HERITAGE AS THERAPY
Set Pieces from the New South Africa

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Abstract
Since the democratic dispensation in South Africa, heritage as a category has been necessarily framed by the specter of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, its place in wider society, the general underpinnings of amnesty, forgiveness and the desire to move forward as a nation. Human rights activism, truth commissions, and juridical proceedings are powerful mechanisms for dealing with historical trauma. More materially, South African cultural productions, including objects, memorials, museums, heritage sites and public spaces of commemoration provide another therapeutic arena. After 13 years of democracy, the material spaces of daily life provide a vantage point to examine how practices of remembering and forgetting pervade the public sphere and the world of things, and how traumatic embrace is configured to include (and exclude) certain constituencies as our case studies demonstrate. Spectacles of trauma and memory in the new South Africa are similarly shot through with other interventions including the pressures of state politics, development tactics and international tourism. Perhaps like never before, this ‘state in search of a nation’, has been under an international spotlight and has been held up as a beacon for other oppressive contexts and post-conflict states.

Key Words◆ Freedom Park ◆ Kassiesbaai ◆ Kliptown ◆ post-apartheid monuments ◆ South African heritage ◆ South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) ◆ Waenhuiskrans Cultural Landscape
The past occupies an ambivalent role in post-apartheid South Africa. For some it is seen as a vast reservoir of trauma and loss, while for others it can be mobilized as a source of pride and redemption (Coombes, 2003; Hall, 2001; Hughes, 2007; McGregor and Schumaker, 2006; Murray et al., 2007; Nuttall and Coetzee, 1998b). The legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) lives on in South Africa and there is still lively public and political debate about guilt, prosecution and justice. Moreover, the status of the past, both the recent past and the deeper colonial and pre-colonial past remains up for grabs, in a precarious limbo, as archaeologists, government officials, heritage practitioners and innumerable communities wrestle with the ways in which they can access evidence, interpret and mobilize it, and employ heritage for empowerment, restitution and social justice. One of us examines heritage as deployed for therapeutic uplift and the centrality of heritage rhetoric and its powerful oppositions (Meskell, 2006b, 2007, in press; Meskell and Masuku Van Damme, 2007). The other, as a heritage professional, focuses on heritage as empowerment and redress within the framework of national heritage legislation and focuses on the rigors of engaging marginalized communities and the ways in which heritage authorities necessarily navigate issues of memory, redress and healing. Together we impute that while cultural heritage is being called upon to reconcile the nation, there are tensions of appropriateness and delivery and an overwhelming emphasis upon the ANC (African National Congress) and the struggle years as opposed to uncovering the necessary social complexities of archaeological, pre-colonial and colonial histories. Moreover, heritage pageantry is often more about national performance rather than social justice and restitution.

TRAUMA CULTURES

South Africans have chosen a very specific path to reconciling their entwined histories, a strategy which is at variance with that of Europe and the Middle East. With the fall of the apartheid regime with the first democratic elections in 1994 there were no removals of statues, no erasures at the scale we witness, for instance, in the overthrowing of the Iraqi regime in 2003. Moreover, South Africa is considerably different to other settler societies who have survived the brute forces of genocide and colonization, including the USA, Canada and Australia: the place of the past is built into the very fabric of the new post-apartheid constitution preamble (Nuttall and Coetzee, 1998a: 13).

We, the people of South Africa,
Recognise the injustices of our past;
 Honour those who suffered for justice
And freedom in our land;
Respect those who have worked to build
And develop our country; and
Believe that South Africa belongs to all
Who live in it, united in our diversity (Republic of South Africa, 1996)

This is further expressed through the reconstruction of national heritage legislation that in the previous decades served to marginalize and down-play the heritage of non-white South Africans. The National Monuments Act (NMA) of 1969, provided limited protection for heritage related to living communities and mostly concentrated on prehistoric archaeological sites and artifacts, a legislative inheritance of the earlier Relics Act (1934). To counter this legacy, post-apartheid legislation embodied in the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) – No.25 of 1999 – stresses the need to ‘conserve and protect and promote heritage for all South Africans’. The preamble to the Act encourages ‘communities to nurture and conserve their legacy’ while calling for the ‘redress of past inequities’ (NHRA, 1999: 2). The spirit of the NHRA mandates the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) as the national heritage resources authority, with a mission to safeguard tangible and intangible heritage resources for the purposes of commemoration, restitution, development and ultimately healing. In practice this has entailed treading a precarious tightrope of engagement between national, provincial and local heritage authorities, communities and stakeholders.

This emergent heritage legislation has been necessarily remedial in addressing the social-political debates in communities that previous statutes failed to address. Similarly, heritage legislation has been constantly developing in order to address specific histories within the national estate that were formerly silenced. The South African Heritage Resources Agency provides legitimate avenues through which communities and professionals might explore these ‘other’ histories, specifically through its grading and declaration process. This process allows for the nomination and declaration of heritage resources with exceptional significance (internationally, nationally and locally), to be managed nationally as National Heritage Sites (Grade I). Similarly, the NHRA makes provision for heritage to be graded and declared as provincial (Grade II) or local/municipal (Grade III) to be managed by Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities and local (municipal) heritage resources authorities respectively. Such legislative measures allow communities a voice within a process yet relies on those same communities to bring their histories to the fore in the first instance. As we will see, the challenge remains to keep these various accounts and experiences foregrounded within the broader political narrative of nationhood.

Trauma cultures, like the South African case, and their concomitant cultural productions enable new practices and publics. What citizens desire of both past and future requires constant wrestling, the ambiguities and choices remain difficult: ‘Now we want to throw off the psychological
burden of our painful past; now we want to hold onto it. We know that death may be a very real consequence of throwing off the burden altogether in one big heave' (Ndebele, 1998: C10). In the recrafting process, trauma raises questions about what constitutes a public culture and, in the case of South Africa, it impels us to question what counts as history and whose history, and a rewriting of the history of the nation in the service of a rainbow nation narrative (Witz, 2003). Heritage is called upon again and again in the rhetoric of politicians like Thabo Mbeki to help pay for the socio-economic depredations of the apartheid regime and to forge a new, more humane and more prosperous South Africa for all its citizens. Thus we need to expand the category of ‘heritage’ beyond the confines of traditional understanding, to see heritage as a form of therapy, as the past laboring in the service of a better future, a progressive and productive benefit to all, but specifically for the disempowered, dislocated and disadvantaged. And yet the socio-economic hardships faced by non-white South Africans has hardly been ameliorated (Walker, 2006), moreover, evidence points to the fact that small scale ventures around heritage tourism and self-sustainability are tenuous at best [see Binns and Nel, 2002; Meskell, 2005, 2006a; van Amerom and Büscher, 2005]. Trauma cultures may be doing the work of therapy, in a collective sense, but also in an inherently political one. South Africans are being educated through various cultural productions about what is best remembered and what is best to forget. The very recent past and its horrors can be foregrounded, yet the longer, more complex colonial history of the country, and the reasons why apartheid was successfully entrenched in the first instance, have been subsequently downplayed.

As José Zalaquette, a member of the Chilean Truth Commission, cautions, identities forged out of half memories or false memories easily lead to future transgressions (quoted in Krog, 1998: 32). By not fully recognizing the past, and in this instance we are concerned with the longer, more historical experience and effects of colonialism, a post-1994 society might simply concentrate on its end product, apartheid, as an aberration. We need to actively ‘discriminate among memory practices in order to strengthen those that counteract the tendencies in our culture to foster uncreative forgetting, [and] the bliss of amnesia’ (Huyssen, 2003: 10). One fear is that the larger edifice of forgetting elides the specificities of history that can still, to a large degree be documented and told, and that in the process the ingrained effects of colonialism will be naturalized and their didactic fictions retain their residual power. This is the challenge of a responsible and ethically aware archaeology, anthropology and history (Meskell, 2006b).
HERITAGE CONTEXTUALIZED

While threads of commonality link the South African situation with nations like Australia, Canada or the USA, there remain certain peculiarities. The first point surely has to be the extreme politics of racism and the long lived effects of apartheid in its downplaying of an African past and its support of scholarship that directed the discipline in alternative directions [Dubow, 1995; Hall, 1988; Shepherd, 2003]. Colonial and apartheid heritage legislation in South Africa was exclusivist in its approach about designating site significance let alone site conservation and management. A salient example is the focus on essentially white monuments and memorials over and above a more representative heritage of the diverse, non-white communities that constituted the nation’s majority. Legal allowances were not made to protect sacred sites or to determine what was significant to indigenous communities in terms of intangible heritage, since these potentially disrupted the prescribed political agenda of colonial and apartheid regimes.

The second point is that archaeology is yet to be considered a black profession today; it remains difficult to attract and retain students to the discipline and those prominent black scholars who hold university posts tend to be from neighboring countries like Zimbabwe. This situation is undoubtedly inextricably linked to our first point, and unlike other post-colonial nations there is not a general sense that archaeology can tell people about their past, offer tangible benefits to the wider South African populace, and that it remains a luxury in the face of much more pressing social and economic concerns. The historical situation also explains why archaeology and heritage management have developed rather differently from other settler states such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Institutionalized discrimination suppressed indigenous activism in South Africa, whereas elsewhere indigenous peoples employed the same strategies associated with other social movements and interest groups [Smith, 1999: 108]: they mobilized resistance efforts, engaged in protest and other kinds of direct extraordinary politics, which were not possible in South Africa.

Third, the sphere of heritage has been dominated by historians and art and museum professionals, often politicized actors during the apartheid years, who filled the vacuum left by a certain unwillingness by archaeologists to publicly engage. Archaeologists for the most part are reluctant to assume the role of public intellectuals and this is especially the case in South Africa. Heritage refers most commonly to the arts and culture in a contemporary or traditional sense, framed in recent historical terms rather than ancient or materialist understandings. Conversely, South African heritage is often immaterial, including music, dance, performance, indigenous knowledge, artistic skill and so on. This heritage
is proximally closest to the vast majority of people’s cultural experience and knowledge; it is avidly consumed as African exotica by international visitors and thus shored up by governmental and non-governmental (NGO) economic initiatives.

If heritage is everything, or almost everything in South Africa today, then here is the caution that it may also simultaneously be nothing. Like the gaudy facades at shopping markets, ethnic craft exhibits, emergent clothing designers, these efforts coalesce around issues of branding and hyper-commercialism. But where is the content of history and are such genuflections to the past permeating South African society and thus healing or making a difference? In many of the spectacles of new nationhood there is a tendency to direct attention to the struggle years and heroes of the ANC, possibly at the expense of society’s poor and needy, not to mention those communities that fall out of the all-pervasive ANC dominated narrative. To do so we outline a number of new sites such as Freedom Park outside Pretoria and the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication in Kliptown and compare them with other small-scale heritage initiatives by marginalized communities and the social tensions that have recently ensued. We also examine an example of how new legislative authorities address particular histories that fall outside the dominant government narrative and consider the efficacy of legal processes within the NHRA in confronting the inconsistencies of memory, social justice and restitution. To do so we reflect upon the recent grading and declaration of an historic fishing village in the Western Cape.

HERITAGE PAGEANTRY

There has been enormous pomp and ceremony with the opening of sites such as Old Fort Museum, Constitution Hill, Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication and the yet unfinished Freedom Park (Bremner, 2007; Farred, 2004; Murray, 2007). While all tout national success and healing, there is an overwhelming sense that these edifices have little currency with ordinary South Africans, are attracting more foreign than domestic visitors, and are more about crafting a political pageantry than reflecting national heritage or building a multi-ethnic constituency. The 2007 riots in Kliptown around the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication suggest that the residents of that impoverished community feel not only excluded from the ANC’s creation of heritage, but also from current political process more generally. The central questions remain: Who are these heritage sites really for? Whose interests do they serve and can they function as anything other than stagy set pieces?

Freedom Park represents the epitome of South Africa’s burgeoning theaters of spectacle. As Mbeki’s brainchild, the project has an overt spiritual focus on cleansing and healing and is underpinned by the African
Renaissance philosophy (Deacon et al., 2004: 22; Mbeki, 1998). As critical locus for heritage pageantry and the showcasing of the struggle years, it has suffered from the now familiar tensions of delivery and performance. Mbeki ably described this as the most ambitious heritage project of the democratic government, comprising ‘a vast wall, each brick commemorating a warrior who sacrificed his or her life for a cause, an eternal flame paying tribute to unsung heroes and heroines who helped shape democracy, a gallery dedicated to the legends of humanity, a spiritual resting place for our fallen fighters, and the story of southern Africa’s 3.6 billion years of history’ (Freedom Park Trust, 2007). As Murray notes (2007: 57–8), this is a ‘state-sanctioned legacy project’, whereby the ANC devoted precious resources to transform one of the most politically charged Afrikaner cultural spaces, symbolized by the adjacent Voortrekker Monument, and attempt to eclipse it with a monumentalizing of African tradition and indigeneity. Instead of leveling or reworking the Voortrekker Monument with its fascist apartheid ideology commemorating the defeat of the Zulus at Ncome River, a post-apartheid historical monument rises on a nearby hill (itself charged with being ‘symbolic of Africa’) with an overburden of symbolic regalia representing the new nation (Figure 1). Its aspirational sentiment for a non-racial, non-sexist democratic society is only vaguely captured in its motto ‘Interpreting the Past. Informing the Present. Imagining the Future’. New projects and museums such as these have etched out a new role for architects and historians (Murray, 2007: 58), as they inadvertently become agents for reimagining and representing the South African past, specifically in terms of a shared nationhood (Bremner, 2007: 85).

Earmarked for completion in 2009, the building has already been years in the making and progress has been tardy. Two ceremonial set pieces were opened in 2007: the Isivivane is the symbolic resting place commemorating those who died in the struggle and the Sikhumbuto to celebrate the struggle for humanity and freedom. Like the didactic unifying imagery of the nine provinces at Constitution Hill, the Isivivane requires nine boulders from historic locales from each of the provinces to create a symbolic burial ground. Dripping in material symbolism, the Isivivane has also witnessed public cleansing rituals publicized as the symbolic reparations called for by the TRC, going as far as immaterially repatriating the spirits of those internationa

This sharing of national pain explicitly aims to integrate history, culture and spirituality and is a prime example of the therapeutics of heritage. Sikhumbuto is also a meta-memorial since it invokes ancestral intercession and assistance for current and future affairs. Deploying the familiar imagery of war memorials – walls of names, eternal flames, gallery of heroes and a sanctuary – the park encompasses not only the struggle against apartheid, but importantly pre-colonial wars, genocide, wars of
resistance, the Anglo Boer War, the First and Second World Wars as well as the Liberation Struggle. Ominously it has space to allow future generations to add their heroes and heroines to the wall of names, hinting that the monument’s didactic program of reconciliation and healing may inevitably falter. Here too nature and culture have been combined in the Garden of Remembrance featuring indigenous plant species as well as a
strong sense of history (specifically early life forms 3.6 million years ago in Barberton). There are indoor and outdoor spaces for visitors to pray or conduct rituals or ceremonies in the 2000 seat amphitheater: this is spectacle, therapy and state performance at its best. And like most other examples it emanates from a mix of civil society, NGOs, political interests and academic inputs. At the time of writing the third stage awaits completion, featuring a living museum, a repository for the Pan-African archives, botanical gardens and standing water, administration buildings as well as the obligatory commercial facilities (Freedom Park Trust, 2007).

The declared aim of the Heritage Precinct is to capture the great themes of South African nationhood, namely the struggle for liberation, land, and resources. Rather than embracing a diversity of viewpoints, the park’s mission enfolds the nation’s distinct experiences and symbols into one coherent narrative of the struggle for humanity. From their perspective, this addresses past distortions and biases, reinterprets previous heritage sites and proffers a new heritage perspective that is spiritually uplifting and inspirational. Yet in doing so, new memory work effectively sutures previously ‘antagonistic, competing, conflicting, non-compatible histories [that] are brought together and rewritten’ (Bremner, 2007: 85).

For the Freedom Park Trust (2007), the site portrays a vision of the future embedded in the African Renaissance and this commitment to the ideologies of the Renaissance is reflected in the park’s CEO, Mongane Wally Serote, currently chairman of AROSA (African Renaissance Organisation of Southern Africa) and deputy Chair of SACAR (South African Chapter of the African Renaissance). Exemplified by the particular romanticism and nostalgia of the Renaissance, this new suite of heritage domains, including Freedom Park and Walter Sisulu Square, go well beyond the project of appropriate memorialization of an erased past and instead forge an ANC-specific vision, some would say invention or mythologizing, of a new political identity. Scripting this new identity, in Bremner’s view, has entailed a mélange of themes, metaphors, false suppositions and errors, all intercalated into a new material heritage. Each seeks to accommodate both victims and perpetrators and also to overturn any notion that blackness and victimhood are synonymous and of a nationalism of negativity (Bremner, 2007: 94). Ultimately these sites must compete, in spectacular form, with the new panoply of tourist and heritage experiences from game reserves, cultural villages, museums, malls, casinos, and so on.

**REMEMBERING KLIPTOWN**

As a contrast to the nationalist projects of the ANC or the themed productions of the private sector, we want to briefly outline developments that have taken place in Kliptown on the outskirts of Johannesburg. As one of the earliest townships, it was home to a multiethnic community but has
received far less attention than District Six or Sophiatown. Contrasting with the Apartheid Museum, Robben Island or Constitution Hill (Gevisser, 2004), Kliptown offers another vantage into emergent complexities around the state’s promissory notes of socio-economic and psychical uplift at the local level. Two historical moments are traced here: the first is the establishment of a small museum with its small-scale object biographies that effectively reclaims the township in the public imaginary. The second is the large-scale, government sponsored production of the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication, celebrating the signing of the Freedom Charter by prominent struggle heroes in 1955.

Tying the two sites together is the Freedom Charter, an ANC policy document that inspired generations of ANC followers and is framed in terms that may be associated with British socialism of the time (Rumney, 2005: 403). It spoke of the national wealth, the heritage of South Africans, including mineral wealth, industry, trade and crafts for which all citizens should have equal access, rather than being in the hands of the minority, for their greater good and well-being. As we will see, extravagantly memorializing the site of the Charter’s endorsement has proven much easier than fulfilling the document’s promises for the residents of Kliptown. The example of Kliptown neatly underscores what is at stake if the nation forgets the specificities of the past, subscribes to the fiction of rainbow nation, and papers over the internal tensions and inequities. The current plight of the people of Kliptown is not unique, but it reflects the ambivalent status of colored communities in an era of ANC domination.

By way of background, Kliptown is known for being the first area near a major town in the old Transvaal where Africans could buy freehold land. As Bonner documents (2006), in 1905 the first Africans were able to purchase freehold plots in Kliptown and guarded this right until freehold tenure was revoked in the 1950s. Importantly a number of residents still managed to retain their foothold until the demise of apartheid in the 1990s that may account for the particular sense of pride and belonging espoused by this community. Through a large part of its life Kliptown afforded its residents a certain degree of freedom. According to local resident interviews, different races could mix freely in Kliptown and black South Africans could express their individuality and indulge their entrepreneurial inclinations (Bonner, 2006; Bremner, 2004; Mbembe and Nuttall, 2004). However, in the mid-1960s, the familiar process of forced removals began, targeting Africans in the first instance (Bonner, in press). Famously, Kliptown hosted or was home to an impressive list of South African and African political figures including Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Winnie Mandela, Charlotte Maxeke, Robert Mugabe, and Samora Machel. Today, as in the past, Kliptown is home to a diverse population that crosses the boundaries of color, nation and religion.

In 2005 one of us spent some time with some of the organizers of the Kliptown, Our Town Trust and its exhibit. One of the main planners
explained proudly that he was born in Kliptown a month after the famous charter had been signed. We were sitting in the back of the exhibition rooms. Papering the walls were the architect’s plans and designs for Freedom Square: at the time it seemed an incongruous building, too large and lavish to be nestled amongst the poverty of slum life. Gene explained that in the mid-1990s there was a breakdown in the physical and moral environment of the township, with high incidents of robbery, rape and murder. Desperate attempts were made to bring the government authorities into the township to see for themselves and address the problems, but they refused claiming it constituted a security risk. He had been a member of the ANC, but was dissatisfied with the party’s inaction and was subsequently suspended. As a way of taking matters into their own hands and initiating the regeneration without ANC support they decided to start a small display celebrating their own heritage in very much their own style. Beginning in 1998 they found and renovated an old building, previously used by the apartheid authorities to surveil the town, and now home to a larger Education and Training Center. Typical of so many heritage projects, the Trust relied on private and non-state sources (Rumney, 2005). International money, from the French and from various NGOs helped to launch the exhibition. Residents used disposable cameras to take photos and cleverly enlisted the financial backing of AGFA. They petitioned for money from the Johannesburg City Council as well as other local development agencies and received support from various academics at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Significantly, the result was not simply a history of the Freedom Charter, although the episode figures in the photographic displays, but the material component of the exhibit is centered on the daily lives of ordinary Kliptonians. Hugh, another key player, made clear that the exhibit was more about the reclaiming of Kliptown in the public imaginary.

Besides the ruins of Kliptown that you see, the poverty, but behind it, there’s so much history. But what drove our people to do this is the pride of heritage obviously. Because what happens tomorrow when we are all not here, two or three years down the line? Our children won’t know anything. They won’t know about Kliptown. They won’t know about history. It’s for us to write history, and not for history to be forgotten.

What Gene and his colleagues subsequently produced is what archaeologists would call object biographies, namely the stories woven around particular things, their historical trajectories and how they were intimately connected to specific individuals, moments in time, political contexts and so on. The basis of the display is a collection of old photographs and Kliptonian material culture. Each object has a deep biography, while objects such as handcuffs and instruments of torture are testament to a negative heritage. Hugh picked up a battered pass card, explaining, without a trace of bitterness,
every person had to have this book. This is an old ID book but they call it a pass. This pass, when you go to Johannesburg and the policeman say 'Pass!' you must just take out this book. And sometimes if you were in Johannesburg after sunset your pass doesn’t work, you’re going to jail. You’ll spend the night there at John Vorster Square which was the main area of persecution, of torture and everything.

John Vorster Square was a notorious high-rise building where black South Africans were not only detained or tortured by the police, but were literally pushed from the upper stories to their deaths. The building remains today as a scar on the Johannesburg city skyline and despite early calls for its demolition in the heady days after the 1994 elections, it has survived as a brutal mnemonic.

Hugh points to photos:

just to show you a few people who were actually involved with Nelson Mandela, who used to hide him in those days of apartheid when he was totally banned. I mean he couldn’t even walk down the road because the police station was there. They were continuously looking out for him. So there were people in the community still alive now who used to say, ‘Come on in, let’s just hide you away, let’s just disguise you.’ Now for years, people of Kliptown have been fighting for, now after the release and everything, they say, ‘We’ve helped a person, what’s happening now? We’ve helped so many leaders who are sitting round, have they forgotten us?’

Many Kliptonians believe the ANC has been too slow in addressing the dire social problems of the town, not to mention acknowledging the history of a colored community rather than a black one.

Only in 2000, as Bremner documents, did the provincial government of Gauteng decide to include the development of Kliptown on its list of high-priority economic development projects, finally reawakening a state-level interest in the neighborhood. She argues this was due to the new and widespread conception of tourism’s significance for economic development rather than an ethos of benevolence, responsibility, or redistributive justice (Bremner, 2004: 524). The set piece for this initiative was the dramatic construction of a national heritage landmark that bears the name of a fallen ANC comrade and hero, Walter Sisulu. The site was listed on the national heritage register in 1997 and in 2002 the winning design of the square was awarded to StudioMAS. According to Bremner,

the scheme appropriated a number of easily recognizable symbols of power: the conical towers of the ruins of Great Zimbabwe, the colonnades of ancient Rome, the light columns of Hitler’s Nuremberg stadium, and the underground vault of the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria. The Freedom Charter itself would be laid to rest inside a truncated cone, in which, at midday on June 26 each year, observers would be able to watch the sun briefly light up its surface, before it receded once more into the shadows of history. (Bremner, 2004: 525)
Built on the square where people assembled to ratify the Freedom Charter in June 1955, the site today consists of two squares, one denoting the old apartheid South Africa, the other the new, democratic South Africa. Redolent with the same political significations and dramas we see elsewhere, the ‘democratic square’ consists of nine blocks, representing the nine provinces and decorated with crosses, signifying the first democratic votes placed on ballot papers. As an additional layer of meaning, there are nine principles that mirror the nine blocks: identity, legibility, history, symbolism, analogy, accessibility, robustness, legality, program and equality. Snaking pathways are intended to resemble the long lines of voters in the 1994 elections. The Flame of Freedom burns inside the conical tower, lit by President Thabo Mbeki on 26 June 2005, to commemorate the 50th anniversary. The roof of the tower is cut in an X shape, designated the ‘mark of freedom’. Dripping in the rhetoric of sustainability, tourism, cultural heritage and improving socio-economic conditions, the heritage site neatly combines the national pageantry and economic development and job creation for which South Africa has become synonymous. And in this climate of intense musealization, there are plans for a museum, on the north side of the square, supported by 10 columns representing the 10 clauses of the Freedom Charter.

More recently, this deeply symbolic ‘heritagescape’ became a more volatile space when the residents of Kliptown took to the streets, barricaded roads, burned tires and looted and burned shops. Frustration over the lack of government services in the community reached boiling point in July 2007 when protests erupted and police fired rubber bullets at Kliptown residents. Here in the shadow of Walter Sisulu’s Square of Dedication (once called Freedom Square) hundreds took to the streets, pelted the police with stones all as a protest to the government’s failure to deliver the services they had been promising for years – sanitation, electricity and housing. The irony of this failure, after the pomp and ceremony of the ANC-led pageantry of the Square is stinging, and yet delays in service provision are laid square at the feet of the government’s plans for regeneration. One disgruntled resident claimed that he had applied for electricity for years, only to be told by the councilors that ‘they can’t put electricity here, they are going to abolish this place and improve our living conditions’. Trevor Ngwane, the outspoken organizer of the Anti-Privatization Forum (APF) and member of the Kliptown Concerned Residents, cleverly retorted that ‘we tell communities that the priority of government is football and not housing’, referring to the government’s sizeable budget for the 2010 Soccer World Cup (Bangerezako, 2007). As John Matshikiza (2007: 285) soberly asserts, ‘Kliptown and the people who live there, are what the African renaissance really is. It would be interesting to see that translated into some political vision for the future – and allow these to remain places where the people count.’
WAENHUISKRANS CULTURAL LANDSCAPE: EXCAVATING MARGINALIZED HISTORIES

Many South African communities echo the harsh social realities faced by the residents of Kliptown that are only magnified by the state spectacle of heritage pageantry. One province where this is particularly evident is in the Western Cape, primarily because of its ethnic diversity and, like Kliptown, the dominance of colored communities that have not always easily allied themselves to black ANC politics. We focus upon the Waenhuiskrans Cultural Landscape, a stretch of land along the Cape West Coast about 350 km southeast of Cape Town encompassing the fishing villages of Kassiesbaai, Dollas Downs, part of Arniston Village and their environs [SAHRA, 2006a – Council Report]. The area is richly layered with coastal archaeological sites [Henshilwood and Winter, 2000; Kaplan, 1997] and includes the site of Kassiesbaai which is one of the few traditional fishing villages along the southwest coast of the Western Cape that has maintained permanent residences since before 1830 (Pistorius, 2001). The name of the town was in part derived from tales of local people using wood and crates (or *kassies*) as building material from shipwrecked vessels such as the *Arniston* (1815) that washed up on the shore (SAHRA, 2004).

In 1986 the town of Kassiesbaai was declared a national monument in order to preserve the traditional limestone cottages [National Monuments Council, 1994]. This vernacular architecture required the use of natural building material – thatch (*Chondropetalum tectorum*) – and, since its declaration, authorization from the heritage authority is required for any building alterations (Pistorius, 2001. Figure 2).

In 2006 the Western Cape branch of the SAHRA recommended that the areas of Dollas Downs, Kassiesbaai, and portions of Arniston Village be approved as Grade 1 sites in order to protect these fishing villages that were under threat posed by development in the area. The villages have an unbroken history with descendant communities still subsisting in this manner and remain South Africa’s only example of self-sufficient fishing villages. The unique limestone and thatch cottages, the historic architecture and prehistoric archaeology (shell middens) – constituting both intangible and tangible heritage resources – exemplify the relationship between people and their landscape. Many coastal villages suffered forced removals during the apartheid era Group Areas Act of 1958. When Arniston was declared a ‘white area’ in the 1960s the colored community was relocated. Kassiesbaai, however, is one of the few communities that managed to keep their cultural heritage alive and continues to do so [SAHRA, 2004] despite the fact that, according to an ex-resident of Kassiesbaai, historically the fishing village once extended further than its current boundaries (Henshilwood and Winter, 2000). During the long history of the Waenhuiskrans community they managed to successfully lobby against eviction twice [SAHRA, 2005]. Given these factors, the protection, declaration and
support for the Waenhuiskrans Cultural Landscape was critically important under SAHRA’s mandate for recognition, restitution and healing (SAHRA, 2006a – Council Report).

Waenhuiskrans, not surprisingly, became a political landscape within a political process, and there were fraught negotiations during efforts to rebuild trust between local communities and heritage officials (SAHRA, 2006a – Council Report). While most parties recognized that the project had the social capacity ‘to bring about transformation of thought’ (SAHRA, 2007 – Annual Report), most in the heritage sector acknowledged the grim reality that ‘heritage’ falls short in terms of the huge social and economic burden disadvantaged communities now face. Put simply, heritage legislation offers only one avenue for restitution and cannot hope to provide for the massive social and economic deprivations of the past (Meskell, 2006b). Indeed, back in 1995 a National Monuments Council report underlined the Kassiesbaai community’s request to have their housing concerns addressed before agreeing to discuss the extension of the declaration of the area. Their housing and socio-economic development fell under the government’s Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and state housing subsidies (SAHRA Memo, 1995). While poverty alleviation and sustainable development are pervasive discourses in South Africa (see Binns and Nel, 2002), they often place a heavier burden on heritage management than is tenable. SAHRA’s Western Cape office has been at pains to remain open to public and stakeholder participation but
faces significant challenges including limited financial resources and difficulties in maintaining the architectural integrity of the site. Moreover, the story of Kassiesbaai has no obvious political currency in dominant narrative of the nation, yet like the case of Kliptown, it was deeply and negatively affected under apartheid and has its own important story to tell. Heritage officials in the Western Cape similarly define this as a timely political opportunity to ‘illustrate the collective history of all those who contributed to bringing about acceptance and reconciliation’ (SAHRA, 2007 – Annual Report: 116).

Ultimately what Kassiesbaai and its surrounding landscape illustrate is the need for sustainable and integrated heritage resources management that showcases marginalized histories, bolstered by local stakeholder support. We suggest that the more positive examples of healing histories in South Africa today often emanate from living, organic sites that have both historical and contemporary layers. This position resonates strongly with the aims of the Kliptown, Our Town project, as outlined earlier. Without that lived dimension many South Africans are confronting a heritage that is ostensibly dead to their own communities. Waenhuiskrans remains a work in progress. And while these once disempowered colored communities have the opportunity to direct future management, villages like Kassiesbaai remains poverty stricken and, as such, preserving the past cannot fully function as a surrogate for the social, economic needs and political aspirations in the present. As Clifford (2004: 8) imputes, ‘heritage is not a substitute for land claims, struggles over subsistence rights, development, educational, and health projects, defense of sacred sites, and repatriation of human remains or stolen artifacts, but it is closely connected with all these struggles’. Since heritage can play a recuperative role in allowing otherwise marginalized histories to be brought to the fore, communities invest their aspirations and needs into such heritage prospects. In South Africa, despite several high profile celebratory projects as outlined earlier, the heritage sector remains severely underfunded and agencies such as SAHRA have to implement their mandate across all nine state provinces. In the past there have been instances where financial institutions such as Sanlam LTD have stepped in and donated R50,000 for the rehabilitation of the cottages at Waenhuiskrans because of the lack of funds from SAHRA (WoonBurger, 1996). The financial costs at the time for the project totaled R130,000.

As a striking contrast, single sites such as Robben Island receive disproportionate financial support because it was the site of the prison that held Nelson Mandela and other high-profile ANC cadres during apartheid. The Portfolio Committee on Arts and Culture (2005) reported that Robben Island was allocated R35,500,000 to invest in management of the site. For stark comparison, SAHRA as the national heritage authority was allocated only R16,512,000 (Pallo Jordan, 2004).
has increased annually with the 2006/2007 forecast at R30,700,000 (SAHRA, 2006b – Annual Report), when such sums are distributed across the nation the contrast and challenge becomes even more marked.

In thinking through the sites of Kliptown and Kassiesbaai – both identified as colored communities – a number of critical issues emerge. There is a danger that compartmentalizing heritage through the legislative measures of grading and declaration, while a progressive and democratic move after the demise of apartheid, has the potential of segmenting and ossifying histories and preventing organic development. That being said, access to this process has effectively opened doors to many communities that were previously silenced within the larger national narrative. The challenge is allowing these divergent histories an influential position within the nation’s collective memory, whose focus has largely been on the armed struggle under apartheid. From this perspective Waenhuiskrans has many advantages over Kliptown, but its continued support and sustainability is sensitive and requires significant state investment. Heritage in South Africa must balance a preoccupation on the ANC and the struggle years to better incorporate the pre-colonial and colonial past and its wider set of stakeholders. Heritage management serves ultimately to celebrate specific pasts, but in order to achieve that therapeutic goal there are many quotidian obstacles, many of which hinge upon government support. As a result the past is generally perceived to be a luxury given the pressing material needs of the living and the failure of state provision (see Meskell, 2005, 2006a). The preamble to the NHRA might set the tone for our best intentions, namely spiritual well-being through defining cultural identity (NHRA, 1999), but it is only by interrogating what constitutes identities deemed worthy of commemorating and whose accounts dominate the national consciousness, that South Africans can confront contemporary social divisions and let healing truly begin.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

In finishing, we must recollect that South Africa is first and foremost a success story for post-conflict societies, and if we look on the national scale, that the ANC has done an impressive job in sustaining peace and forging a forgiving, some would say forgetful, civil society. And yet perhaps this reconciliation has gone so far as to gloss over the respective internal histories and prior tensions that need to be recognized, such as those between black and colored communities, between those groups that do not ally themselves so easily with the ANC project or those that feel marginalized or unacknowledged in the state-sanctioned depiction of the struggle for freedom. Writing about the situation more broadly in Southern Africa, McGregor and Schumaker observe that
state-led commemorations of nationalist achievements and struggle histories have been highly selective, liable to elevate ruling party histories and heroes over others, often ignoring unions, youth or women, and dealing with violence selectively or not at all. It is interesting that the heroes and sites of early colonial revolts have been remarkably absent in public monuments, testimony perhaps to the growing marginalization of rural populations, the lack of local meaning . . . or the difficulty of harnessing important living mediums and sacred sites to state projects. Rather than promoting national unity as intended, state heritage projects have often provoked controversy and resistance, particularly when combined with mounting popular disaffection, shifts towards authoritarianism and closure of the public sphere, the pressures of economic decline and gaping inequalities enhanced by neoliberal adjustment. (McGregor and Schumaker, 2006: 8)

It is not enough to bolster state pageantry with heritage monuments, or spend billions of Rand in changing the names of streets, towns and airports or to say that heritage will pay and that ordinary citizens should market themselves and perform their ‘ethnic’ culture for their own socio-economic uplift: the government must now provide more tangible benefits. Nor should it simply rely on the NGO sector, international agencies or expect private/public partnerships and the tender system to assume the burden (Rumney, 2005). We might recall Mamdani’s (1996: 5) salutary warning that ‘in the aftermath of conflict, healing is not a foregone conclusion’. Real therapy must start at home.

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