Marota (more commonly known as the Bapedi) after their father, King Sekwati, died in 1861. After the royal assassination, Mampuru II fled and sought refuge with Chief Marishane (Masemola). He later sought further refuge with the King of the Ndebele, King Nyabela (Davenport & Saunders 2000:164).

According to South African History Online (SAHO) (2019a), the then-Republican government requested King Nyabela to surrender Mampuru II for insurrection, but King Nyabela refused and stated, "Mampuru was in his stomach" (SAHO 2019a). This subsequently led to the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) war against the Ndzundza Ndebele, between the Nyabela and the Boers, which lasted for almost a year before King Nyabela surrendered Mampuru II to the Pretoria Boers (Davenport & Saunders 2000:169). In 1883, the three kings were handed over to the Boers, where both Chief Marishane and King Nyabela were commuted to life imprisonment. Mampuru II paid the ultimate penalty. He was stripped naked in public and executed by the then-Republican government at Pretoria Central Prison on 22 November 1883 (Delius 1984; Department of Correctional Services 2022; Ledwaba 2017; SAHO 2019a). Like many of the incarcerated, Mampuru II's remains disappeared after execution, and 136 years later, his final resting place remains unknown. It is plausible that his remains were shipped off for racial research to a Western museum, however, there is no evidence to support this, and some researchers say his remains were interred in Pretoria at an unknown location.

According to Hlahla (2013), the Pretoria Prison is named after Kgoši Mampuru II because he was a king who stood for his people and was the rightful heir to the Bapedi (SAHO 2019a). While the eventual renaming of the prison was consultative and widely debated, almost no literature exists on the development or existence of the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum as a tourist destination (Delius 1984; Motena 2019:9). Although South African Tourism (2022) states in an online travel article that the Kgoši Mampuru II Correctional Facility's gallows are a museum and part of a heritage site in honour of the 3 500 souls who lost their lives between 1902 and 1989, it is still a functional jail with a maximum-security section (C Max).

THE PERIOD OF POLITICAL EXECUTIONS FROM 1961 TO 1989

Political execution was a capital punishment for political crimes by an individual or people who were trying to overthrow the state. The executions took place in the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area, which was the only official site for capital punishment in the country, while Robben Island served as a prison colony for the most dangerous individuals to the apartheid state, with a total prison population of about 1 500 inmates as long-term prisoners (Benson 2017).

An estimated 134 political offenders were executed and buried in unmarked graves by the state. Most of these offenders were labelled communists and terrorists, and a threat to the state and the South African people. Most of these political offenders were members of anti-apartheid organisations, and some were individually motivated to overthrow the state. The executed offenders all had one purpose: fighting injustice in government. The ages of the executed political offenders ranged from

18 to 70 years (Odendaal 2012). The apartheid government introduced political execution as a strategy to minimise or deal with internal pressure (Anon 2011). Therefore, execution was one of the ways of silencing political activists who opposed the apartheid policies of the time (Motena 2019:x).

The years during which these executions took place are mostly linked to the South African historical context. Most of the militant or armed anti-apartheid wings were founded in 1961. These included the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) and *uMkhonto we Sizwe* (MK); hence many political activists were executed (Odendaal 2012; Simpson 2016). The number decreased between 1961 and 1963, but in 1964, the number of executions increased to 26. This year was linked to the historical context of the Rivonia Trial, which took place from 1963 to 1964. During this period, the pressure on the government had escalated, and the response was either life imprisonment, mostly on Robben Island, or execution at Pretoria Central Prison (Allo 2016:2; SAHO 2019b; 2019c).

After the Rivonia Trial, the number of political executions declined. In two years, it dropped to non-political executions. This happened because most of the leaders of armed wings were either in prison or in exile. Political activists were threatened with either execution or arrest. The number of executions dropped once again for about seven years, with no executions related to politics taking place (SAHO 2016). In 1976, political executions resumed. This year was also linked to the Soweto Uprising, as most of the students who participated in the riots in Soweto went into exile for military training and came back a few years later. Hence, political executions continued from 1982. The last political execution took place on 29 September 1989 with the execution of Jeffrey Boesman Mangena (1952–1989) (Anon 2011; Beinart & Dubow 2013:45).

THE KGOŠI MAMPURU II MUSEUM

The Kgoši Mampuru II Museum (also known as the Correctional Services Museum) is situated on the same premises as the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area. The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum comprises two buildings: the museum itself and the Gallows Memorial Museum (Van Laun 2018:12). The actual museum exhibits the history of the prison, as well as formations of prisons in South Africa dating as far back as the arrival of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) in southern Africa. The maximum security prison cell building (C Max) is less than a kilometre from the museum. The gallows share the building with C Max, and the gallows room is situated on the top floor of the building. It is accessible after climbing 52 steps to the execution room. The museum (both the museum itself and the Gallows Memorial Museum) was officially opened to the public by former President Jacob Zuma on 15 December 2011 (Hlahla 2013; SAHO 2020).

Both buildings, as one destination situated in the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area, have the potential of becoming

one of the top tourist destinations in the City of Tshwane and the wider metropolitan area of Pretoria. The site needs to promote the unique activity that took place there, as it was the only official site for capital punishment in the country. This museum is an authentic and actual site, which makes it unique and needs to consider marketing platforms to improve the museum and visitors' experience. Most importantly, the preservation of the site and the artefacts need to be considered by the site management for future exhibitions.

The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum faces several challenges. Its operation does not make it easily accessible as it shares premises with an operating prison. Some of the challenges facing the museum, other than formalising its name, are establishing the interpretation and information about the prison. These are important elements that will ensure that the collection exhibited at the museum is easily accessible. Information about tourist destinations can be accessed traditionally, mostly by word of mouth or online (Lubbe 2003:43). Considering the modernised world in which we live, it is advisable to prioritise online information as most visitors rely on the internet for a quick source of information about a tourist destination. Little information on the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison is available to possible visitors online. The available information is insufficient. For example, most museums (specifically penal museums) provide information about whether a booking is necessary, but the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison does not provide this information, even though visitors are expected to book in advance. Moreover, when considering penal museums such as Robben Island Museum in South Africa or Auschwitz in Poland, visitors are provided with enough information about the site (Anon 2019a; 2019b).

Information is an important tool for marketing a museum. Social media is another platform that helps provide information about the site and keeps it up to date. It makes the museum more attractive. The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison relies to a large degree on word of mouth, as it receives visitors while not having these platforms available. Considering some of the other penal museums in the world, such as the Battlebox Museum in Singapore or Auschwitz in Poland, social media plays a huge role in providing information on these museums. As an open public platform, it gets visitors talking about their experiences during their visits (Anon 2019b; 2019c). On this platform, whenever a site is criticised, the site management can get to work on its weaknesses. Moreover, it helps to make the site easily visible and uses criticism and reviews to improve its facilities, especially based on feedback on websites such as TripAdvisor and other tourism platforms.

TripAdvisor is a website that shows tourists' destination reviews and provides brief information about the site. It makes recommendations when visitors are searching for a popular destination nearby (Miguéns, Baggio & Costa 2008:2).

For example, the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison is close to the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park. These sites are both on TripAdvisor, and when tourists are searching for these destinations, the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison will likely pop up because it is located between these two popular destinations. Not being on TripAdvisor limits the prison's exposure, as well as the opportunity to market the museum and improve the experience offered at the site. If the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison can be on TripAdvisor, it will increase its visibility, as TripAdvisor gives awards to popular destinations. These are known as the Travellers' Choice Award. The Battlebox Museum was a visitors' choice in 2017 (Anon 2017; 2019c).

The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum does not have a website, brochures, or pamphlets as a source of information about the prison museum. Generally, tourists like to take marketing material home after visiting a tourist attraction. Most tourists take brochures home as a souvenir of the place they have visited. Brochures, therefore, play an important role in the marketing of a museum because people who read these brochures or pamphlets tend to be interested in revisiting the site and sharing their experiences (Mafuya & Haydam 2005:157). Most punitive museums or tourist attractions provide brochures or pamphlets to their visitors, but the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison does not do so. By not providing brochures, the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison does not promote itself well, nor does it intend to do so. This limits the chances of people knowing about the museum. The reasons for this remain unclear. Why declare a prison museum when the intention is not to promote or highlight the prison site as a tourist destination?

The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum certainly cannot offer its visitors the best and most memorable experience. The world's infamous penal museums, such as the Robben Island Museum or Alcatraz East Crime Museum, offer tourists a good visitor experience. Most of the guides in these penal museums are former prisoners. Most of these penal museums are now tourist sites and no longer function as prisons. The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison in the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area is inherently disadvantaged by the fact that it is situated in functional prison facilities, which are considered by many to be unsafe spaces. Considering the niche of dark tourism or dark destinations, however, it offers a dark experience, which attracts tourists for the transformative experience or historical interest.

The museum can isolate itself from the actual prison management and make the space welcoming for its visitors. Most penal museums have a welcome signboard with brief information about the museum (Wadsworth 2018). This information prepares the visitors for the site before they can explore it, and finally, this information forms part of the material they can use to take the memory back home. It should therefore offer souvenirs to visitors.

The traditional way of keeping tourists' experiences in a book does not attract new visitors to the museum. Although good and bad comments are written in these books, like TripAdvisor, no one will know whether a visitor's complaint has been addressed. For example, the Battlebox Museum is rated five out of five (5/5) on TripAdvisor, but that does not mean that everything is perfect at the museum. One of the comments written on TripAdvisor was 'disappointment', where a tourist was disappointed because they required cash as a method of payment, but online it was stated that credit cards were accepted. The best thing about this is that the management could keep the tourist happy by apologising and offering a complimentary Battlebox tour and Changi World War II tour for free. The offering works well to attract other visitors because it shows that the management makes it a priority to listen to visitors. If a tourist is not satisfied with the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison, they will not be able to address the matter on a public platform such as TripAdvisor (2019c).

Most tourists tend to rely on reviews and comments on the website to see if the site or museum is worth a visit. If tourists see comments on reviews on TripAdvisor, for example such as those online comments left after experiencing a visit to the Auschwitz Museum, others may be curious to have the same experience – despite the inhumanity of the site. Auschwitz Museum is a memorial site dedicated to victims of the Holocaust in Poland, and remains a global dark tourist site visited by millions of tourists per year (Miles 2002; Richardson 2021; TripAdvisor 2019b). Similar comments include, "plan to be there three to four hours concerning the infamous Alcatraz East Crime Museum off the coast of California" (TripAdvisor 2019a). Alcatraz is also an isolated island and was infamously known as 'The Rock', a major federal penitentiary in the USA. It is considered a top tourist destination and is even recommended by Hughes (2009:72) as one of "... the places to take your kids before they grow up".

DISCUSSION

Following the research for this article, it is evident that the Kgoši Mampuru II Museum remains elusive and unknown to most, even for its recognition as a South African museum. The fact that it is situated in the Kgoši Mampuru II Management Area causes it to have serious boundaries as it is in a functioning prison. The museum cannot be removed or separated from the actual prison because that would take away its authenticity, but changes can be made within the site for it to be recognised as a museum of value or a site of memory and education. For example, the museum can collaborate with other museums around the City of Tshwane, such as Ditsong Museums, or be recognised by the Department of Art and Culture. Yet, the management of the museum remains isolated, and it remains operational under the Department of Correctional Services.

The discussion on the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison is threefold: marketing the prison as a site for dark tourism, promoting it

as a truly unique visitor experience, and recognising the need for the conservation of the prison museum, which houses collections of major historical significance and accessibility. Some of the best ways of improving the site's visibility are to embrace smartphone culture and encourage visitors to get social. This can also make it visible to local tour operators and travel agents as a tourist destination. In the modern world, people tend to capture most of the interesting exhibitions they come across visually, and when modern technology is encouraged in the museum, it increases the chances of new visitors, as most of the photographs taken will be shared on the internet and social media. This can lead to the visitors interacting with the museum exhibition.

When visitors are encouraged to take selfies and share the content online, it tends to make people curious about the site, who would then like to experience the museum exhibition in person. Visitors should be encouraged to take photographs, post them on social media and use specific hashtags. This can best be done when the museum hosts unique events throughout the year (Sullivan 2019).

Hosting unique events throughout the year makes the museum more attractive to new and former visitors. The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison has unique collections that are significant to the history of South Africa because it is the only site where official executions took place during the apartheid era. Events can be hosted annually in different months, using months in which some of the country's prominent political offenders were executed. For example, the museum could highlight commemorative or reconciliatory events for those executed in remembrance of the lives lost during specific months of the year.

John Harris (1937–1965) and Solomon Mahlangu (1965–1979), both anti-apartheid campaigners and struggle activists, were executed in April. Other 'execution months' could commemorate the lives of Andrew Zondo (1966–1986) in September and Vuyisile Mini (1920–1964) in November. By hosting such annual commemorations of prominent political activists who were executed, the museum could serve its communities better and with greater empathy. The life of Solomon Mahlangu, as an example, is an existing annual museum commemoration, that can be remembered by utilising social media and using hashtags. The role of marketing these events can increase public exposure and elicit an apology (Sullivan 2019).

Hosting events annually will be one of the best ways of taking the commemoration of such events to the community. The site stands as a place where people can go and pay homage to the armed struggle heroes. Furthermore, it is a learning centre for the youths of South Africa and globally. As a result, social media becomes an important tool to be utilised. For the museum to attract youth, it needs to be active on social media, for example, creating social media accounts, as well as adding the museum on TripAdvisor.

For this to happen, the museum needs to look out for local blogs/vlogs, websites, newspapers, and television stations around Tshwane, and promote events and the museum. Potential visitors to museums mostly plan their trips online or on the internet. Once an event has been created on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, it shows up on the timelines of people who are interested in attending or going to an event. As a result, it creates pressure on people to attend an event. Furthermore, site management can emphasise that entrance to the museum is free. This will strengthen the museum's marketing endeavours (Sullivan 2019).

Visitors' experience and first-time expectations at any tourist destination or museum are aspects that site management needs to prioritise; whether it is to create a first-time or long-lasting impression or to sensitise the visitor. Wadsworth (2018) discusses five components of a memorable museum visitor experience, which can significantly improve visitors' experience at the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum. First, one needs to make the space welcoming. According to Wadsworth (2018), a 'welcome' sign on its own is not enough. At the prison museum, the 'welcome' sign appears inappropriate and certainly does not prepare the museum visitor for a good first-time impression. The museum should ideally visualise and highlight what the visitor ought to anticipate seeing upon entering the building. Instead, the museum visitor is confronted with 52 steps that head to the gallows. Symbolically and literally, the 52 steps demonstrate the walk to death, as each prisoner had to climb these steps, accompanied by the wardens. The museum has numbered each step to give the museum's visitors a desensitised notion of how the seconds ticked by for those ascending the stairs heading towards their execution (South African Tourism 2022).

Inappropriately, the museum uses the same entrance as is used by families or friends visiting incarcerated inmates in the actual prison. It would be more appropriate and sensitive for the museum to have a separate entrance for its museum visitors. Moreover, a visible signboard directs tourists to the museum and the gallows memorial since they are not situated in the same spot. The museum claims to serve as a place where one can learn about the history of the place and South Africa's execution history. Walls are lined with the names of some of the prisoners, and the nooses hang from the ceiling to add an air of sadness (South African Tourism 2022).

Visitors are not informed that other notable and world-famous persons were also executed (death by hanging) in the prison. For example, the infamous South African nurse, Daisy de Melker (1886–1932), poisoned her two husbands with strychnine for their life insurance money, as well as her two sons with arsenic, among many others not mentioned here. As the South African media has further covered extensively, the Pretoria prison currently quarters notable inmates such as the disgraced world-athlete Oscar Pistorius, assassins such as

Januz Walus, Clive Derby-Lewis and the Czech fugitive, Radovan Krejčíř (Tauyane 2015).

The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum space is certainly selective of history both past and present, lacks context and is by no means contemporary, interpretative or interactive. Ideally, the best way of enhancing the visitors' experience is to use modern interactive technology or other digital or interpretative techniques. Technological tools such as motion sensors and touchscreens are used in most 21st century museums. The benefit of these tools is that they can be set to respond to questions in local and international languages (Wadsworth 2018). Although there are guided tours, there is no technology to give an intimate look at the living conditions in the correctional facility and to share information that a famous person, such as Kgoši Mampuru II, was hanged there as well as other notable figures. The museum may be a disappointment to visitors, yet to some gruesomely fascinating at the same time.

Furthermore, the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum does not have any directional signage, only one-way signs. This can lead to foot traffic into the active prison area, and seriously deter any visitors' experience. The visitors' experience is not only dependent on the museum management, in this case, the Department of Correctional Services. Visitors should ideally be educated and pay attention to the displays in the museum, and not only take photographs (Wadsworth 2018). In this specific case, taking photos should perhaps be prohibited, and taking back memories or learnt experiences should suffice.

According to psychological scientist Henkel (2013), visitors should not be encouraged to take photographs during a museum visit, because the focus is on capturing the exhibition or objects and no attention is paid to the display. The prison museum, as a site of dark tourism and 'dark museology', should have restrictions on photography out of respect for history and those who lost their lives by specifically stating to visitors the dos and don'ts. Many visitors end up having photographs that can be deemed sensitive to the families of the incarcerated or those executed. The prison museum could consider this option with the proliferation and influence of social media today as a positive marketing approach for many museums.

The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum furthermore needs to adopt some preservation and conservation ideas, which will help protect the museum artefacts and historical content. Some of the artefacts in the museum are not placed behind transparent glass. They are exposed to the visitors – to be touched. This is an ethical and moral boundary. There are no signboards stating that visitors should not touch historical objects or items on display. These objects are most probably authentically endangered because once they have been touched several times by visitors, they will eventually deteriorate. In many cases, they should not be touched at all (Motena 2019:29).

The recent renovation of the gallows into a memorial is perhaps one of the advancements in improving the museum. The initial plan was to have the gallows easily accessible without passing through the cells of C Max, which visitors previously had to, do. The safety of the visitors should be prioritised. According to the *Daily Maverick* (2021), the gallows remain currently closed to the visiting public, however, this remains unconfirmed. The museum is situated in a functioning prison, so there is seemingly no threat of the historical contents being stolen. Nonetheless, as a safety measure, security alarms and cameras are needed to protect the objects, photographs, and items on display. Ironically, a prison museum has no security measures of this nature. This questions the functioning of the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison, as both a museum space and a tourist attraction.

Undoubtedly, the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum is fascinating. As a unique museum, it needs to have better access, both to tourists and researchers. Research demonstrates that it is recommended to isolate the museum from the Department of Correctional Services in one way or another. The museum exhibits the important history of prisons in South Africa, as well as the history of the armed struggle in the gallows exhibition. It fills a tourism niche for both museology, and dark tourism and deepens education on South Africa's penal history. It is critical to grant access to researchers because so little is known about prison museology. This will educate the public and develop new knowledge of the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum. This will serve the interests of civil society and the community. Admittedly, a major challenge for this research and paper was obtaining adequate data and accurate information to back up hard evidence, nonetheless, this article demonstrates a need to further research the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum, its history, and contributions to modern museology in post-apartheid South Africa.

Another major challenge encountered as part of this research was the initial intention of conducting interviews as supporting evidence. The first plan in 2019 was to interview the museum staff about the management of the museum, but due to poor procedure, ethical compliance had to be granted by the Department of Correctional Services. The response of the Department and permission to conduct interviews came back negative, stating that no interviews would be permitted, nor were photographs permissible (Motena 2019:30).

If the museum was isolated from the Department of Correctional Services and stood on its own, perhaps as a provincial museum or a second-site museum under the umbrella of Ditsong Museums of South Africa, the research results may have been different. It is hoped that this research will benefit the museum by encouraging it to improve. The South African economy will benefit from a dark tourism

perspective, as will individuals and society, in general, by being educated about one of our country's major sites of execution. The alerting questions regarding the challenges and poor operation encountered at the museum are as follows: Is it supposed to be a museum?

Museums are educational and meant to be learning institutions. Is the youth and public aware of this museum as the institution does not have any tourism marketing platforms, including social media, a website, and brochures? The museum's history or heritage is rich because this is the only place in South Africa where people were hanged after they received the death penalty. Most tourists know about the political prisoners that were hanged at the gallows of the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum, as shared by other museums such as Freedom Park, Constitutional Hill, the Apartheid Museum, the Johannesburg and Cape Town Holocaust and Genocide Centre, and Iziko Museums' Slave Lodge, to mention a few. Moreover, the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg (Apartheid Museum 2022) exhibits the types of ropes that were used to hang political prisoners. The rhetorical question that remains is: Does the Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum deserve the status of a 'museum' or even a commemorative site, while it still incarcerates some of the most dangerous criminals in South Africa? A conclusive answer is not possible.

CONCLUSION

This paper, while exploratory, introduced the concept of dark tourism as a tourism niche involving travel to sites and museums historically associated with death, tragedy, and suffering. The Kgoši Mampuru II Museum fits into this tourism niche. The museum is forebodingly associated with the history of execution. The prison is a dark institution that is a remnant of apartheid in South Africa. Research has argued that this prison museum has one of the darkest histories and apartheid heritage, and that its place in history is widely neglected in the literature, yet ironically, it is 'preserved' and 'promoted' as a living museum. The challenges, gaps, silences, and many unknowns require further attention. The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison Museum, like other prison museums worldwide, has immense potential to serve as a dark tourist attraction. On the other hand, it remains a dark place in South African history and, within the present, a museum that needs to be addressed much better in museological and wider heritage studies. The Kgoši Mampuru II Prison is a thought-provoking museum and remains a living site of memory about the gruesome history of South Africa while the prison currently remains active. However, the Pretoria-based prison has the potential of enhancing dark tourism in South Africa. It is hoped that this paper will contribute to some debates and spark an interest in 'dark' museology, particularly in an African context to fill much-needed gaps in the literature on this subject.

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