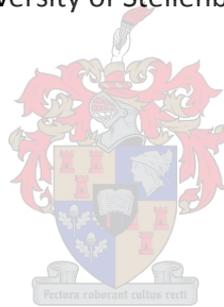


**ETHNOGRAPHY AND THE ARCHIVE:
POWER AND POLITICS IN FIVE SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC
ARCHIVES**

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Declaration

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Abstract

This study addresses issues concerning power and politics in five music archives in South Africa. It has a three-fold approach. First, it provides an overview of archival theory as it has developed since the French Revolution in 1789. It follows the trajectory of changing archival principles such as appraisal and provenance and provides an oversight into the changing understanding of 'the archive' as an impartial custodian of the Truth, to its conceptualisation in the Humanities as a concept deeply rooted in discourses around power, justice and knowledge production. Interrogating the unfolding concept of the archive throws into relief its current envisioned function within a post-Apartheid South Africa. Secondly, this dissertation explores five music archives in South Africa to investigate the level to which archival theory is engaged with and practiced in music archives. The archives in question are the International Library of African Music (ILAM), the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio and Sound Archive, the Gallo Record Archive, the Hidden Years Music Archive (HYMA) and the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS). This interrogation serves to illustrate how music archives take part in or subvert the power mechanisms inherent in archival practice. As such, this dissertation is situated within a body of scholarship that seeks to subvert the still prevailing consideration of the music archive as a neutral repository. Third, it investigates how a critical reading of music archives within a consideration of archival theory can add to our understanding of the practical realities of archives that firmly ground them as objects of power.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie spreek vraagstukke aan rakende mag en politiek in vyf Suid-Afrikaanse musiekargiewe. Die studie volg 'n drie-ledige benadering. Eerstens gee dit 'n oorsig van argivale teorie soos wat dit ontwikkel het vanaf die Franse Revolusie in 1789. Dit volg die trajek van veranderende argivale grondslae soos waardebeplanning en oorspronklike herkoms en gee 'n oorsig van die veranderende begrip van 'die argief' as 'n neutrale kurator van die Waarheid, tot by die konsepsualisering van die argief in die Geesteswetenskappe as 'n konsep wat gegrond is in diskoerse van mag, geregtigheid en die produksie van kennis. Die ondersoek na die ontluikende konsep van die argief bring breër kwessies rondom die voorgestelde funksie daarvan in 'n post-Apartheid Suid-Afrika na vore. Tweedens verken hierdie studie vyf musiekargiewe in Suid-Afrika om ondersoek in te stel na die vlak waartoe daar in gesprek getree word met argivale teorie asook die mate waartoe hierdie teorie toegepas word in musiekargiewe. Die betrokke argiewe is die International Library of African Music (ILAM), die Suid-Afrikaanse Uitsaaikorporasie (SAUK) Radio en Klank Argief, die Gallo Record Argief, die Hidden Years Music Argief (HYMA) en die Dokumentasie Sentrum vir Musiek (DOMUS). Hierdie ondersoek illustreer hoe musiekargiewe in strukture van mag, inherent aan argiefpraktyk, deelneem of dit omverwerp. Dus staan die studie binne 'n vakkundige raamwerk wat daarna streef om die steeds heersende beskouing van die argief as 'n neutrale bewaarplek te ondermyn. Dertens ondersoek die studie maniere hoe 'n kritiese beskouing van musiekargiewe binne 'n raamwerk van argivale teorie kan bydra tot die verstaan van die praktiese realiteite van argiewe op 'n manier wat argiewe stewig begrond as objekte van mag.

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List of archival abbreviations

ACTAG: Arts and Culture Task Group

DOMUS: Documentation Centre for Music

HYMAP: Hidden Years Music Archive Project

ILAM: International Library of African Music

NAC: National Archives Commission

NASA: National Archive of South Africa

NRF: National Research Foundation

SABC: South African Broadcasting Corporation

SAHA: South African History Archive

SAMAP: South African Music Archive Project

SAMRO: South African Music Rights Organisation

SASA: South African Society of Archivists

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organisation

VHA: Virtual History Museum

Note: All translations are my own unless indicated otherwise

Introduction: The importance of music archives

South African archival institutions have always been primary sites of ideological engagement. Since the advent of democracy in 1994, archives in South Africa have participated in efforts directed towards reconciliation and the acknowledgement of the history and value of all its citizens. The remnants of the archive which served to uphold Apartheid through its selection and destruction practices had to be “refigured” to reflect South African society at large. However, due to the nature of the transition to democracy, the Apartheid archival system was not dismantled and reconstituted, but “the new would be built out of the old through a process of transformation” (Harris, 2000:10). Therefore, after the transition to democracy in 1994, archival institutions feverishly instigated and engaged in transformation strategies, oral history projects and various attempts to make archives more accessible to the public. However, “refiguring the archive” has proven to be an extremely contentious project, as it implies coming to terms with the tensions between the past, present and future in a young democracy where archival practice has to confront the complex problems of post-Apartheid South Africa, new technological developments and daunting economic challenges.

The recent reaction to the performances of a polemical song, “Dubul’ Ibhunu”¹ in 2009/2010 by then ANC Youth League President, Julius Malema and his followers at rallies, poses interesting questions regarding the role envisioned for the archive in South Africa’s post-Apartheid landscape. The song and its performance received wide media coverage, sparked threats of hate-speech and invoked fears of racial polarization and renewed outbreaks of racial tension and violence. Amongst these reactions, the Secretary General of the ANC, Gwede Mantashe, called for the song to be archived in a responsible and professional manner (Robinson, 2010). If one considers that the archive is widely regarded as the source of raw material for the production of history (Harris, B., 2002:161), how should the archive function in a democratic society that is dealing with a problematic past? The response of Mantashe might point to a view that sees the archive as a solution for contested representations of this past and as a democratic project of nation-building.

¹ The English translation is “Shoot the Boer”.

If one considers the important role that music played (and still plays) in shaping the South African landscape,² music archives could prove essential in opening up new avenues for the archiving and preservation of South Africa's multiple narratives and musics. This can however not be considered an uncontested project. The renewed interest in archives in academic discourse during the past three decades reveals that archives are not solely keepers of information but active participants in the construction and subsequent interpretation of that information. Although archives were traditionally seen as impartial custodians of the Truth, this view has changed with increasing academic interrogation exposing archives as "intermediaries between a subject and its later interpreters, a function/role that is one of interpretation itself" (Kaplan, 2002:217).

Critical scholarship on archives is a rich discursive field and in the past few decades there has been a steadily developing interest in the subject both locally and internationally. Within the South African context, perhaps the most influential contribution towards this line of enquiry has been the book *Refiguring the Archive* (2002). This book includes a collection of work investigating the relationships between history, knowledge, power and the archive in a post-Apartheid South African context from the perspectives of various disciplines. Although *Refiguring the Archive* (2002) is an expansive collection of scholarly work about the South African archive, the music archive is not included. This seems to be a general phenomenon in the South African as well as international discourse regarding the critical analysis of music archives. International material referring to the sound archive is focussed on the recording and preservation of field material in relation to the field of ethnomusicology,³ the practical realities of sound archives such as digitisation, preservation and copyright,⁴ the challenges inherent in archiving performance arts,⁵ and articles describing specific archives and their

² For examples see Allen (2008); Gilbert (2007); Pyper (2005); Robertson (2004); Gray (2004); Drewett (2004); Bekwisiswe (1990) and De Kok & Press (1990).

³ Seeger (1986; 1996); Scüller (2004); Chaudhuri (1992)

⁴ See the special section of the *Signal Processing Magazine* 2010, Volume 90(4): Ethnic Music Audio Documents: From the Preservation to the Fuition; Seeger & Chaudhuri (2004); Harrison (1987, 1997) and Edmondson (2004).

⁵ Jones et al. (2009); Auslander (2006); Lycouris (2002); Reason (2003, 2006); Taylor (2005); Merod (1995).

collections.⁶ A search for literature on the music archive in South Africa has disclosed a limited amount of articles that either deal with specific collections within archives, or that engage to varying degrees with the possibility of regarding performances as archives.⁷ However, the body of scholarly work on archival theories within the context of the music archive, musicology and the critical discourse on archives remains limited.

In comparison to the history of archival institutions, music and sound archives are a relatively recent phenomena. One of the earliest sound archives is the Phonogramm Archiv, established at the Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften in Vienna in 1899, which collects ethnographic sound recordings (Strachan & Leonard, 2003:4). Popular music archives only started to gain momentum around the 1920s, such as the Library of Congress's Recorded Sound Reference Centre (Strachan & Leonard, 2003:4). In South Africa one of the earliest examples of an archive dedicated solely to the preservation of sound material is the International Library of African Music (ILAM) established by Hugh Tracey in 1954, with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Sound and Radio Archive following in 1960 and in 1971 the National Documentation Centre for Music and the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NAFVSA) in 1985.⁸

The various definitions for the term "archive" reference a long historical lineage that will be discussed in chapter 1 of this dissertation. The International Council of Archives proposes the following definition: Archives are "(1) non-current records preserved, with or without selection, by those responsible for their creation or by their successors in function for their own use or by an appropriate archives because of their archival value (2) an institution responsible for the acquisition, preservation, and communication of archives" (Walne, 1988). The same definition would also be applicable to music archives. Music archives are

⁶ For examples see Olson & Fagoaga (2008); Canazza & Orcalli (2001).

⁷ For examples see De Jongh (2009), Allen (2008), Masoga (2008), Muller (2002) and Jorritsma (2011). They will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 1 of this dissertation.

⁸ The National Documentation Centre for Music was established in 1971 as part of the Human Science Research Council (HSRC). The Centre closed circa 1992 and the material was moved to the National Archives (De Jongh, 2009:28). The National Film Archives was established in 1964 as part of the National Film Board and specialised in films made about or in South Africa. In 1982 it was incorporated into the State Archives Service and in 1985 the name was changed to the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NAFVSA). In 1989 it became a member of the International Association of Sound Archives (IASA). (*About the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa*).

generally grouped under the rubric of sound and audio-visual archives along with archives such as film archives and oral history archives. They can contain a large variety of material ranging from documents, photographs, diaries, music manuscripts, notebooks, artefacts, recordings and video material. Due to this wide range of material, audio-visual archive practice has much in common with general archival practice. Music archives vary in terms of the institutions they serve which determines the material they house and the archives' function. Many music archives and collections are linked to, or incorporated within, larger institutions such as national and regional libraries, universities, radio stations, record companies or national state archives. There are also a great number of privately owned collections. The archiving techniques, criteria for inclusion, selection and collection practices, ownership of material, cataloguing and preservation techniques differ greatly between these institutions and are often idiosyncratic; determined by individuals who also set up institutional guidelines. Music and sound archives that serve the corporations which established them, such as radio or record company archives, are shaped in content and function by those institutions. Similarly, the collections in for example university music archives or privately owned archives are often the result of individual efforts in terms of collecting or acquisition of collections which reflect the specific conditions, interests and efforts that led to their collection, for example the collection of folk music collected by John and Alan Lomax from the 1920s for the Library of Congress's Archive in the United States (Strachan & Leonard, 2003:3).

Music archives bear the marks and agendas of the institutions they serve, the socio-political and economic contexts wherein they were created and the individuals who serve(d) to establish and maintain them. These contexts influence and shape the content of archives as well as the systems set in place to order and preserve material. Archival practices such as selection, classification, ordering and description can therefore not be viewed as neutral, but should be regarded as cultural constructs. These systems are fundamental in determining what documents will become part of the archival record and how that record will be represented. It therefore becomes crucial to understand and interrogate the logic of music archives whereby certain subjects are produced and others are silenced.

In order to explore music archives as “artifacts of history” (Burton, 2005:6) shaped by various contexts, processes of archive making and systems set in place to make archiving possible, this dissertation takes as its premise the call from scholars such as Ann Lara Stoler (2002), Nicholas Dirks (2002) and Antoinette Burton (2005) to explore the archive through self-reflexive ethnographies. This methodology opens up avenues not only to examine the histories of archives, but also the stories of those involved in the various processes of archive making as well as the researcher’s own encounters with the archive. The notion of self-reflexive ethnography is based on the assertion that the material reality of the archive as a place, the researcher’s encounter with the archival system and archivists and her own worldview and experiences influence the finding, use and eventual interpretation of material.

This dissertation is structured in three parts. It begins with an in-depth analysis of the theoretical concepts of archival practice. These theoretical concepts and methodologies inform archival realities such as collection, selection, arrangement, description and classification. This is followed by five ethnographic case studies that seek to explore music archives and archival systems as culturally constituted and subject to various power relations inherent and exterior to the archive. Through this approach it becomes possible to explore the archival practices specific to each music archive as well as facets involved in creating the archival record. The last section considers the five music archives under discussion within the framework of archival theory presented in the first part of this dissertation. It explores the possibilities offered through a critical reading of music archives within the context of archival theory, and what this might contribute to the discourse on power and the archive.

2. Notes on methodology

The methodological framework of this dissertation is based on a combination of self-reflexive ethnography and historical analysis of the archive. Preliminary literature studied, includes material such as archival training manuals, catalogues and secondary literature written by archivists or individuals involved in the music archives. Secondary literature includes academic books and journals, and newspaper articles or websites relating to the

five case studies in this dissertation and other aspects of the study. The balance between historical and ethnographic approaches differed in each case study. Where the particular music archive has been the object of an established discourse of historical scholarship, the research relied primarily on secondary material found in academic journals and written material published or un-published by the archivist. Where little or nothing has been written about the particular music archive, observations, interviews and material gathered from field trips became paramount in constructing a reading. However, throughout the dissertation, the ethnographic experiences of the researcher in the field proved invaluable in relation to the arguments presented.

My initial motivation for incorporating ethnographic fieldwork in exploring archival institutions was motivated by a personal interest to acquaint myself with the local and physical conditions of the five music archives I focus on in this study. Rumours, news reports and even academic studies abounded with accusations of neglect, malpractice, staff shortages and the disappearance (or wilful destruction) of valuable records.⁹ This had to be investigated. What I did not foresee was that spending time in each archive and using an ethnographic method of participant observation, interviews and self-conscious subjective reflection in fieldnotes, would prompt various possibilities for theoretical reflection on the material. My archival visits enabled engagement with my source material through extended formal and informal interviews and short conversations in hallways, opportunities to participate in archival systems and activities, and gave me time to observe archivists during their daily practice. This allowed me some insight into music archival practice; one not only derived from the theories practitioners use, but as Clifford Geertz tellingly puts it, also on “what the practitioners do” (Geertz, 1973:5). Soon after embarking on my research I realised the necessity of doing this kind of field research, as material written about music archives in South Africa and their archival practices is limited (if it exists at all).

Demarcating the music archive as my field implied focussing on places where music was not necessarily being performed or studied, but where it was very specifically being structured, classified and ordered. In this dissertation five music archives in South Africa are presented

⁹ See De Jongh (2009); Ballantine (1993); Erlmann (1991); Allen (2007, 2008).

as case studies. The selection was partly motivated by the prominence (and use) of the specific music archives, as well as by the different institutional environments they represented: academic, corporate, commercial and privately owned. The ethnographic methodology employed reflects on my interest in the culture of the archive. Similarly to an ethnomusicologist exploring the performance of music within a specific community, I am interested in exploring the ways that the music archive performs, how various individuals perform in the archive, as well as how the researcher performs in the archive. I made a total of five fieldtrips of one week each to the various music archives. In some cases I also made short follow-up visits. These music archives are:

1) The International Library of African Music (ILAM) which is based in Grahamstown, Eastern Cape. This archive is linked to Rhodes University and mostly contain recordings made by Hugh Tracey of sub-Saharan African music. Fieldwork was conducted from 13 to 19 February 2011.

2) The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio and Sound Archive situated in Johannesburg, Gauteng. The Radio and Sound Archive serves the public broadcaster. It contains material ranging from radio broadcasts, music recordings made by and for the SABC and various paper documents. Fieldwork was conducted from 24 to 30 July 2011.

3) The Gallo Music Group Record Archive based in Johannesburg. It is a commercial archive serving the needs of the record company, estimated to contain the largest collection of South African released master tapes in the world. Fieldwork was conducted on various occasions due to difficulties in gaining access to the archive, which will be discussed in chapter 4. Fieldwork was conducted on 30 July 2011, 3 to 5 February 2012 and 18 July 2012.

4) The privately-owned Hidden Years Music Archive (HYMAP) located at Melville Beach, Kwazulu-Natal. This archive contains the recordings of the 3rd Ear Music Company and the recordings of David Marks. Fieldwork was conducted from 22 to 25 February 2012.

5) The Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS) located in Stellenbosch, Western Cape. This archive is based at the University of Stellenbosch. It contains a variety of musical

material including documents, recordings and artefacts from a wide spectrum of South African musics. Fieldwork was conducted from 2 to 6 April 2012.

I began the research process at each archive by making an appointment for an interview with the head archivist or director of the archive. These individuals subsequently directed me to various materials that they thought might be of interest to my study. My research activities usually followed similar patterns: doing interviews with all the archivists and cataloguers, looking at the suggested material, doing my own searches, being shown around the archival vault and spending time observing archivists cataloguing or sorting material. In this manner I collected both oral and archival material for my research. As noted above, my five case study archives all function within various institutional structures. This meant that interviewees varied from students, high-profile academics, archivists and librarians to business managers and sound engineers. My upbringing in a so-called conservative Afrikaans family as well as my later experiences as a music student at the University of the Free State, placed me in a particular relational context with my interviewees. As a 'fellow South African' acquainted with local conditions, I had a certain amount of flexibility in dealing with a variety of different personalities. I also found that my 'insider' status – as both a South African and an Afrikaans speaker – resonated culturally with many of my interviewees and facilitated my research relationships within the field.¹⁰ Interviews were done in either Afrikaans or English, with some conversations slipping from one language into the other. I translated all the Afrikaans interviews into English unless stated otherwise.

In terms of establishing the motivation behind creating archives and how the archival systems were set in place and are currently administered, the interviews with individual archivists proved extremely insightful. As Alessandro Portelli noted, "oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did" (Portelli 2006:36). These individuals stand central to archives – what they preserve and how they preserve – and my interviews with them allowed me glimpses into these processes. My interviews were for the most part un-structured, guided by the prompts and responses of the interviewer and interviewee. This open-ended and

¹⁰ For reflections on insider ethnography see the work of Muller (1999); Halstead (2001); Chiener (2002); Labaree (2002); Jorritsma (2011) and Bruinders (2011).

spontaneous approach yielded the most subjective and revealing results (see Bozzoli, 2006:161). This approach meant that my responses to what interviewees had said steered the interviews in certain directions and away from others. It thus forced me to consider the “intrusion of the interviewer’s assumptions and of the interviewer’s self-schema into the interviewing and interpretive process” (Yow, 2006:55), assumptions formed by having read a certain set of texts on the subject and coming from a particular socio-cultural background. Naturally this influenced my experiences in the field and how others experienced me.

In the interviews I allowed the narrative, as recounted by interviewees, to unfold. I only interjected at certain points to steer the discussion back to archives. During the interviews, my informants were asked to recount why they became involved in archives, how their training commenced, their understanding of the power of the archive, how they viewed their institution, as well as specific practices connected to their work/institution. In some interviews I had to hear and let pass without comment statements that I vehemently disagreed with; yet, I knew that in order to elicit more information I would have to nod, refrain from being argumentative, feign laughter when not feeling like it and, hopefully, come away with a recorder full of ‘evidence’.¹¹ At other times I had to listen to archivists talking for hours about their specific classification systems, detail that - although important for this study, at times became numbingly excessive in detail. Even though I actively pursued this methodology, which proved invaluable upon re-listening to the interviews, it left me at times feeling extremely agitated. My uneasiness during some interviews meant that I missed opportunities to press for more information or to ask the interviewees to elaborate on certain points. I experienced becoming Marcel Griault’s ethnographer who “parades across his face as pretty a collection of masks as that possessed by any museum” (quoted in Clifford, 1988:75). However, these spaces of discomfort and subjectivity became valuable as instances for personal and theoretical reflection.¹²

¹¹ Yow (2006:66) has pointed out how this can affect an interview: “Having empathy with someone whose values you abhor is difficult. Even if you repress an expression of disdain, body language and subtleties in the phrasing of questions will reveal your attitude” (Yow, 2006:66).

¹² This self-reflection and awareness of the effect of the researcher on the field she is working in, has a long intellectual history. For some works that discuss this history see Yow (2006); Berger (2008); Bartz & Cooley (2008) as well as the Special Issue of the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 35(4), (2006).

3. Structure and chapter outline

Probably the most challenging aspect of writing this dissertation was the necessity of drawing on a large spectrum of disciplines without many precedents in music research to guide me. To be sure, the absence of work that integrated archival practice and method within a larger unfolding body of work around the interpretation and power of the archive in the humanities became increasingly evident. As far as I can determine there exists no systematic study of archival theory as it has developed historically into the ways it has been interpreted and used in South African practice.

This dissertation is structured in three parts. Part one provides an overview and critical engagement with existing archival theory; part two consists of five case studies of South African music archives and part three is a thematic account of aspects of archival practice in South Africa as found in these case studies.

Part I relies on the work of Eric Posner (1967), Terry Cook (1995, 1997) and Verne Harris (2000) in order to navigate a course within an immense body of work from 1789 to the present. This section establishes a certain epistemological and ontological scaffolding of archival practice and the concept of “the archive” for the rest of the dissertation. Chapter 1 presents an overview of archival practice and theory as it has developed historically and how these practices came to be applied in South African archival practice. This section ends with an exploration of the “archival turn” that took place within humanities scholarship (mostly from the 1980’s), which signalled a different interaction with and understanding of the archive.

Part II consists of five case studies of music archives in South Africa. This section aims to explore music archives in South Africa within the framework presented in Part I and to determine how these theories and methodologies are applied within specific music archives. The section starts with a detailed reflection on methodology, fieldwork and some of the difficulties engendered by the ethnographic research design. Chapters 2 to 6 all belong to Part II of the dissertation.

The International Library of African Music (ILAM) in Grahamstown is explored in chapter 2 through the work of Hugh Tracey, founding father and main collector of the archive. Three of the core activities at the archive during his time as the director of ILAM, namely recording, cataloguing and repatriation are interrogated as instances of archive making that are still influential in the functioning of ILAM today. The methods used by Tracey are transformed into objects, catalogues, codification systems, criteria for value and projects that provide a material reality to interactions between the personal and the material in processes of power and control.

Chapter 3 turns to the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio and Sound Archive in Johannesburg. After sketching a brief historical background of the SABC and the establishment of the archive I trace the power and politics of the archive through some of its core theoretical assumptions, systems and practical applications. This chapter interrogates the archival practices of appraisal and selection, catalogue and classification system as practices that could reveal overt and hidden forms of political interference, as well as disclose the subsequent role played by the archive in maintaining these power relations.

An encounter with the Record Archive of the Gallo Music Company in Johannesburg is discussed in chapter 4. This chapter pays attention to the historical narrative of the Gallo Music Group to demonstrate the particular conditions that allowed for the company's creation and growth. As the archive of one of the biggest record conglomerates in South Africa, the archive is situated within various power structures that continue to shape the function and content of the archive. Through a discussion of the classification and description systems used at the Gallo Record Archive these power structures are discussed in relation to accessibility and ownership.

The only private archive that forms part of this dissertation is the Hidden Years Music Archive (HYMAP) in Melville, Kwazulu-Natal, discussed in chapter 5. As a private collection, collected mostly by an individual during the heydays and demise of Apartheid, this archive provides the opportunity to explore the effects and lingering after effects of the power of the Apartheid dispensation. After an historical account of the archive in order to explore the

content of its holdings, the chapter interrogates the recording and collecting methods of its collector, the concept of archival value in relation to changing historical and socio-political contexts, as well as the archival system instigated by David Marks, the collector and curator of this collection.

Chapter 6 explores the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS) at the University of Stellenbosch, which evolved into an active collecting institution of South African music material. The subsequent eclecticism of DOMUS's holdings and the various ideological positions of its donors and by implication their collections, created many instances of friction. In order to explore the establishment and function of this archive as well as the various power structures and moments of friction that characterise DOMUS, this chapter discusses DOMUS's collection policies and descriptive practices as well as some of the projects DOMUS's growing archival vault allowed.

Part III serves as a concluding section for the dissertation, providing space for a reflection on the five ethnographies and a consideration of what archival theory as presented in the first chapter of this dissertation could contribute to discussions about the archive and the various power structures it functions within and maintains. Chapter 7 commences with an exploration of the main methodological challenges found throughout the case studies presented in Part II. This chapter concludes with a thematic exploration of the main concerns and ideas that emerged from the ethnographic case studies.

Part I

Archival theory and the archive

“This is a tedious and meticulous book. The reader is warned.”

Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives (Muller, Freith & Fuin, 1940:9).

Chapter 1

Archival theory and the archive: An overview

1.1 Introduction

Western archival theory and practice has been built on a vast intertwining web of ideas, theories and practices. Archives have existed in various forms for millennia, and through the centuries changes in society, philosophy and technology forced archivists to redefine and restructure archival practice and management. From the Sumerians to the empires of the Babylonians, Assyrians, Hittites and the archives of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome and the Orient, traces exist of archives and the systems used to arrange and preserve them, dating back as far as the third millennium B.C.E. (Posner, 1972:54-55).¹ Archiving as we know it today mainly stems from ancient Ptolemaic and Roman Egyptian practices (Posner, 1972:28), where records and archives were kept to maintain order and state power. This concept of the function and value of the archive mainly as a place used for the creation and keeping of bureaucratic and official records (i.e. an institution primarily concerned with judicial-administrative functions) changed during the eighteenth century with a realisation of its cultural value for citizens and its research potential for scholars. The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the archive become a stable construct, an impartial institution safeguarding documents of truth. Although this notion of unbiased archives has since been rejected, the understanding of archives in a Ptolemaic sense still holds sway in many traditional archival institutions.

The word 'archive' is derived from the Greek word *archeion*, which means a government building, from which the primary definition of the word 'archive' was constructed as "a place where records and documents are kept" as well as the "records or documents" (Hill, 1943:206). This understanding of the archive as a stable construct has subsequently been challenged and destabilised in the work of scholars, artists, musicians and philosophers who expanded the definition of archive significantly from its original meaning. Today, "the

¹ For a detailed overview of Ancient Archival practice see Posner (1967, 1967a, 1972) and Duranti (1989a, 1989a).

archive” refers to both a place and an experience, both an institution and an act of remembering and forgetting. The archive also came to occupy a prominent place in the popular imagination. Non-fiction novels such as *All the Names* (Saramago, 1999), *Possession: A Romance* (Byatt, 1990), *The Archivist: A Novel* (Cooley, 1998) and *The Archivist’s Story* (Holland, 2007) engage with the archive and its keepers, and one even finds significant references to the archive in epic films such as *Star Wars II, Attack of the Clones* (Lucas, 2002). In the twenty-first century the archive became a socio-cultural institution compelling vigorous debates relating to identity, locality, history, culture and personal and collective memory (see Cook, 1997:27; Hamilton, Harris, Taylor, Pickover, Reid & Saleh, 2002). In this sense, the role that archives played in popular culture are seen to have changed to “memorials”, to tools in the “construction of the self and sense of community” (Little, 2007:112).² The archive is thus evoked in a more fluid and metaphorical sense reminiscent of the works of prominent French philosophers such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Paul Ricoeur.

This ambiguity of the archive - on the one hand considered as an institution, and on the other as a broad metaphorical idea - resulted in a complex discourse based on the “abstract and the concrete, the theoretical and the practical” (Daniels & Walch, 1984:xi).

Subsequently, archival theory has had a bumpy ride, evidenced in the heated debates fought in the pages of the *The American Archivists*, *Archivaria* and *Archival Science*, on whether archival theory could be called a theory, or whether it simply constituted a methodology.³ These debates also touched on the contemporary split between archival

² Hanna Little points out that whereas archives were used in the past to “establish aristocratic rights or nation states”, archives have come to denote a “vehicle for understanding yourself,” and a source of identity as can be seen in various forms of “roots tourism” and “ancestral travel” (Little 2007: 105;108). See also Kaplan (2000) and *Ancestral stories (Archival Platform)*.

³ This debate was sparked by Frank Burke’s essay of 1981, in which he argued against an archival theory that “tends to oversimplify that which is complicated and to overcomplicate that which is simple” (Roberts, 1990:110). Instead he called for an archival theory that is concerned with the reasons why societies create records, the place of archives in society, and the impulse in human nature to revere artefacts (Burke, 1981:42-43). In the subsequent debate that ensued authors either situated themselves with those who believed that “there is less need for theoretical knowledge because everything about archival work, theoretically, can be known empirically” (Roberts, 1990:112), or with those who saw “the theoretical aspects of archival science as something inexorably linked to practice” and believed that “appraisal theory in particular require speculation, experiments, and sharing of appraisal decisions” (Eastwood, 1988:235). Verne Harris a prominent

science (theory, methodology and practice) and works produced in other disciplines that explored and complicated the notion of the archive. As will be illustrated in this section, archival theory can indeed be viewed as a theory, intricately linked to its application in archival practice. Archival theory has developed in tandem with social developments and changes, but since the 1990s it has mostly remained transfixed on methodological and technical problems without considering philosophical and theoretical developments from outside the archival discipline.

To explore these shifts and developments in archival discourse, I will trace the main ideas of leading scholars within the European, American, Australian, Canadian and South African archival discourses on archival theory concluding with a section on 'the archive' as seen from other disciplines. This will provide a viewpoint into the changing meaning of the term 'archive'. Since a comprehensive overview is beyond the scope of this chapter, archival theory will be investigated in relation to the main archival shifts which occurred mainly around the two concepts of *provenance* and *appraisal*. Appraisal refers to the process whereby the so-called intrinsic value or long-term preservation and potential use of records is determined, giving credence to the various selection practices in archives. Provenance refers to the original creator(s) of the documents. The 'principle of provenance' or the *respect des fonds* dictates that "records of different origins (provenance) be kept separate to preserve their context" (Pearce-Moses, 2005). Archival practice in audiovisual archives are founded on the same basic principles of appraisal and provenance. In *A Manual for Sound Archive Administration*, (1990), Allen Ward notes that the preservation of sound recordings "require 'archival' arrangement and treatment similar, if not identical, to that considered appropriate to textual archives" (Ward, 1990:viii; see also Harrison, 1997a). More technical and practical matters such as description, finding aids, arrangement, filling, preserving, etc. will not feature in the ensuing discussion. These considerations will surface, though, in the case studies. The aim of the present overview is to explore the

South African archivist asserted that it is vital for a discipline to engage in theory, formulations and discourses, for otherwise "their capacity to connect with those having more generous understanding of significant 'context' – [remains] extraordinarily narrow" (Harris, 2004:217). To follow this debate see Botha (1937); Burke (1981); Cappon (1982); Cook (1984/85); Roberts (1987, 1990); Eastwood (1988, 1994); Stielow (1991) and Mortense (1991).

epistemological and ontological unfolding of the archive in order to create a framework for the rest of the work contained within this dissertation.

1.2. The introduction of the principle of provenance

Archival theory as it is known and practiced today was first articulated in eighteenth-century France and Germany (Cook, 1997:20).⁴ Until the eighteenth century, archives were mostly decentralised and not concerned with the records of administrative origin other than those of the institution they served (Posner, 1967a:25).⁵ Although there were attempts to centralise archives as early as 1713 (see Posner, 1967a:25), the central archive established in Paris in 1790 marked a major change in archive administration.⁶ Probably one of the most influential developments in archival theory after the French Revolution was legislation accepted in 1794 which for the first time gave the public open access to all the documents in the holdings of the Paris central archive (Esterhuysen, 1968:33).⁷ The only exception were records still in administrative use that remained closed to the public, while older, non-current records could be consulted by any member of the public (Duranti, 1989:7). This incidentally, is a principle that still holds true in archival practice of the twenty-first century.

Around the 1830s one of the core principles of archival theory, namely *respect des fonds* or provenance, was formulated by the French National Archives and further developed by

⁴ For an informative article about the history of archives in Europe from the early twelfth century until the mid-1990s see Ducheyne, (1992).

⁵ In his book, *Archives in the Ancient World*, Eric Posner points out that although some ancient civilisations created archives like the *Tabularium* of Republican Rome that “showed a tendency to absorb the records of various administrative origins [...] the idea of concentrating in one place the archives of different creators was alien to ancient and medieval times” (Posner, 1972:4).

⁶ Centralisation facilitated the administration and use of archives greatly. Lesure, Bowers, Hagg, & Vanrie (2001: 858) note that where the archive was centralised in the capital city early on (such as in France and England) the accessibility of archives were more user friendly than in places where centralisation only happened relatively recently, for example Italy. In such instances a researcher would have to search all the provincial archives as well as the central archive in Rome.

⁷ For an overview of some of the most important developments in European archival theory after the French Revolution see Posner (1976a). For a specific look at the creation of central archives in France that saved some public records from the large-scale destruction of records that took place in the aftermath of the French Revolution see Lokke (1968) and Panitch (1996).

archivists in Prussia, Germany and Holland (Schellenberg, 1956:90; Posner, 1967a:31).⁸ This principle refers to the preservation of the *original order* of documents as they were created by an institution (Posner, 1967a:31, see Muller, Freith & Fruin, 1940:52). Before this principle became accepted archival practice, a process of ‘methodising’ was used whereby all archival collections were broken up into a chronological system and grouped by subject, regardless of their origins (Schellenberg, 1965:42,59; Duchein, 1992:19). This resulted in disjointed archives where the relations between documents were often untraceable, making it impossible to investigate how a particular institution functioned, or, for instance, to unravel the “functioning of discontinued offices” (Posner, 1967a:32).

The system of provenance was given final “theoretical justification” (Schellenberg, 1965:42) in the publication of the *Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives* (1898) by Dutch archivists Samuel Muller, Johan Freith and Robert Fruin.⁹ After its first publication in 1898, this *Manual* became one of the first widely disseminated international handbooks for archival practice and theory of the twentieth century, translated into German (1905), Italian (1908), French (1920), English (1940) and Portuguese (1973).¹⁰ It became popularly known as the *Dutch Manual* and consists of one hundred rules for archival practice that were formally accepted by the Dutch Association of Archivists (Cook, 1997:21). The first rule in the *Manual* describes an archival collection as “the whole of the written documents, drawings and printed matter, officially received or produced by an administrative body or one of its officials, in so far as these documents were intended to remain in the custody of that body or of that official” (Muller, Freith & Fruin, 1940:13). “This”, the rule continues, “is the foundation upon which everything must rest” (Ibid.). The authors were mainly concerned with “government, public or corporate records” (Cook, 1997:20) and dismissed private and personal archives that constituted in their view nothing more than a “conglomeration of papers and documents” (Muller, Freith & Fruin, 1940:20).

⁸ For a detailed discussion of the development of the principle of provenance see Posner (1967) and Kolsrud (1992).

⁹ First appeared as the *Handleiding voor het Ordenen en Beschrijven van Archieven* in 1898.

¹⁰ For an investigation into the development of Dutch archival theory that culminated in the *Dutch Manual* see Ketelaar (1996) and Horsman, Ketelaar & Thomassen (2003).

Reaction to the publication of this *Manual* was varied, especially with regard to the principle of provenance. Some, like the Italian archivist Eugenio Casanova, keenly propagated provenance and original order (see Casanova, 1928; Tamblé, 2001:87) while others have been more critical.¹¹ Terry Cook argues that since the authors of the *Dutch Manual* had to deal with small amounts of medieval documents which were usually well organised and virtually all important, it was unproblematic to respect the original filing and classification systems used by the creator, or to reassemble archival collections that had been split up (Cook, 1997:20). In addition, with the significant changes in administrative structures in the twentieth century it was not always possible to assume that the form in which the collection was received would correspond “in its main outline with the organisation of the administration which produced it” (Cook, 1997:20).¹² Posner argued that “arrangement of a body of archives might not be the most desirable for purposes of research” (Posner, 1967:2). Instead of being restricted by provenance, archives should be made more accessible for “answering questions formulated according to the needs of present-day inquirers” (Posner, 1967a:32-33).¹³ In spite of the critique, the concept of provenance and original order still form a corner stone of archival practice. The *Dutch Manual* has been

¹¹ One of the most influential archivists of the Prussian Privy State Archives, Adolf Brenneke (1875-1946) heavily criticised the notion of *respect des fonds* and the principle of provenance as it was advocated in the *Dutch Manual* (see Horsman, 2002:2). Brenneke saw provenance as a functional principle that did not depend on the physical nature of archives – foreshadowing the development of virtual archives of the 1980s and 90s (Menne-Haritz, 2005:325). He believed that the “original physical order was to be conserved only if it demonstrated the internal relations” and that if “the actual arrangement of the papers when they were transferred to the archives contradicted that aim, the order should be changed in such a way that the internal structure and the underlying network of activities would become visible” (Ibid.). Because Brenneke defined “arrangement according to provenance” the researcher would be able to “understand how the records emerged from businesses and thus to understand what happened when they were created” (Ibid., 326). Consequently the context of records would be visible in the structure of the records and would “not need to be transmitted as a verbal description” (Ibid., 326). Unfortunately his ideas were not accessible outside of his country and with the interruption of the war his theories did not evolve further (see Brenneke, 1953). In another article of critique, Richard Berner points out that “materials are received in as many different arrangements as there are individual collections [...] the order in which the papers are received is not necessarily a useful index to the personality of the ‘creator’, unless he was preoccupied with the problem of arrangement” (Berner, 1960:396).

¹² See also Genicot and Magurn (1950) who argue that the *Dutch Manual* is not applicable to modern day archives and records, where the destruction of records has become a necessity. They call for the reconsideration or a rewriting of the Manual.

¹³ Posner suggested that a midway solution should be found where the files and records were arranged and inventoried according to their original order and then catalogued and indexed “by preparing accurate and exhaustive descriptions of the contents of the different *fonds* and indicating the possible historical significance of their different series” (Posner, 1967a: 33).

immensely influential and is still considered a “pillar of classical archival theory,” and a “Bible for modern archivists” (Schellenberg quoted in Cook, 1997:22). It transformed the character of archival institutions including South African archival practice (discussed below) and informed two landmark publications in archival theory published respectively by Hilary Jenkinson (1937) and Theodore R. Schellenberg (1965).

1.3. The ‘impartial’ archivist and the ‘authentic’ archive

As mentioned previously, archival theory is based on two core concepts, namely the principle of provenance and that of appraisal and selection.¹⁴ After the First World War, archivists had to deal with modern government records that accumulated faster than before, and the size of archival collections meant that the record could no longer be preserved in its entirety as advocated by the *Dutch Manual*. The concept of appraisal was first raised after the French Revolution and practiced in Germany by discarding the oldest “and perhaps most valuable materials as space became crowded” (Schellenberg, 1956:133,135). Although some guidelines for archival appraisal were formulated in the early twentieth century in Prussia (Schellenberg, 1956:135,136) it was the Englishman Hilary Jenkinson who became known for his theory of appraisal. Jenkinson published the second major treatise on archival theory and practice in 1922, entitled *A Manual for Archive Administration*. In this manual, Jenkinson tried to address the problems of preserving large archival collections through limited appraisal and selection, extending some of the Dutch formulations as well as advocating new principles for archival practice.

Jenkinson’s belief was that the archivist’s primary function is “to keep, not select archives” (Cook, 1997:23). The central notion of this preservation was based on archives as evidential value of the past. Jenkinson’s conceptualization of the archive was thus still concerned with government and state, focussing on the legal character of archival records. He defined an

¹⁴ It should be noted that other archivists propose different core concepts. David Bearman for example identifies four concepts namely selection and appraisal, retention and preservation, arrangement and description and access and use. However, he notes that within these concepts the two core concepts remain selection and appraisal (Bearman, 1989). Luciana Duranti (1993:52) identifies two concepts, namely preservation (physical, moral and intellectual) and communication of archival documents. The two concepts identified by Terry Cook (1995, 1997) namely provenance and appraisal could encapsulate all of the above mentioned concepts.

archival document as one “drawn up or used in the course of an administrative or executive transaction (whether public or private) of which itself formed a part; and subsequently preserved in their own custody for their own information by the person or persons responsible for that transaction and their legitimate successors” (Jenkinson, 1937:11). In Jenkinson’s view documents become eligible for archives when they “cease to be in current use” and “are definitely set aside for preservation, tacitly adjudged worthy of being kept” (Jenkinson, 1937:9). Jenkinson furthermore expanded the Dutch principle of provenance, translating the concept *fonds d’archives*, as it was used in the *Dutch Manual*, with the term ‘archive group’. Jenkinson’s archive group is somewhat more inclusive and could contain *fonds* within *fonds* in archive groups of very large agencies (Jenkinson, 1937:101-102).¹⁵ Terry Cook points out that similar to the Dutch trio, Jenkinson’s Archive Groups are geared towards “medieval and early modern records, with their closed series, their stable and long-dead creators, and their status as inherited records from the past” (Cook, 1997:23). He thus did not have to deal with large quantities of records, or series that were open-ended and continued to be added to.

Probably one of the most far-reaching ideas in this manual is Jenkinson’s view that the archive is *impartial* and *authentic*. Building on the principle of provenance, Jenkinson believed that because archives originate organically in their office of creation and are then preserved in official custody in the same state, archives are “by their origin free from the suspicion of prejudice in regard to the interest in which we now use them: they are also by reasons of their subsequent history equally free from the suspicion of having been tampered with in those interests” (Jenkinson, 1937:13).¹⁶ This “un-tampered archive” is

¹⁵ *Fonds* as found in the *Dutch Manual*’s conceptualisation of the principle of provenance or *respect des fonds* refers to “the entire body of records of an organization, family, or individual that have been created and accumulated as the result of an organic process reflecting the functions of the creator” (Pearce-Moses, 2005). In contrast the archive group, as conceptualised by Jenkinson refers to “a collection of records that share the same provenance and are of a convenient size for administration” (Ibid.). Therefore, within more complicated administrative structures and larger bodies of records produced by one creator, smaller sub-groups could be created within the Archive Group to make the collection more manageable.

¹⁶ Although it must be noted that Jenkinson spends a few meagre paragraphs on explaining the possibilities of forgery in the archive, he ends his argument by saying that “forgery or falsification is to be regarded as altogether exceptional among Archives” (Jenkinson, 1937:15), thus substantiating the above mentioned argument. Subsequently Jenkinson notes in relation to archivists that “we may

based on Jenkinson's insistence on an "unbroken line of custody" (Jenkinson, 1937:12), an elaborate chain of responsibility from the original creator of the archive to the eventual preservation by archivists (see Jenkinson, 1965:39-41). Consequently, Jenkinson's archive, based on the two qualities of impartiality and authenticity, could not tell "anything but the truth" (Jenkinson, 1937:12). Jenkinson vehemently defended this statement against criticism from theorists such as Theodore R. Schellenberg, calling it "one of the most valuable Archive Characteristics" (Jenkinson, 1957:147-149). For Jenkinson, this sanctity of evidence was essential, and with it his belief – like the Dutch trio – that the arrangement and description of archives must exactly reflect their creators' original administrative structure and record-keeping system(s).

In a similar fashion Jenkinson believed that archivists should be impartial and pursue a career of service and responsible custodianship (Jenkinson, 1937:11). Since the archivist must be able to read and understand documents to work effectively, Jenkinson stipulated that he or she will need a knowledge of palaeography, medieval Latin, French of the Anglo-Norman variety, Middle-English, diplomacy and, embracing all these, administrative history (Jenkinson, 1948:16-23). These super-human archivists also had to be skilled in "Sorting, Arranging and Listening [...] a little of a Bookbinder and Repairer [...] a Photographer; something of a Fireman; and a little of an Architect, Builder, Chemist, Engineer, Entomologist and Mycologist" (Ibid., 23). But above all, the most important function of the archivist remained to keep the original order of archives as "Material Evidence" (Jenkinson, 1948:14-15). Jenkinson's ideal archivist had to be an omniscientist, a Renaissance man, in order to assist all researchers and the inevitable wide range of their topics (Jenkinson, 1948:27). He believed that "the good Archivist is [...] the most selfless devotee" of truth, "the whole of his professional labours, rightly understood, are directed to that one end" (Jenkinson, 1984:21). Since publication, this idea has been widely criticised, and Terry Cook notes that it clearly reflects the empirical positivism common to the historiography in which Jenkinson was schooled (Cook, 1997:7).

presumably acquit him of any intention to tamper deliberately with his Archives; the wrong-doing will be unintentional" (Jenkinson, 1937:84).

Jenkinson's notion of the impartial archive was based on the principle that no selection took place, that it was an organic process not pre-determined by the whims of scholars or archivists (Jenkinson, 1937:22). However, this idea was challenged by the sheer quantity of modern record accumulation. In spite of this, Jenkinson was still fundamentally against the idea of appraisal, asking whether "destruction of any kind [is] a proper part of the Archivist's business?" (Jenkinson, 1937:145) Appraisal was further complicated by the principle of provenance within Jenkinson's theory. Archives were seen as an "organic emanation of documents from a records creator", which meant that "severing any record from that organic whole seems to violate fundamental archival principles" (Cook, 1997:23). Jenkinson's solution to this problem was to let the agency creating the documents (what he refers to as the Administrator) select its own documents from collections and destroy according to its own discretion (Jenkinson, 1937:150-151). In this manner the archivist would not have to make decisions regarding accumulation or destruction, but instead receive a pre-selected collection of documents that he or she could preserve in its entirety (ibid., 152). Duranti points out how Jenkinson believed that any destruction of useless documents on the part of the archivist would allow for the personal judgement of the archivist to influence his decisions, but "for an Administrative body to destroy what it no longer needs is a matter entirely within its competence and an action which future ages cannot possibly criticise" (Duranti, 1994:337). The only problem Jenkinson could foresee with this approach to appraisal was whether the Administrator would destroy enough records or destroy too many (Jenkinson, 1937:151).

The central dilemma of Jenkinson's concept of appraisal is that it allows the creator to decide what should become the archival record, thus creating room for him/her to remove incriminating material from the archive. Cook points out that "at its most extreme," this approach "would allow the archival legacy to be perverted by administrative whim or state ideology" (Cook, 1997:24).¹⁷ Jenkinson's method of maintaining an objective, un-tampered

¹⁷ Many such examples exist, for instance the archives in the former Soviet Union, were informed by state ideology which determined that the only records of value for preservation were those that reflected the ideals of the state (Grimsted, 1971). Similarly, in South Africa the Apartheid government influenced what documents should be kept and what should be destroyed, thereby reflecting a skewed picture of reality and the State (Harris, 2009a). For more examples see Horecky

archive is further problematised through the standards he articulated for administrators to create and maintain effective archives, which implied making distinctions between more and lesser important agencies, programmes and activities. These distinctions would undermine the impartial archivist as well as the innocence of the records as “natural or pure accumulations that their administrators created” (Cook, 1997:24). In this sense, Jenkinson’s theory of appraisal is fundamentally flawed, and although he was aware of this, he had “no suggestions to offer” (Jenkinson, 1937:149-155,190). Although Jenkinson did allow the archivist to destroy duplicated material as well as documents which “are of no historic value,” (Jenkinson, 1937:140) his approach was not radical enough to maintain high-quality impartial archives for the future (see Cook, 1997:24). Thus, although Jenkinson was the first proponent of appraisal, he did not fully engage with new developments and the problems that “open-ended series from fluid administrative structures,” where documents are continually added to existing collections, might create in the Archive Group (Ibid.). Gerald Ham notes how Jenkinson’s approach “solves the problems of complexity, impermanence, and volume of contemporary records by ignoring them” (Ham, 1993:9 as used in Cook, 1997:24).

Similar approaches to appraisal as those advocated by Jenkinson were implemented in South Africa circa the late-1920s, along with archival principles as advocated by the *Dutch Manual*. The *Dutch Manual* was first brought to South Africa in 1911 by Collin Graham Botha who later became the first Head Archivist of the Union and Provincial government archives in 1919.¹⁸ Before the creation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, archival practice was haphazard and scattered amongst the four colonies of the Cape, Natal, Orange Free State and the Transvaal (Davies, 1973:9).¹⁹ After unification, the South African Archive Service was

(1957); Stoler (2002); Dirks (2002); Sahadeo (2005); Fritzsche (2005) and Pohlandt-McCormick (2005).

¹⁸ Botha brought this book to South Africa after a visit to the United Kingdom and Europe in 1911 where he spent some time visiting archival institutions (Davies, 1973:9).

¹⁹ The first significant archival practice in South Africa was initiated in the Cape Colony where a commission was appointed in 1876 to collect, catalogue and index the archives of the Colony (Davies, 1960:12; Preller, 1961:43). In the Transvaal (now the Gauteng province), the State Secretary of the South African Republic appointed two officials in 1887 to arrange the papers of his office “after office hours”. This was turned into an official archival post in 1889 for the Department of the State Secretary only. The post lapsed during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) and only in October

established and centralised in Pretoria, with each province retaining its archives and documents under the direction of the Head Archivist (see Hartman, 1959:53, Davies, 1960:12). Shortly after his appointment as the Head Archivist, Botha was sent on a tour of Europe, the United States and Canada to explore various systems of archival practice and management in these countries (Davies, 1973:10; Preller, 1961:47). His report of this tour was published in 1921, forming the foundations of the Government archives of South Africa and the first archives act of 1922 (Davies, 1973:10, 19).²⁰ One of the most important recommendations contained in this report refers to appraisal strategies strongly influenced by both English and American (see below) practices of the time (see Davies, 1961:11). In a later Presidential Address to the South African Association for the Advancement of Science (S2A3), Botha remarked that in the process of appraisal the “archivist has to consider not only the historians of today but also of the future” (Botha, 1937:9). As advocated by Jenkinson, Botha called for the moral and physical defence of archives as well as commitment to serving students and researchers (Botha, 1937:8). In spite of these suggestions, most “entrants into the archives were given Muller, Freith and Fruin’s world-famous manual” until as recently as the 1980s (Harris, 2000:89).²¹

1.4. The introduction of appraisal and selection

Jenkinson’s notions of impartiality, integrity and the archivist’s responsibility to the moral defence of the archive were upheld in the United States until the 1960s.²² However, his theories were undermined by the American archivist Theodore R. Schellenberg and his

1902 a “keeper of the archives” was appointed. In the Free State the first Government Librarian and Keeper of the Archives was appointed in 1903 (Davies, 1973:10). See also Human (1977).

²⁰ See Botha (1921).

²¹ The fact that the *Dutch Manual* remained influential in South African archival discourse until as late as the 1980s, may point to a lack of active engagement in issues of archival theory in South Africa. It is likely that this was not unrelated to the international cultural and academic boycotts in the Apartheid era. The South African National Archives was only admitted as a member of the International Council on Archives and its ESARBICA branch in 1990 (Harris, 2000:17). The Society for South African Archivists was established in 1960 and in its subsequent publication the *S.A. Archives Journal* (published from 1959), critical engagement with archival theory first started to appear from the late 1980s.

²² These ideas were vehemently defended by amongst others the first State Archivist of Illinois, Margaret Cross Norton. She wrote that archivists are bound “to protect the integrity of [...] records” and even if “historical” archives may appear to have no value for current affairs, this “does not release the custodian from his legal and moral responsibilities” (Norton, 1975:26).

colleagues who promoted the role of archivists as appraisers. During the mid-twentieth century, the sheer volume of created documents made it impossible to conserve all the records and documents produced in society. Nowhere was this more pertinent than in America, where the growth rate of records during the Second World War “had reached six hundred thousand metres annually” (Schellenberg, 1956:35-36). This resulted in a fundamental reorientation in American archival practice. The role of the archivist changed from one being primarily concerned with preservation and collection to selection. In 1965 the American archivist, Theodore R. Schellenberg, published *The Management of Archives*. In this (his second) manual (the first was published ten years earlier in 1956), he articulated a robust and radical appraisal theory. Schellenberg’s second manual is regarded as the third milestone in archival practice during the twentieth century. Written from an American perspective, the author was not bound by medieval and similarly archaic archives of the past, but concerned with archives of the present and their efficient management. As such, this manual actively deals with the appraisal and selection of archival material, and was one of the first manuals that established successful guidelines to this effect for archivists.

Schellenberg’s notion of the archive was based on a thorough understanding of the position of other theorists on this concept. After tracing the definitions of archives by leading thinkers from England (Hilary Jenkinson), Germany (Adolf Brenneke), Holland (Muller, Freith & Fruin,) and Italy (Eugenio Casanova), Schellenberg deduced that all these definitions mainly refer to tangible matters (the form of archives, their sources and the places of preservation) and intangible matters (the reason why materials were created or accumulated and the values according to which materials are preserved) (Schellenberg, 1956:13). However, he believed that three factors were essential for a definition of archives. The first of these related to the reasons why materials were produced or accumulated. In this regard he wrote that “to be archives, materials must have been created or accumulated to accomplish some purpose” (Ibid.). Second, he believed that documents and records become archives when they are “preserved for reasons other than those for which they were created or accumulated” (Ibid.). Third, Schellenberg stated that selection should be implicit in the definition of archives (Schellenberg, 1965:14-16). This definition of archives is for the most part contrary to Jenkinson’s views. Schellenberg considered Jenkinson’s central beliefs (that documents could only be considered as archives if an unbroken line of custody

can be established and that selection should take place by the person(s) responsible for the creation of the documents) as inessential and impracticable (Schellenberg, 1965:14).

Contrary to Jenkinson and the Dutch archivists, who considered “that all the material created and received by an administration was ‘archives’,” Schellenberg considered archives only as “that much smaller portion that had been chosen by the archivist for preservation from the larger, original whole which he termed ‘records’” (Cook, 1997:27).²³ Schellenberg and his colleagues thus distinguished between “archives” and “records”, with records referring to the documents preserved by its administration “as evidence of its functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations etc,” and archives as “those records [...] which are selected and adjudged worthy of permanent preservation for reference and research purposes [...] in an archival institution” (Schellenberg, 1965:16).

An important contribution of Schellenberg to archival theory was the attribution of primary and secondary values to archives. Primary values referred to the importance of archives for the original creators and their ongoing operational duties, and secondary value as the importance of archives for other agencies and to non-government users, in other words researchers (Schellenberg, 1956:16,133).²⁴ When it comes to appraisal, the agency or records officials are mainly responsible to judge the primary value of the archives while the archivists (not Jenkinson’s so-called ‘Administrator’) determine the secondary value of records and documents after the records are no longer in use (Ibid., 133).

This consideration gave rise to the “life-cycle” concept according to which the whole cycle of records is considered from the records management phase to the archival phase (Macneil, 1993:12). It was first developed by American archivists such as Margaret Cross Norton and Philip Brooks with the understanding that archivists should work with the creating agencies.

²³ See Schellenberg (1965:ix-x).

²⁴ Jenkinson remained unwavering in his opposition against Schellenberg’s theory and critique. In a review of Schellenberg’s first Manual, *Modern Archives, Principles and Techniques* (1956), Jenkinson argued against defining archives by their research value, comparing it to pulling a rabbit from a hat and then saying that is what hats are intended for (Jenkinson, 1957:149). He went on: “to make the fact that Archives have been subject to selection of this kind an essential part of Archive quality is to mask the sad conclusion that our generation is bringing Archives a long step nearer to the status of those artificial ‘Collections’ to which Dr. Schellenberg [...] assigns, in agreement with me, an inferior quality as evidence; and that in doing so it surrenders one of the most valuable Archival Characteristics – their impartiality” (Ibid.).

The life-cycle concept worked in three phases: records were first used and organised by the creators and then stored for a “period of infrequent use in off-site record centres” (Cook, 1997:26). When these records were not required by the creators anymore, they were “selected as archivally valuable and transferred to an archive, or declared non-archival and destroyed” (Ibid.).²⁵ This required a close relationship between record managers and archivists.²⁶

Schellenberg further stipulated that selection should take place based on the “evidential or informational values” of the documents or records (Schellenberg, 1956:114). Evidential value refers to “the evidence public records contain of the functioning and organization of the government body that produced them” and informational value refers to “the information they contain on persons, corporate bodies, problems, conditions, and the like, with which the government body deal” (Ibid., 139). However, Schellenberg clearly states that he does not use “evidential value” in the sense of Jenkinson to refer “to the sanctity of the evidence in archives that is derived from ‘unbroken custody’ [but] to a value that depends on the importance of the matter evidenced, i.e. the organization and functioning of the agency that produced the record” (Ibid.). This method of selection is thus mainly based on the value of documents for future studies, research and scholars. Schellenberg emphasised the links between archivists and historians and the fact that most archivists were trained historians before they took up the profession. Due to these selection

²⁵ This transfer of records to a record centre for temporary storage was an important development in archival practice because it meant that records no longer in current use could be removed to cheaper storage to create space for current records. Schellenberg notes that even though record centres may create the opportunity for departments “to defer the reviewing of their records” (Schellenberg, 1956:108) their biggest advantage is that these record centres make records more accessible for use because they serve “as places for the concentration of all past accumulations of records” (Ibid., 107).

²⁶ Brooks was one of the first archivists to assert that archivists needed to take interest in records from the moment they are created. He stated that “the earlier in that life history that co-operation between the agency of origin and the archivist can be established, the easier will be the work for all” (Brooks, 1940:226; see also Brooks, 1943:160). In South Africa record management was not accorded a great deal of importance until the Archives Act of 1962 was passed, after which the Archives Service developed a records management strategy (Harris, 2000:34). For a comprehensive history of records management and the move to bring archival practice in contact with it, see Evans (1984) and Brooks (1951). However, not all reactions to this shift in emphasis were positive. Shiller, for instance, stated that although this practice has benefits, the emphasis on record managers leads to “the abandonment of the tradition of scholarship and research, desertion of historiography, and renunciation of a broad intellectual comprehension of the records” (Shiller, 1948:229-230).

principles, he maintained that records managers and archivists should try to retain professional links, but ultimately “records were the concern of records managers and creating institutions; archives were the concern of archivists and archival institutions” (Cook, 1997:28).

Schellenberg devoted considerable space to the development of differences and similarities between library, archival and museum practices. In a similar vein to Jenkinson, Schellenberg wrote that the main difference between these institutions was that “archival institutions are receiving agencies”, not acquiring material by purchase but preserving the material produced by the body it serves, “whereas libraries are collecting agencies” (Schellenberg, 1956:19).²⁷ However, in accordance with Schellenberg’s theory, Terry Cook notes that in subsequent years archivists have focussed on the differences between records managers and archivists, creating “strategic problems for archivists in a computerised world, because electronic records especially require ‘up front’ intervention by archivists if records are to be preserved as archival evidence” (Cook, 1997:28).

Schellenberg still retained the principal of provenance in his archival theory but changed Jenkinson’s definition of “archival group” to “record group” in order to cope with the large volumes of records generated by “complex governments” that did not exhibit the completeness and independence that Jenkinson’s Archive Group required (Schellenberg, 1965:167). In modern administration “all units are interrelated and few are completely independent” (Ibid.). Consequently, the “record group considered quantity, as well as provenance, as a criterion for its creation” (Cook, 1997:28). In other words, when a record group with the same provenance (for example from the same creator) became too big, a subgroup could be created.²⁸ Schellenberg further dismissed the Dutch filing system of

²⁷ Here the influence of some of Jenkinson’s ideas with which Schellenberg came into contact during visits to Australia can be seen (see Schellenberg, 1956:xi). See for instance what Jenkinson wrote on archives: “Archives are not collected” but “they came together, and reached their final arrangement, by a natural process [...] as much an organism as a tree or an animal [...] they have consequently a structure, an articulation and a natural relationship between parts, which are essential to their significance” (Jenkinson, 1948:4).

²⁸ Whereas Jenkinson’s Archive Group could contain sub-groups, the Record Group was structured to allow the creation of parallel record groups when a collection becomes too large to handle. The records of large agencies could therefore be divided into a number of record groups which usually reflected the bureaus within the various departments of large agencies (Pearce-Moses, 2005).

“original order” as impractical, saying that a system should be chosen by the archivist themselves (Schellenberg, 1965:91-102).

Schellenberg’s contributions to archival theory were numerous and significant. It asserted that archivists (rather than Jenkinson’s Administrator), should have the final say in selecting archives and dismissed the Dutch *fond d’archives* and Jenkinson’s archive group for the record group that seemed suitable for the arrangement and description of records from complex government agencies. Schellenberg saw the need to connect the archival profession and system with “broader cultural issues” joining “management techniques to historical scholarship in archives” (Cook, 1997:29). This principle was distorted by archivists in subsequent years, however. Hans Booms, a prominent German archivist, remarked how archival practice from the 1920s to 1940s in Germany followed this methodology to the point where archivists started “anticipating the needs and issues of the distant future,” a kind of “archival futurology [which] was doomed to failure, since it required archivists to be clairvoyants” (Booms, 1991/92:26). It became the “central methodology for determining which records have archival value” and resulted in fragmented, and in some cases, random archives (Cook, 1997:29). Terry Cook further argues that this system of user-based selection “removes records from their organic context within the activities of their creator and imposes criteria on both appraisal and description that are external to the record and its provenance” (Cook, 1997:29). This creates a narrow reflection of human research interests, and is based on archivists predicting future trends and topics.

1.5. Archives in the service of society

The decades after the publication of Schellenberg’s manual saw a shift in archival practice from archives primarily serving the state (as propagated by Dutch and English archivists) to archives reflecting and serving society. Schellenberg’s appraisal theory, based on a historical approach, challenged the statist paradigm advocated previously. Archives still functioned as the keepers of judicial and governmental evidence for accountability, but they also became places for the consideration of “roots, identity, locality and collective memory” (Cook, 1995:40). This mainly came about due to a shift in historiography away from grand narratives towards micro-biographies and a more social-orientated discipline. The trend

towards local histories placed tremendous strain on archives and their collecting policies.²⁹ Archivists had to change their appraisal strategies drastically to represent the “full documentation of society, not merely the piecemeal evaluation of isolated records for historical or other long-term value” (Cox & Samuels, 1988:30). Gerald Ham reflected that “our methods are inadequate to achieve our objective, and our passivity and perceptions produce a biased and distorted archival record” (Ham, 1975:5), resulting in the archivist being “nothing more than a weathervane moved by the changing winds of historiography” (Ham, 1975:8).³⁰ The main proponents for a societal approach in archival theory and practice came from Germany, Canada and later the United States.

The social responsibility of the archivist came to the fore in South African archival discourse during the 1980s (Wernich, 1988:43; Harris, 2000:90), but it was not until the 1990s that the principles and practices of appraisal started to be challenged in South Africa.³¹ Archives were received and preserved in their entirety until the 1950s/60s (see Snyman, 1965) but increasing record accumulation called for a more vigorous approach. Consequently appraisal principles, similar to that of Schellenberg, were applied in South Africa roughly from the 1950s through to the 1980s based on the functional (evidential) and research (informational) value of the records to be preserved (Snyman, 1965:26; Wernich, 1988:45; Kirkwood, 1998:42; Davies, 1961:11; Harris, 2000:40).³² However, soon after the implementation of Schellenberg’s appraisal strategy, increasing criticism was raised by South African archivists. This criticism focussed particularly on archivists predicting the future research value of documents and records (Wernich, 1988:45; Kirkwood, 1998:42; Ketelaar, 1992). South African archivists thus started to consider other methods for

²⁹ This change in history writing since the 1970s brought along various new fields of study including sexuality, minority cultures, feminism etc. In relation to how these “new” discipline fields changed archival viewpoints see Burke (1981); Maynard (1991/92); Beattie (1989/90) and Bressey (2005).

³⁰ Diane Beattie (1989/90) illustrates this point well in exploring how archivists in the past were steered by a certain mindset of the time to history that virtually ignored women and ethnic minorities.

³¹ For articles to this effect see Kenosi (1999/2000); Harris (1996a, 1997, 1998c) and Lewis & Prins, (1978).

³² Harris notes that a skewed interpretation of Schellenberg’s method for appraising was used in South Africa (as well as in other countries) according to which his notion of the “evidential values’ in records were almost entirely ignored” (Harris, 2004:216). This resulted in “appraisal programme[s] geared to identifying records with ‘informational values’ through piecemeal interventions” (Harris, 2004:216).

appraisal, such as the societal model of appraisal advocated by the German archivists Hans Booms. This method stood in stark contrast with the American method of imposed value introduced by Schellenberg, and was particularly appealing to South African archivists after the transition to democracy (See Wernich, 1988; Kenosi, 1999/2000).³³

Hans Booms was one of the key thinkers of the societal approach and one of the first theorists to approach the concept of appraisal from a philosophical (and not necessarily a practical or methodological) angle. Booms reacted against the traditional archival approach of content-orientated selection that “opened archival work to political instrumentalization” by creating a model based on historical analysis for appraisal (Menne-Haritz, 1994: 535). The premise of Booms’s “Documentation Plan” (1987) was that archivists “must first of all establish the value of records before they can decide what to keep and what to destroy” (Booms, 1991/92:25). He asserted that this value “could not be found in the records themselves, for archival value is not intrinsic to the record, and generally cannot be established there” (Booms, 1991/92:25). Booms believed that “only society from which the material originated and for whose sake it is to be preserved can provide archivists with the necessary tools [...] towards forming the documentary heritage” (Booms, 1987:104). He considered this a vital part of archival practice since public opinion authorises “public actions, [which] essentially generates the socio-political process, and legitimises political authority” (Booms, 1987:104). In order to determine this value archivists needed to “orient themselves to the values of the time in which the record was created [...] by analysing opinions published at the time, which reflected the values of the records’ creators’ contemporaries living in a democratic society” (Booms, 1991/92:28). Present-day public opinion and the natural biases of the archivist should not impinge on selecting past records, but rather the records must reflect the values of the society at the time the records were created (Cook, 1995:40).

Twenty years after initially formulating and using the Documentation Plan, Booms conceded that his proposal had been too complicated, and that he “may have relied too heavily on

³³ Although theoretically attractive, the measure towards which this method was actually applied in South African archives seems limited. No articles regarding its practical application in South African archives could be found.

philosophical, theoretical and social categories” without being “practical enough” (Booms, 1991/92:31). Subsequently, he proposed a revised method in 1991, writing that what society deems significant can only be determined indirectly through the “analysis of the administrative structure of the records creator”, which would help archivists to “connect the documentary needs identified in the contemporary chronicle (what should I document) with the records themselves” (Booms, 1991/92:31).³⁴ The focus thus shifted from directly documenting society to documenting institutions and records which would in turn reflect society and its values. In other words, Booms considered the “provenance of records as expressed through the functionality of their creators” as the basis of the appraisal process (Cook, 1997:31; Booms, 1987:31).³⁵

Inspired by amongst others the work of Hans Booms, various alternative approaches to archival theory were explored and developed during the late 1980s and early 1990s, especially in the United States and Canada. This included the “Black Box” (1985)³⁶ method of Frank Boles and Julia Marks Young, Helen Samuels’s “Documentation Strategy” (1986), Luciana Duranti’s “Diplomatics” (1988) and Terry Cook’s “Macro-appraisal” (1995) approach. Underpinning all these developments was the acknowledgement that “archives should acquire collections reflecting the total complexion of society; archives must not collect the papers of only the rich, powerful, and famous, but of the plumber as well as the politician, the menial as well as the musician” (Cook, 1979/80:141).³⁷ It is within this context that the

³⁴ However, Menne-Haritz points out that the Framework Documentation Profile “which Hans Booms considered in 1990 to be the realization of his ideas from 1970, was the decisive instrument for the political instrumentalization of archives in the service of the socialist state” (Menne-Haritz, 1994:536).

³⁵ This conceptualisation of provenance means that “Archives provide evidence of their creator because they are *interrelated* as to meaning: each archival document is contingent on its functional relations to other documents both within and outside the *fonds* of which it forms a part, and its understanding depends, therefore, on knowledge of those relations” (Macneil, 1993:9).

³⁶ The “Black Box” approach was based on three categories to evaluate records, namely the value and cost of information and the implications of appraisal. This process included 58 sub-categories and questions and received criticism from the archival community for its complicated system. For further information see Boles and Young, (1985) and Sink, (1990).

³⁷ This “total archives” approach was mainly propagated by Hugh A. Taylor, and gained currency in various countries from the early 1970s (Cook, 1997:33). For the development of the “total archives” concept in Canada see Millar (1998, 1998a); Cook (1979/80); Birrell (1980); Dick, Gagne, Langham, Lohead & Moreau (1980/81) and Spragge (1995).

“total archives” concept was developed in Canada, advocating that archives have “responsibilities for both public and private archives” (Roberts, 2001:52).

The Documentation Strategy emerged as one of the major new archival concepts of the 1980s (Cox, 1989:192). It was formulated on the principle that “planning must precede collecting” (Samuels, 1991/92:127). Helen Samuels created this system, recognising that institutionally-focused appraisal (such as proposed by Booms’s second model), “produced a fragmented and incomplete archival record” (Cook, 1995:41). She believed that the scale of “modern documentation could only be understood by some wider level of cooperative research above the level of the record and its immediate creating institution” (Cook, 1995:41). The Documentation Strategy is therefore based on inter-institutional appraisal, research and collaboration involving records creators, administrators and users (Cox & Samuels, 1988:39). Various documents are considered important to collect, including official, public and private manuscripts, visual media, published information and oral histories so that “the main themes, issues, activities, or functions of society” can be documented (Cook, 1995:41, 47). It is an analytical approach to appraisal that does not look at individual records but at an “analysis of the universe to be documented, and understanding of the inherent documentary problems, and the formulation of a plan to ensure the adequate documentation of an on-going issue or activity or geographic area” (Samuels, 1991/92:126). As part of this process, Samuels’s approach advocates that if it becomes clear through analysis that there are gaps in the archival record, archivists must become actively involved in creating the necessary documents or identify other professionals to create the needed material (Samuels, 1991/92:137). Samuels notes that records of dance companies, music performances and cultures that use oral traditions will only be “captured if visual and aural records are deliberately created” (Ibid.). Although archivists have started to participate in such projects, Samuels notes that “as archival practices focuses primarily on activities that produce records, the documentation of activities that do not normally create or leave records is not an integrated and accepted activity” (Ibid.). However, “if archivists perceive their responsibility as documenting an institution, then the intervention to create or ensure the creation of records must also be an integrated part of their documentary activities” (Ibid.).

The Documentation Strategy involves four primary activities, namely “choosing and defining the topic to be documented, selecting the advisors and establishing the site for the strategy, structuring the inquiry and examining the form and substance of the available documentation, and selecting and placing the documentation” (Samuels, 1986:116).³⁸ However, the notion of choosing an appraisal theme was strongly reminiscent of Schellenberg’s subject-appraisal archive (Tschan, 2002:189-190). This approach was further criticised for being “impractical”, “too large in scope”, and “beyond the resources of any archival repository” (Cox, 1996:149; see also Bearman, 1995:383; Cook, 1997:31). The potential of this method, however, lay in its successful application in personal manuscripts and non-corporate records or as a supplement for collecting strategies of government or public archives (Cook, 1997:33). Samuel later recognised the Schellenbergian fallacy in her earlier work (Samuels, 1986:116; Cook, 1997:33), and developed a complimentary strategy to the “documentation strategy” called “institutional functional analysis”. The functional approach starts from the premise that selection activities should not depart from a “consideration of specific sets of records” but must understand “the context in which records are created; a knowledge of what is to be documented, and the problems of gathering the desired documentation” based on a “comprehensive understanding of an institution and its documentation” (Samuels, 1991/92:128).³⁹

Samuels advocated that archivists should first understand the functions and activities of the institution before the appraisal of records could take place (Samuels, 1992:15). These two strategies could thus be used productively in support of one another (Samuels, 1991/92:128). First, by investigating the broad context of records creation and the subsequent appraising of institutions’ records and second, by collaborating with other institutions to “locate related personal records that might complement or supplement the

³⁸ For more information see Samuels (1986, 1991/92, 1992); Alexander & Samuels (1987); Cox & Samuels (1988); Menne-Haritz (1994) and Cox (1994).

³⁹ Within this approach the principle of provenance serves the purpose of a “methodological means for the arrangement and description of records,” and as an “organizational principle for the definition of the universe that ought to be documented” as well as a “guideline [...] for locating the appropriate sources when it is used as research principle”. However, “it is not accepted as a basis for appraisal” anymore (Menne-Haritz, 1994:340).

institutional archives" (Cook, 1997:33).⁴⁰ However, in spite of the shift from record to provenance, the problem of identifying value still remained, both approaches caught in a Schellenbergian value judgement: "it merely shifted the level at which relative importance was to be determined" (Tschan, 2002:189; see Duranti, 1994:336). Despite the criticism, Richard Cox points out that the value in this strategy is that it presents both an archival theory and a methodology to deal with complex modern institutions and the accumulation and selection of documents (Cox, 1996:145). Similarly, Cook notes how Samuel's approach, by first focusing on broad research and then inter-institutional research connecting records in all media, publications and cultural artefacts – provides "an important direction for coping with the voluminous records of complex modern organizations and contemporary societies" (Cook, 1997:33).

The strategies developed by Hans Booms and Helen Samuels were infrequently applied by archivists in "concrete situations" (Craig, 2007:5),⁴¹ and most appraisal theory and implementation strategies continued to follow Schellenberg's focus of the actual appraisal of mountains of records to find "value" for research purposes (Cook, 1995:43, 44). The macro-appraisal approach, formulated by Terry Cook and his colleagues during the 1980s and 1990s, significantly challenged this situation. It is one of the systems broadly accepted and implemented in various countries including Canada, the United States, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Slovenia and The Netherlands, and sets new standards for appraisal.⁴² In this approach the focus is shifted from "what documentation should be kept" to which "functions and activities of the creator should be documented" (Cook, 1996:141).

⁴⁰ For articles that investigate the application of the Documentation Strategy see, Hackman & Warnow-Blewett (1987); Cox (1989, 1996) and Cook (1996).

⁴¹ An exception is some of the articles mentioned in footnote 38, p.35 as well as an article by Caroline Williams (2006). In this article Williams interviewed archivists from six repositories about their uses of appraisal theories including those developed by Booms and Samuels.

⁴² For articles that focus specifically on organisations where macro-appraisal is applied along with similar methods see the *Journal of Archival Science* Vol. 5 nos. 2-4, 2005. For other articles exploring the application of macro-appraisal see Cook (1991, 2005); Wilson (1994) and Roberts (2001).

1.6. From the physical to the conceptual

Macro-appraisal is a theory of appraisal that assesses the value of records based on three principles: why the records were created (function), where and by who the documents were created (structure) and how were they created - rather than appraising based on content or informational value (Pearce-Moses, 2005). This method further seeks to determine which functions are poorly documented in institutional records that must be complemented by private manuscripts, other archival media, oral history projects, and non-archival documentation (Cook, 1995:45; see also Cook, 1996). Only after these processes have been followed can the archivist realistically target micro-appraisal, applying criteria such as age, extent, uniqueness, time span, completeness, fragility and manipulability to the selection of documents (Cook, 1995:45). According to Cook, such a “top-down” approach limits “excessive time delays in the disposal process, unfocused appraisal decisions, and the resulting duplication of archival records” (Cook, 1991:29).

Macro-appraisal represents a return to the core principle of archival theory, namely provenance, but not in the literal sense as advocated by the *Dutch Manual* or Jenkinson, where it was based on “arrangement and description” and an “exact congruity between creator function, creator structure, and record-keeping system” (Cook, 1997:31). It is increasingly unfeasible in the era of tons of paper and wildly multiplying electronic records combined with organizational instability, to determine the organic context of documents or activities. Consequently the principle of provenance is used more on a conceptual than a physical level and it serves more a functional than structural purpose (Cook, 1995:41).

Kirkwood (1998:43) explains that “records are the products of processes involving complex interaction between creators or records, their clients and broader trends in society”. Macro-appraisal focuses on these processes and macro contexts of records “as revealed through their creators’ functions, programs, activities, and transactions, that is, through the context and process of the records’ own creation” (Cook, 1997:31). By focusing appraisal on “which functions, which creators or institutions, which programs and activities are most important to document” (Cook, 1995:43) the value of documents are relocated to the “layered and multiple intentions of people in their individual, corporate or professional interactions.”

(Craig, 2007:4) Meaning is thus not found in the records themselves, “but [in] the transactions and customs to which they bore witness as ‘evidences’” (Taylor, 1987/88:24). In other words, appraisal thus becomes the “attribution of meaning to these interactions” (Craig, 2007:5). In order to understand the processes that underlie record creation, Taylor encouraged archivists to adopt “a new form of ‘social historiography’” (Taylor, 1987/88:24). According to Cook, such a method would enable archivists facing incredible information overloads and technological transformation, to deal less with “individual documents and series” and more with “the recognition of forms and patterns of knowledge” (Cook, 1997:35).

Macro-appraisal was first implemented by the National Archives of Canada in 1991 (Cook, 1997:31).⁴³ South Africa followed suit and in 1996 the National Archives launched its new appraisal programme based on macro-appraisal theory and methodologies (Harris, 1998a:40). The possible implementation of macro-appraisal in South Africa was first raised by Eric Ketelaar, a Dutch archivist, during a visit in 1992,⁴⁴ and later by Terry Cook who presented workshops on macro-appraisal in 1994 and during the 1997 International Conference of ESARBICA hosted in South Africa.⁴⁵ Cook’s visit in 1994 led to the creation of an appraisal review committee to assess current appraisal policies and the applicability of macro-appraisal in South Africa (Roberts, 2001:49-50).⁴⁶ Since macro-appraisal is applied within a “total archives” perspective that combines public and private archives (Cook, 1995:46), it was a very attractive system for a newly democratic South Africa looking to find effective measures of transforming Apartheid archives into representations of democracy.⁴⁷ Macro-appraisal recognises “the interaction of the citizen with the state and the impact of state actions on the citizens” (Cook, 1997:32,33). The archives are thus involved in both the

⁴³ Similar projects to macro-appraisal called PIVOT and DIRKS has been implemented respectively in The Netherlands and in Australia (Roberts, 2001:2; Hol, 1996:5). Small differences between these approaches entail that the PIVOT project is mainly concerned with government functions (thus more statist) whereas the Canadian project is broader in scope and more society based (Cook, 1997:33).

⁴⁴ See Harris (1996a), note 91.

⁴⁵ See the conference report of the fourteenth ESARBICA conference (1997) (*National Archives of South Africa*, 1997). The Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) was formed in 1973. Initially it consisted out of Eastern and Central Africa but later grew to include the Southern Africa region.

⁴⁶ For more detail on this committee and their suggestions see Roberts (2001) and Dominy (1993).

⁴⁷ Verne Harris discusses this transformation discourse at some length. See Harris (1996a, 1996b, 2000).

preservation of their institutions' documents and act as "preservers of societal memory and historical identity" (Cook, 1997:34). Due to this process, Cook asserts that macro-appraisal "reflects a wider vision of archives, one sanctioned in and reflective of society at large rather than one shaped primarily by powerful interest groups of either users or creators, or the state" (Ibid.). However, in a multi-cultural society such as South Africa, macro-appraisal runs the risk of negating the small and peripheral communities and their documentary heritage for the dominant one-dimensional narrative of the ruling party. Roberts (2001:63) similarly points out that the criteria used to identify what functions need to be preserved risks reflecting an "official view of the world" without relating or reflecting the "underlying reality" (see also Brown, 1995). Critique has also been raised by scholars who feel that too many records are destroyed that could be useful for future research (See Hol, 1996:5; Brown, 1991/92:52 & 1995; Roberts, 2001). Furthermore, Roberts pointed out that "incomplete, inaccurate, or otherwise inadequate resources may constrain the ability to properly understand the reality being evaluated and apply criteria to functions or structures as intended" (Roberts, 2001:63). Subsequently, other methods used in addition to macro-appraisal, have developed to address these issues.⁴⁸

In European archival theory, the idea of 'diplomats' was developed, based on a revival of what Terry Cook calls neo-Jenkinsonian principles. Diplomats re-asserts the evidential character of the record (see Cook, 1997:20) and was first developed in the nineteenth century to determine the authenticity of documents (Duranti, 1989:16).⁴⁹ In 1988 Luciana Duranti, an Italian archivist, revisited diplomats by publishing a series of six articles in the Canadian journal *Archivaria*, arguing for the relevance of diplomats for the understanding of modern records.⁵⁰ Diplomats is based on the study of documents, how and why a document was created and the consequence of its creation, as well as "the character of its

⁴⁸ See for example Žumer, (2008) who explains the use of both macro- and micro-appraisal techniques in the Slovenian archives.

⁴⁹ Duranti notes that even though the challenge to "distinguish genuine documents from forgeries" has always been present, no interest was paid to this issue until the sixteenth century. She further states that the authenticity of documents in the ancient world was not based on "an intrinsic character of documents but is accorded to them by the fact of their preservation in a designated place, a temple, public office, treasury, or archives. This principle was open to abuse" (Duranti, 1989:12).

⁵⁰ See Duranti (1989, 1989/90, 1990, 1990/1991, 1991, 1991/1992).

physical and intellectual form” (Duranti, 1989:16).⁵¹ Although diplomatics has value in focussing attention on “careful research into the form, structure, and authorship of documents, especially in electronic environments”,⁵² it cannot be used positively without a “broader understanding [...] of the animating functions, structures, and interrelationships of the creators that contextualize those isolated individual documents” (Cook, 1997:37).

A similar neo-Jenkinsonian approach has also been advocated by Australian archivists, notably Sue McKemmish and Frank Upward (Cook, 1995:42). The Australian Record Keeping System returned to some of the central notions of Jenkinson’s theories, namely authenticity, impartiality, uniqueness, naturalness, and interrelatedness focusing anew on the evidential character of “complete, accurate and reliable” documents (McKemmish & Upward, 1991). Rejecting Schellenberg’s concept of the informational value of archives they returned to the “judicial and evidentiary roles” of records that “provide administrative, legal and historical accountability for both the creator and for society as a whole” (Tscahn, 2002:190). This perspective has developed within the Records Continuum Model developed through the work on archival recordkeeping by Frank Upward, Chris Hurley and David Bearman (McKemmish, Acland, Ward & Reed, 1999:4).⁵³ Within the Records Continuum system records are regarded “as active participants in business processes and technologies, dynamic objects which need to be associated throughout their life span with ever broader and richer layers of contextual metadata in order to maintain reliability and authenticity, and to be meaningful and accessible through time and space” (Ibid.). In the Continuum model the content of a record may be considered fixed but in terms of its contextualisation “a record is always in a process of becoming” (McKemmish, 2001:335). The process involved in record keeping is seen as multi-dimensional and includes the “creation of documents in the context of social and organisational activity (record-as-trace), their capture into records systems (record-as-evidence), organisation within the framework of a personal or corporate archive (record-as-personal/corporate memory), and pluralisation as collective archives (record-as-collective-memory)” (Ibid.). Since it is essential to manage the record through the

⁵¹ For more information of a practical application of Diplomatics see Schwartz (1995) and Duranti (1989). For a historical overview of the development of diplomatics from its conception in 1681 to how it could be used in the twentieth century see, Skemer (1989) and Storch (1988).

⁵² See Bearman (1992).

⁵³ See Upward (1996, 1997); Hurley (1993, 1995, 1998) and Bearman (1992, 1993, 1996).

processes involved in the record continuum so that “it retains its evidentiary quality”, they also reject Schellenberg’s distinction between “records” and “archives” and return to the use of the term “archival document” for a record during any point in the records continuum (Cook, 1997:39; McKemmish, 2001:335).⁵⁴

The intervention of archivists in the records formation process also became paramount, especially in an electronic environment where archivists have to ensure the preservation of these documents (Tscahn, 2002:191). The accountability of institutions to the public is consequently a central concern of this model of which the “effective creation and management of the archival document to ensure its integrity and validity is a precondition” (McKemmish, 2005:12). If institutions cannot be held accountable for ensuring these qualities in their records then “any efficient access gained to information will be meaningless, for current and archival users alike” (Cook, 1997:40). Maintaining the evidentiary qualities of archival documents forms “a basis for the institution’s internal accountability and for a wider public accountability essential for any democracy where leaders and institutions are required to account to the people for their actions” (Cook, 1995:42). Although this method’s insistence on evidentiary value and accountability is important, it received various critiques, most notably from Terry Cook and Verne Harris. Cook pointed out how this model would devalue archives’ role “as a bastion of national culture and societal memory in favour of narrower, strictly legal accountabilities” (Ibid., 43). Archives would be divided between administration on the one hand and the cultural role and function of archivists on the other hand (Cook, 1997:40). Harris points out that the continuum model based on an inclusive and unifying framework “is a totalizing conceptual container”, a model based on “constructing a metanarrative at the same time as denying its ‘meta’ attributes” (Harris, 2004:216).⁵⁵ In spite of this critique, the record continuum model proved a useful first step in linking the “dynamic world of business and social activity to the

⁵⁴ Whereas the life cycle model consisted of eight phases which were sub-divided into records management and archival phases, the continuum model consists out of four states from the creation of the records to classification and the maintenance and use of the information (Macneil, 1993:12). See also Atherton (1985/86).

⁵⁵ It is interesting to note that in a previous article published in 1989, Harris encouraged the continuum model for archives in South Africa. This shift in his perspective could perhaps be explained by experience of the model’s function and the influence of Jacques Derrida on his work (further discussed below).

passive world of information resource management in cyberspace” (McKemmish *et al.*, 1999:3).

1.7. The post-custodial era

The complex modern administrative institution with open-ended record series,⁵⁶ electronic records, and ever-changing structures created many challenges for archivists, especially with regard to the concept of provenance.⁵⁷ Modern administrative institutions led various archivists to question the concept of provenance and the record group. Bearman and Lytle (1986/85:20) asserted that “despite its limited validity as a snapshot of one aspect of an organization, the record group concept has become an albatross” around the neck of archivists. In the current information age, to describe records in the traditional sense “by means of arranging them and recording that arrangement to some desired depth or detail is too labour intensive”. Instead Bearman noted that the “object of archival documentation should be to document the context of records’ creation and use, not to describe the records in their particularities” (Bearman, 1995:384).

Since the late 1960s the Australian archivist, Peter Scott, explored these complex administrative procedures and the consequences for archival practice. His understanding led him to abandon the record group or *fonds* concept, which he saw as “unduly limiting” and an “unnecessary complication” (cited in Cook, 1992:27), instead focussing on the importance of description.⁵⁸ Scott developed the Australian series system approach wherein archival description became a “dynamic system of multiple interrelationships,” moving away from the traditional static cataloguing mode (Cook, 1997:39; Cook, 1992:32). His system incorporated the means for “describing multiple interrelationships between numerous creators and numerous series of records, wherever they may be on the continuum of records administration: in the office(s) of creation, in the office of current control, or in the

⁵⁶ A series is a group of records within the Record Group (as defined by Schellenberg) that are arranged according to a filing system. These series “are related as the result of being created, received, or used in the same activity”. Each series will have its own title including a collective title for the group as a whole (Pearce-Moses, 2005).

⁵⁷ See the work of Bearman & Lytle (1985/86).

⁵⁸ For more information see Scott (1966). See also the series of articles by Scott & Finlay (1978, 1979).

archives” (Cook, 1997:38).⁵⁹ Records could thus be described from the moment of their creation, “at the level of accumulation or arrangement [...] and allows provenance (creation) to emerge through the intellectual mechanism of his multiple listings” (Cook, 1992:32).

Scott’s descriptive system was based on the separation of the “control and description of the actual records (the series, files and items), from the contextual and content information about them” (Cook, 1992:32).⁶⁰ In other words, description was not based anymore on the understanding that each record “could only be stored in one place” and each record “should only be described in one place,” (Ibid.) but within complex administrative structures where multiple locations and multiple creators exist. Scott argued that the focus should be shifted “from physical arrangements by groups” to “multiple listings” (i.e. an archival approach versus a record-keeping approach) (Scott cited by Cook, 1992:32). The *fonds* was thus no longer primarily a physical thing to be arranged in a custodial approach of physical groupings and arrangements, but through description it was seen as “independent of the physical location and arrangement of the documents – a non-custodial approach” (Horsman, 2002:16). Scott’s system later became especially relevant for electronic records and paved the road to “automated authority control” systems “as the solution for archivists trying to describe modern multiple provenance records” (Cook, 1992:32). Such a system could include automated disposal processes, which would make appraisal by the archivist unnecessary because documents could be “captured at the moment of its creation,” prohibiting any tampering with the document as well as making it instantly available to those who have the authority to access it (Bearman, 2002:330).⁶¹

⁵⁹ Scott’s descriptive system created the possibility to move away from “fixed one-to-one linkages,” and to create links between “many series and one creator, between many creators and one series, between many creators and many series, between creators and other creators, between series and other series, and between series and creators to functions, and the reverse” (Cook, 1997:38).

⁶⁰ Description thus took place on two levels namely the “administrative context of creation” and “the description of the actual accumulation of records” (Cook, 1993:33). In this way “the fonds (or ‘whole’) will emerge organically through the descriptive activity of archivists” (Cook, 1993:30)

⁶¹ Two of the most prominent automated archival descriptive systems are MARC AMC (Machine-Reading Cataloguing Format for Archives and Manuscript Control) and EAD (Encoded Archival Description). MARC AMC was developed during the late 1970s and 1980s and EAD during the 1990s. As another form of an automated system see for instance the “Wayback Machine”, an automated internet archive that holds more than 100 terabytes of data and provides free access to a collection of archived Web pages from 1996 (See O’Sullivan, 2005:70). For more information see Martin (1994); Czeck (1998); Marshall (2002); Prom (2002) and Yaco (2008).

Peter Scott's ideas were further developed in terms of electronic records by archivists such as David Bearman, Richard Lytle and Terry Cook. Their main premise was that archivists should shift their focus from the "content of a record to its context; from the record itself to the function of the record; from an archival role in custodial preservation and access to a non-archival role of intervening in the records creation process and managing the behaviour of creators" (Henry, 1998:313; see also Cook, 1992:26).⁶²

Electronic information challenged archivists by replacing the "relatively stable framework of bureaucratic organizations" with fluctuating, ephemeral structures and records (Bearman, 1992:169).⁶³ The United States, Canada and Australia have been at the forefront of developing archival theory in terms of electronic and ephemeral documents.⁶⁴ The challenge of electronic records is that "the boundaries of the documents have given way to a creative authoring event in which user and system participate" and subsequently "only the context in which these virtual documents are created can give us an understanding of their content" (Bearman, 1990 as used in Cook, 1997:42).⁶⁵ Since these electronic records and the archival practice necessary for their preservation are moving archives beyond and away from the physical record, it has been termed a post-custodial mindset for archives (Cook, 1997:48).

⁶² See for instance Terry Cook advocating that archivists should "liberate themselves from the constraints of the 'custodial era', with its focus on physical groupings of records, and to embrace instead the implications of the 'post-custodial era,' with its conceptual paradigm of logical or virtual realities" (Cook, 1992:26).

⁶³ For some interesting articles that explores the new spaces that electronic or virtual records opened up see O'Sullivan (2005); Breaden (2006) and Craig (1998).

⁶⁴ For key Electronic Records projects see (as used in Taylor 2006:17-18): the "Pittsburgh Project" that ran at the University of Pittsburgh from February 1993 through the summer of 1996 under the leadership of Richard Cox; Luciana Duranti's project at the University of British Columbia that started in 1996 and evolved into InterPARES, an international undertaking consisting of numerous participants from over the world; as well as Electronic Record projects by the International Council on Archives'. Also as noted in Bearman (2006:21), the Victorian Electronic Records Project, launched in 1998 by the Public Record Office of the State of Victoria in Australia.

⁶⁵ An example of this interaction between user and system can for instance be seen in the possibilities that "hot links" offer, where changes in one document are immediately and automatically updated in all the documents that it is linked to (Taylor, 1991/92:178). In this world where documents become fluid, and "lose their separate formal identity" (Ibid.), a "world of relational databases, of complex software linkages, of electronic accountability trails in office systems, of hypermedia documents, of multi-layered geographical information systems" emerge (Cook, 1991/92:206). Terry Cook points out that although archivists dealing with these records are promoting a move away from the actual custody of physical records, the "essence of the archivist's task comprehending and elucidating contextual linkages remains the same" (Cook, 1997:42).

This mindset proved to be especially relevant in relation to the complexity and volume of electronic records, where digital archival holdings can be accessed from anywhere in the world, with records “held in more than one place” and “a provenance in more than one institution; the antithesis of the conventional archive” (Hall, 2002:335).⁶⁶ Whereas the custodial approach was a curatorial approach, the post-custodial is a knowledge-oriented approach wherein the “*fonds* is not viewed as a physical entity, but as an abstract concept” (Cook, 1992:32).⁶⁷

The post-custodial approach does not mean the abandonment of archival principles, “but rather re-conceiving traditional, Jenkinsonian guardianship of evidence from a physical to a conceptual framework, from a product-focused to a process-oriented activity, from matter to mind” (Cook, 1997:48). In other words records, in order to become evidence, must be linked to their ‘metadata’ (the data relating to the contextual relationships of the record – the data about the data) and uncorrupted content and its physical housing is not of primary concern as long as it is properly protected and controlled (Bearman, 2006:20).

Subsequently Bearman proposed that the “functions and activities that generated the records” should be managed as they are “the key to transforming the archival enterprise” (Pederson, 1995:439,441).⁶⁸ Bearman furthermore called for cooperation between the numerous individuals that contribute to the process of creating a document (Pederson, 1995:439). He argued that archivists should turn their attention from preserving the past to

⁶⁶ See for instance the recently launched “Music Treasure Consortium Web Site” of the Library of Congress. It is a creation of several music libraries and archives in the United States as well as the United Kingdom, providing access in one place to a wide variety of material (see *Music Treasures Consortium*).

⁶⁷ In practice what this means is that the descriptions or metadata of documents would entail “descriptions of the administrative, historical and functional character of the records creator(s)” and “descriptions of the records-creating processes” (Cook, 1992:33). In other words, description would not be based on meticulously noting the content and form of every document, but the *fonds* would reflect an accumulated series exhibiting a “unity based on shared function, activity, form or use” (Ibid.). Within this process provenance is found in the “relationship linking the creator to the record” (Ibid.).

⁶⁸ For articles that explores these record-creating processes or metadata see Dryden (2003); Wallace (2000) and Hedstrom (2001). Wendy Duff (2001) compares two archival metadata schemes: *The International Standards for Archival Description* (ISAD(G)) and the Business Acceptable Communication model (BAC) developed by the University of Pittsburgh Project. McKemmish however points out that “descriptive standards and metadata schema can only ever represent a partial view of the dynamic, complex, and multi-dimensional nature of records, and their rich webs of contextual and documentary relationships” (McKemmish, 2001:354).

documenting the present for the future (Bearman, 1995).⁶⁹ His main premise was thus to turn the archival enterprise from “identifying, acquiring, organizing, maintaining, and making available other people’s ‘old stuff’ to capturing” (Pederson, 1995:440).

Information technologies and electronic records have also transformed South African public records environments (Harris, 1998a:39). David Bearman visited South Africa in 1998, and is one of the primary influences (along with articulators of recordkeeping in Australia) on the commercial records management sector of the National Archives (Harris, 2001/2002:3).⁷⁰ However, Harris (1999/2000:12) is very critical of this system, pointing out that the record is taken as a stable and impartial document that serves as evidence of process and activity. It does not “problematise its epistemological and ontological assumptions about ‘the record’ ” (Harris, 2000:94). It thus ignores the possibility that records do not only exist as “evidence”, but also as “remembering, forgetting, imagining, falsifying, constructing, translating, fictionalising, narrating” and that there are “no hard boundaries between text and context, data and metadata, form and content, evidence and memory, ‘the event’ and ‘the events’ recording” (Harris, 1999/2000:13).

1.8. The archival turn: The archive and the humanities

Although the notion of what constitutes an archive underwent significant changes throughout the twentieth century, the core of its function and understanding as a place, or virtual space of preservation, remained stable. What was challenged was the methodology necessary to preserve the various forms of documents. However, during the 1980s and 1990s when Booms and Samuels (amongst others) were developing methods to enable archives to focus on their social responsibility, a line of thought developed in the humanities that sought to question the very notion of the archive. In the work of historians, anthropologists, sociologists, critical theorists, philosophers, literary theorists, artists and

⁶⁹ The information on electronic records and systems are staggering. For a taste see Cook (1991/92, 1994, 1995); Hedstrom (1991); Taylor (1991/92); Macneil (1993); Bearman (1994, 1996, 2002); Eastwood (1996) and Suderman (2002).

⁷⁰ For a detail description of the application of the Australian continuum model and the life-cycle approaches in the context of electronic records in South Africa see Abbott (2001/2002) and Kirkwood (1994).

musicians, the archive became a site for exploration and interpretation, a vehicle through which to explore knowledge, power, identity, memory and justice. Postcolonial theory began probing colonial archives not just as sources of historical material or repositories of preservation, but as active participants in processes of power, conquest and hegemony (Burton, 2005:7).⁷¹ As Brothman (1993:208) notes, the archive that used to represent preservation, origin, authority and permanence was opened up to “a multiplicity of meanings and readings”. Although a certain scepticism about the archive, its interpretation and representation had formed part of historians’ archival methodology since the 1960s,⁷² scholarly work exploring the conceptual significance of the archive escalated from the late 1980s and was coined by Ann Lara Stoler as the ‘archival turn’ in the humanities (2002).

This archival turn was most notably inspired by the work of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida although an exploration of the concept of the archive has not been confined to the work of these two writers. For instance, Paul Ricoeur considered the archive in *Time and Narrative*, Volume 3 (1988), in terms of the trace and the document. He noted that documents housed in the archive can be measured by “not only a relation between the past and present, but between the event and evidence of its occurrence, and between the fabric of everyday life and its representations” (Merewether, 2006:12). Similarly, in his later work, Ricoeur (2005) pointed out that archives represented a pivotal point between memory (which is of the past) and the writing of history (which is of the present and/or future), that is subsequently inscribed in the public vernacular and becomes part of discourse. Ricoeur questioned the ideological motives that presided “over the apparently innocent operation of conserving these documents” (Ricoeur, 2006:67). Referring to the work of Jacques le Goff, Ricoeur (2006:68) remarked how “archives were for a long time designated by the term ‘monument’”, noting that “what makes a monument suspect, even though it often is found *in situ*, is its obvious finality, its commemoration of events that its contemporaries – especially the most powerful among them – judged worthy of being integrated into the collective memory” (Ibid.). However, Ricoeur continued to point out how, like the process concerning the setting up of archives, “documents turn out to be no less instituted than

⁷¹ See for example the work of Stoler (2002, 2009); Taylor (2003); Dirks (1993, 2002) and Agawu (2003).

⁷² See for example the work of the historian and journalist, Edward H. Carr (1962) (as used in Morrow & Wotshela, 2004/2005).

monuments are, and no less edifying as regards power and those in power” (Ibid.). Ricoeur concludes that through this awareness a “criticism is born that takes as its task to discover the monument hiding behind the document,” aimed to explore the “conditions of historical production and its concealed or unconscious intentions” (Ibid.).

Within the scholarship of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida this monument of power implicit in the document and the archive is explored further. Both of these authors view the archive as a construction “that issues from and expresses relations of power” (Harris, 2001/2002:1).⁷³ Referred to as the ‘New Archivist’ by Gilles Deleuze (1988:1), Foucault paved the way for an enormous corpus of work surrounding the power of the archive, its relation to knowledge and the writing of history.⁷⁴ In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), Michel Foucault set out to “offer a systematic presentation of the principles underlying this method of analysing historical material” (Descombes, 1987; see also Foucault, 1972:135). As part of this methodology he conceptualised the archive as “an underlying structure governing the thought systems and values of any given society, in relation to its own people and others” (Merewether, 2006:11). In other words, Foucault does not view the archive as the institution of records and preservation, or all the texts that a culture preserves, but as the “system of statements” and “rules of practice” that govern what is said or unsaid, recorded or unrecorded (Foucault, 1972:129).⁷⁵ Within Foucault’s work the “archive” functions as a conceptual tool through which to interrogate the assumptions upon which and through which historical meaning is deduced and built. Thus in Foucault’s concept of the archive it “does not have the weight of tradition, and it does not constitute the library of libraries, outside time and place,” but rather it reveals the “rules of practice” that shapes our relation to the past and the construction of historical meaning (Ibid., 130).⁷⁶

⁷³ Within these two texts the trope of the archive is used for different purposes – in Foucault’s *Archaeology* it forms part of his attempts to situate a model or method for historical analysis (Foucault, 1972:135), whereas Derrida’s reflection on the archive leads into a substantive discussion of Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis. However, both these authors employ the trope of the archive in terms of its “epistemic valences” (Arvatu, 2011).

⁷⁴ See Richards (1993); Steedman (2001); Hamilton *et al.* (2002); Burton (2005); Robertson (2005); and Fritzsche (2005).

⁷⁵ See also Hamilton, Harris, & Reid (2002:9); Stoler (2002:89) and Merewether (2006:11).

⁷⁶ Criticism against this work was varied, but mostly focused on Foucault’s treatment of language as an autonomous construction (Hoy, 1986). Since it is not specifically aimed at his notion of the archive, it will not be engaged with here.

For Jacques Derrida, on the other hand, the archive is both a material place of preservation as well as a site of power and control. Derrida postulates that there can be no archive without “consignation in an *external place* which assures the possibility of memorization, of repetition, or reproduction” (Derrida, 1996:11, original emphasis). In *Archive Fever: a Freudian Impression* (1996), Derrida develops these ideas through an etymological exploration of the word ‘archive’.⁷⁷ Tracing the word archive back to its origin in the Greek word *Arkhe*, Derrida notes that the archive “coordinates two principles in one: the principal according to nature or history, *there* where things *commence* – physical, historical, or ontological principle – but also the principle according to the law, *there* where men and gods *command*, *there* where authority, social order are exercised – nomological principle” (Derrida 1996: 1, original emphasis). In other words, the archive in Derrida’s terms is both a material place of preservation and a site of power and control. Thus, the archive cannot simply be seen as “a recording of the past”, but must also be considered as “something which is shaped by a certain power, a selective power, and shaped by the future, by the future anterior [...] a future which retrospectively, or retroactively gives it its so-called final truth” (Derrida, 2002:40-41). Preservation, Derrida notes, also entails forgetting (Derrida, 2002); and forgetting functions on two levels – that which is not taken into the archive and subsequently neglected, as well as a forgetting of those documents that “operate in silence and consequently that which never leaves its own archive” (Harris, B., 2002:64-65).

In South Africa the work of Derrida was brought to the fore with a series of workshops and seminars, art exhibitions and performances hosted at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1998, where Jacques Derrida was hosted as the main speaker. These events and seminars culminated in the publication of *Refiguring the Archive* (2002), a seminal book that investigates the archive as “the foundation of the production of knowledge,” and the establishment of “identities of the present and for the possible imaginings of community in the future” (Hamilton, Harris & Reid, 2002:9). The importance of this conference and

⁷⁷ After Derrida’s breakdown of the archive he turns to Freud’s Mystic Writing-Pad to “examine the archival impulse in relation to what Freud saw as the indissociable presence of the death drive in the necessarily repetitive act of recollection” (Merewether, 2006:11). However, since this dissertation is not interested in psycho-analysis per se, I will refrain from a detailed analysis of Derrida’s exposition of Freud’s work.

publication for archival discourse in South Africa cannot be underestimated. It coincided with a time in South Africa when extended efforts were made to transform and “refigure” the archive for a democratic country (Harris, 1998:1). In this publication widespread attention was paid to archives both as the products of political power as well as the producers of that power through processes of remembering and forgetting, recording, and the exclusion of records from the archive. Archives are not simply regarded as sources, but as sites producing knowledge, “as technologies of rule in themselves” (Stoler, 2002:83) that could function as “monuments to particular configurations of power” (Ibid., 85).

Various other publications appeared worldwide during this time, including *Fiction in the Archive, Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Davies, 1987), *Reading the Archive: On Texts and Institutions* (Burt & Vanpee, 1990), *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (Richards, 1993), *Dust* (Steedman, 2001), *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions and the Writing of History* (Burton, 2005), *The Archive* (Merewether, 2006), *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Taylor, 2007) to name but a few. Still considered in terms of “preservation and transmission of meaning and knowledge,” the understanding of “archive” expanded to allow “ample room for difference and divergence of meaning” (Brothman, 1993:208). Within these and other scholarly texts, what was once only understood as a building that houses and preserves documents, was expanded to include landscape, religion, culture, tattoos, rock paintings, novels, genetics, orality, and performance as forms of archives.⁷⁸ Thomas Richards (1992, 1993), for example, discussed the imperial archive of nineteenth-century Britain not as a building or collection, but as “a utopian space of comprehensive knowledge [...] the collectively imagined junction of all that was known or knowable” (Richards, 1992:140). Various artists and musicians also started exploring and challenging the function of the

⁷⁸ For explorations of performance and orality as archives see Taylor (2003); Masoga (2008); Muller (2002). Genetics and DNA is considered by Soodyall, Morar & Jenkins (2002); the novel as an archive is considered by Ehrhard (1998). For further examples of collected works or books see the two editions of the British journal *History of the Human Sciences*, (1998, 1999). For works exploring ‘the archive’ from a range of different perspectives and disciplines see Hamilton *et al.* (eds.) (2002); Burton (ed.) (2005) and Merewether (ed.) (2006).

archive, its role in recording and documentation, storing and transmission, as well as the construction of the archive and its interpretation, which is further discussed below.⁷⁹

However, at the very moment when other academic disciplines became interested in the notion and power relations of the archive, archival theory remained fixed to the Jenkinsonian idea of the archivist as “an objective, neutral, passive (if not impotent, then self-restrained) keeper of truth” (Schwartz & Cook, 2002:5).⁸⁰ Although in recent years the discourse around the power of the archivist in shaping the record has been acknowledged by archivists (the level to which it is accepted is questionable), there has been limited effort by archivists to investigate the philosophical principles of their profession wherein notions of truth, authenticity, value and textuality clearly call for a more in-depth engagement. As Kaplan puts it, archival practice has largely avoided “issues of representation, objectivity and power,” and that it “has remained curiously bound up in modes of thought and practice distinctly rooted in nineteenth-century positivism” (Kaplan, 2002:209). While scholars from the humanities have started questioning the practices of the archive (such as selection, description and cataloguing) in terms of specific collections within archives, the literature reflects that there has been relatively little engagement with archives on a macro level as institutions, or with deeper analysis of their archival systems. Antoinette Burton has noted

⁷⁹ See for instance the work of Simone Osthoff (2009) wherein she discusses art as a medium that serves continually to erode the archive’s boundaries, stability, function and meaning. Archival material is increasingly used for art work to challenge certain preconceived ideas, both about the archive as keeper of knowledge as well as the society it forms a part of. For other examples see the exhibitions of Siemon Allen entitled *Records/Newspapers/Stamps* (Allen, S. 2008); Taylor (2002); Foster (1996, 2006) and Enwezor (2008). See also the Centre for Curating the archive at the Michaelis School of Art at the University of Cape Town. For an example of work discussing the potential of music in relation to the archive see Muller (2002); Jorritsma (2011); Masoga (2008) and Allen (2007, 2008).

⁸⁰ Brothman (1993:208, 1999:69), Kaplan (2002:217) and Harris (2005:135) voice the same opinion. The reaction from the archival community to this “popularising” of the archive has also not always been positive. In 1998 in a strongly worded opening speech, the president of the Society of American Archivists spoke out against what he called the “misuse” of the word “archives”, which has been “seized and used by computer specialists, librarians, advertising copy-writers, academic faculty, newspapers, and electronic media to cover all manner of information gatherings that really are quite clearly not archives” (Maher, 1998:253). A main concern for Maher was that these “archives” were not built on the fundamental characteristics of archives and could therefore contribute to the popular “emotive appeal of the past; nostalgia and ‘event experiences’” which are in “contrast to documentary-based examinations of the past where the evidence can be removed and re-examined” (Ibid., 259). Although this is the statement of one man, his position gives his words some credence, and clearly reflects the lack of engagement with other disciplines at a time that saw the opening of the archive to serve broader functions within society at large.

the lack of studies that go “far enough in addressing head-on the lingering presumptions about, and attachments to, the claims to objectivity” of the archive (Burton, 2005:7). Apart from disciplinary differences, these mutually exclusive discourses could also be pointing to the current dual understanding of the archive that rests on its ontological and epistemological duality. Susan van Zyl (2002:53) points out how, on the one hand, the institution of the archive is an apparent “solid place of material storage and accumulation,” while on the other hand it can also be seen as “an unstable and ever-changing site always open to the exigencies and recasting of the future-to-come on the other.” Similarly, the curator and writer Jane Taylor moves in this direction when she asks if the archive is “in the first instance a place for storing a body of materials [...] or is it in the first instance an idea, a conception of what is valuable and how such value should be transmitted across time?” (Taylor, 2002:244).⁸¹ Clearly the archive is at one and the same time a pragmatic institution facing day-to-day administrative hassles and challenges and a powerful idea, not necessarily removed from the physicality of the archive, but a concept concerned with the notions of preservation and transmission of knowledge in various forms and manifestations.

A few archive practitioners who did engage and explore the challenges posed by the humanities to the notion of ‘the archive’, include Terry Cook, Tom Nesmith, Rick Brown, Joan Swartz, Hugh Taylor, Verne Harris and Brien Brothman.⁸² Mostly focused on a reading of the archive influenced by Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, these practitioners have shown the value of engaging with this discourse for practical archival application and consideration. Harris, for example, notes how Derrida’s inscription of “the archive” as a “trace of process, of the event, inscribed on an external substrate” broadened the conception of the archive to include “inscriptions as diverse as tattoos, circumcisions, drawings, sculptures, and the tracings in the human psychic apparatus” (Harris 2000: 18). Such an understanding of the archive enables archivists to consider, for instance, “orality not as memory waiting to be archived, but as a form of archive in its own right” (Ibid.; see also Taylor, 2003; Muller, 2002:410). Brothman (1999:66) notes that a consideration of Derrida’s work in terms of archival practice is significant in that it holds “consequences for

⁸¹ For an archivist’s perspective on reasons for this chasm see Brothman (1999).

⁸² See Brothman (1993, 1999); Cook (2001); Cook & Schwartz (2002, 2002a); Taylor (1988, 1995); O’Toole (1993, 1994, 2002); Harris (2002, 2002a, 2005, 2009); Harris & Hatang (2000); Nesmith (2002) and Brown (1991).

the archival community's conception of what the preservation of records actually accomplishes, and what significance lies within and beyond the language archivists use to enunciate their purposes" (Brothman, 1999:66).

Within this body of authors who critically examine the archive, the archivist is described as part of the process of archiving and viewed as complicit in the shaping of the record and the archive, integral to the processes of memory and forgetting and the documenting of society. The role of the archivist and archival practice can be seen most explicitly in the appraising and selection of the records to be preserved. However, through processes such as provenance, original order, description, records, records series and *fonds* archivists also play an important role in creating the archive, or archival collection.⁸³ Brothman, for instance, notes that all of these practices are set to create reliable, fixed records of "essences" (Brothman, 1999:78). The documenting of the context of records is used to "minimize the tensional possibility of alternative readings and meanings" whereby archivists impose "a single context on content" (Ibid., 80). This entails the "fixing" of fluid textualities, and Brothman points out that "acts of preservation [...] implicitly include efforts to set limits", constituting a "form of exclusion or forgetting" (Ibid., 79, 80). As Derrida has argued, the archive does not only preserve memory but produces forgetting at the same time (Derrida, 2002:54). The same can be said for provenance used by archivists "to defend the borders of context, to specify *for all time* the time when, and place where the creation of meaning began and ended" (Brothman, 1999:80, original emphasis). In other words, even though archivists claim that "records speak for themselves, from the purity of their singular origins", archivists' strategies influence and structure context and meaning (Brothman, 1999:81).

All of these strategies and practices are influenced by the individuals who developed them, and are used differently every time by the archivist, shaped in the way that s/he stands in relation to the world as an individual. Subsequently Harris demonstrates that "at best, archival contextualisation reveals the multiple layers of construction in text, and in doing so adds yet another layer" (Harris, 2002:71). The archive itself should be considered as such a layer since documents are removed from their original locations to the archive and given a

⁸³ For definitions of *fonds* and record series see see footnote 15, p. 21 and footnote 56, p. 42.

new context through archival description and arranging. In this sense archives themselves become texts that require analysis (See Burton, 2005:6; Cuthbertson, 1997:10; Davis, 1987:3).

As mentioned above, in appraisal the archivist's role as co-creator of the archival record can be seen most clearly. The different processes involved in appraisal include the archivist's "interaction with the creator and owners of records," the archivist's "engagement with the policy he or she is implementing," as well as the "quality of work [and] perspectives" of the archivist that contribute to determining "what becomes the archival record" (Harris, 1998b:48). It will thus always be a subjective system, "closer to storytelling than to scientific endeavour" (Ibid., 49).⁸⁴ Harris notes that since appraisal is "ultimately political power", archivists should "be held accountable for their appraisal decisions" (Ibid.). He thus suggests that the process of appraisal must be as visible as possible, showing the appraisal process itself, going so far as requesting that appraisers attach a biographical sketch to the appraisal document (Harris, 1996a:2). This system, according to Harris, will give records preserved and not preserved equal significance and allow a democracy in archives instead of an oppressor claiming that their story is the truth, but allowing space "for other, sometimes competing stories, and expose their own story's telling" (Harris, 1998b:49). This would mean that users have crucial access and understanding of the documents they are studying.⁸⁵

1.9. Archives as social agents

After 1990, a transformational discourse emerged in South African archives, "informed by the assumption that archives require redefinition" (Harris, 2000:11). In South Africa, where archives previously functioned primarily as passive preservers of documents mainly steered by the nationalist paradigm of Apartheid, the emphasis shifted to archives as "agents of

⁸⁴ Harris (1998b:49) illustrates how two competent appraisers using the same system will not necessarily agree on which documents should be preserved because they are approaching the same story "with difference in emphasis, plot, density and structure". He points out how appraisal "is the telling of a story using records systems and the sites of records creation as the primary raw material" (Ibid., 50).

⁸⁵ Within this process, for instance finding aids should contain references to all the appraisals that have secured the preservation of the records they describe (Harris, 1998b:49).

cultural identity, reconciliation and nation building” (SASA, 1996:108).⁸⁶ This transformation called for “an archive of the people, by the people, for the people” (Ketelaar, 1992). Archives were thus seen to play a strong social role post-1994 with an official mandate to collect and preserve the experiences of South Africans that were marginalised by the Apartheid government.⁸⁷ This transformational discourse, central to which is the role of archives as the preservers of heritage, the creators of social memory and national identity as well as the creation of new users through outreach projects, was articulated by a new Archives Act in October 1996. The passing of the National Archives of South Africa Act was of crucial significance for archival legislation, heralding a new era for archives in post-Apartheid South Africa (Olivier, 2000:viii).⁸⁸ However, this Act was not passed without controversy. Before drafting on the new Bill began, an Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG) was appointed to prepare a report on South African Archives. After its publication this report was strongly condemned by the National Committee of the South African Society of

⁸⁶ See, *National Committee, South African Society of Archivists*, (1996).

⁸⁷ See the South African Archives Act No. 43 of 1996. This was also true of international archival discourse. Terry Cook for example urged Canadian and American archivists saying: “It is no longer acceptable to limit the definition of society’s memory solely to the documentary residue left over (or chosen) by powerful record creators. Public and historical accountability demands more of archives and archivists” (Cook, 2001:19)

⁸⁸ The first South African Public Archives Act No.9 was passed in 1922. This act determined that the Head Archivist was under the direction of the Minister of the Interior and departments were required to transfer records older than 50 years to archives depots. Archives were seen as “all such public records, documents and other material of every kind, nature and description as are in the custody of any of the public departments” (Cilliers, 1984:29). Provision was also made for the appointment of an Archives Commission by the Minister to suggest recommendations regarding South African archives. In 1948, the National Archives became a division of the Department of Education, Arts and Sciences (see Davies, 1960:12) and in 1953 the second Archives Act was passed. This Act addresses appraisal in regards to the destruction of valueless records, documents or other material for the first time, determining that the final decision regarding appraisal lay with the Archives Commission (Davies, 1960:15). The following Archives Act No. 6 of 1962 gave authority to the Director of Archives over all archives from the moment that they were created in their offices of origin (Koornhof, 1977:24; Cilliers, 1962:25). Thus no distinction was made in the Schellenbergian sense between “archives” and “records”, determining that all documents, including those not yet transferred to an archives depot, are part of the archives (Cilliers, 1966:47). In this sense the records’ life-cycle from the place of origin to the final disposal or preservation of records was taken into account and placed “under the control of the archival service” (Cilliers, 1962:28). Much like the strategy of Schellenberg, intermediate depots were created under this Act where records that had not yet reached the age of 30 years (that needed to be transferred to an archives depot) could be stored in more cost-effective buildings where they could also be consulted and scrutinised (Cilliers, 1962:26; see also Kirkwood, 1994:7). Furthermore, this Act allowed for the creation of a special section for archivists to appraise archives before they were transferred to an archives depot.

Archivists.⁸⁹ In spite of this, the National Archives of South Africa Act No 43 was passed through Parliament in August 1996, still largely based on the recommendations of the ACTAG report. The Bill subsequently caused considerable debate, especially surrounding appraisal policies and the Bill's failure to "oblige the National Archives to redress imbalances inherited from the past" (Harris, 1996a:1).⁹⁰ After being subjected to public debate, the revised Bill was accepted in September 1996. Some of the major changes from previous legislation on archival practice included the preservation of both public and non-public archives (section 3(d)), the shortening of the closed time period of documents from thirty to twenty years (section 12(a)), and establishing the responsibility of archives to collect the heritage of communities previously omitted from archival records (Section 3(e)) and to initiate activities to preserve and reach out to under-privileged communities (see also Du Plessis, 1996:17).⁹¹

Due to the emphasis placed on moving away from one meta-narrative as dictated by Apartheid to the creation of a multitude of contesting narratives, appraisal became a focal point in South African archival discourse after 1994. The archivist Clive Kirkwood points out that due to South Africa's past, and the fact that appraisal shapes the holdings of archives through which "social memory is documented", there has been a concern about transparency and accountability in the appraisal process (Kirkwood, 1998:41, 44). To this end the Archives Act established the appointment of a National Archives Commission (NAC) by the Minister through a process of public nomination, as a watchdog body.⁹² The NAC

⁸⁹ See Callinicos and Odendaal, (1996). For a full critique of this paper see Harris, (1995), and *National Committee, South African Society of Archivists*, (1996).

⁹⁰ For submissions made on the National Archives of South Africa Bill see the *S. A. Archives Journal*, 38:110-123, (1996).

⁹¹ Apart from the National Archives Act other legislation that influences archival practice in South Africa is the Promotion of Access to Information Act (No. 2 of 2000), the Intellectual Property Laws and Copyright Act (No. 98 of 1978), the Legal Deposit Act (No. 54 of 1997), the amendment Bill to the Intellectual Property Law (of 2008) in relation to indigenous knowledge and the National Heritage Act (No. 25 of 1999). The Promotion of Access to Information Act is there to facilitate obtaining information or documents from private or public institutions even if it is still under embargo. For an investigation into the implication and application of this Act see Harris (2000a). An exploration of these Acts and their implication for archival practice requires certain legal expertise and time beyond the scope of this study and suggests possible future directions for this research. For an exploration of copyright law in terms of music archives see McConnachie (2008); Dean (2006); Seeger (1992, 1996) and Seeger & Chaudhuri (2004a:71-115).

⁹² See *National Archives of South Africa Act 1996*, section 6 (4) (e) and 13(2) (a).

should approve appraisal policy and monitor its implementation. Kirkwood points out that this “executive function is unusual in the international archival community, where the ultimate authority in appraisal normally rests with the National Archivist” (Ibid., 44).

In spite of this legislation and the efforts of archivists and archival institutions, Harris notes that this transformation discourse in South African archival practice has failed in many aspects. Harris argues that South African archival practice is still rooted in the neo-Schellenbergian, positivist paradigm that guided South African archives during Apartheid (Harris, 2001/2002:2). Even though archivists are no longer seen as impartial custodians but are accepted as active shapers of the record and social memory, Harris notes how South African archival practice is still mainly defined in terms of custodianship, physical material and places of custody (Harris, 2000:90-91; Harris, 1998:2). Within this conceptualisation of archival practice, records are viewed as “the organic and innocent product of processes exterior to archivists” which “reflect reality” (Harris, 2000:91). There has also been almost no exploration of how indigenous knowledge systems could change archival practices still based on Western foundations (Harris & Hatang, 2000), and Harris calls for “building a discourse (and a practice of archives) rooted in South African realities and traditions” (Harris, 2001/2002:4). However, by transforming archives into “houses of memory” for all, “what was left out” of the archive “cannot simply be put in” through collecting strategies and projects (Hamilton *et al.*, 2002:12).⁹³

On a similar note Harris (1998:2) has written of how archival transformation is interpreted in triumphalist terms, “with the notion of archives holding the collective memory of the nation,” instead of allowing for the creation of contesting, ever shifting narratives. There is a pressing need to make archives accessible and to create new users; however, Harris notes within this discourse archives run the danger of “opting for neatly packaged information products rather than the rich contextualisation of text” (Harris, 2002b:150). In turning to a transformation discourse meta-narratives of nation building or the struggle against Apartheid are often constructed and encouraged through exhibitions, outreach projects,

⁹³ It requires a keen awareness of the fact that the collection of marginalised experiences and records is also shaped and formed by archival processes that include the exclusion or forgetting of other experiences or records, subsequently constructing a meta-narrative (see also Hamilton, Harris & Reid 2002:11-12).

and collecting projects, excluding the counter-narratives of South African society. Instead, archival projects “should enrich the various ways in which personal and social memories are made, giving space for different and differing recollections of the journeys that we have travelled and those that still lie ahead” (Peterson, 2002:35). As Derrida noted, democratic archives should be “constantly reshaped by the archivists of all sorts (and not only by scholars – everyone in the city which takes part in this process)” and therefore the “structure and the meaning of the archive is of course dependent on the future, on what is coming, on what will have come” (Derrida, 2002:46). The archive can thus never be closed, never be final and never be the Truth. Reinterpretation will always be possible (Derrida, 2002:46).

1.10. The music archive

As mentioned in the Introduction, music archives are specialised archives that focus their collecting and preservation practices within specific realms of music performance, practice, or production. In general, music archives deal with similar challenges and attempted solutions to those outlined throughout this chapter. However, music complicates the notion of the archive since it is not only an artefact but also a practice, a performance and a discipline with its own peculiar historical trajectory. Although music often ends up in the archive as ‘artefact’ in various forms - documents, music manuscripts, recordings and instruments - the notion of music as a performance and a process constantly challenges the archive’s focus on end-product and finality.

The music archive is thus ideally positioned to take up the challenge that the post-Apartheid era presents for archival institutions. The call to reposition archives as institutions that include multiple narratives, and the challenge to explore how indigenous knowledge systems can change archival practices still based on Western foundations, is one that music archives through the very nature of the material they keep, can address. Scholars in South African music discourse have already started to consider the possibilities that music holds in terms of archiving. Carol Muller (2002), for example, considers music composition as sites for the “deposit and retrieval of historical styles and practice in both literate and pre-literate contexts” (Muller, 2002:410). Building on Muller’s work, Marie Jorritsma (2011:41-62)

reveals how the musical performance of a church congregation in the Karoo could be understood as an act of music archiving, preserving the oral/aural history of the community's encounters with various peoples in this region. In similar fashion Mogomme Masoga (2008) notes how a practitioner of African indigenous music should be considered as an oral archive. In Sylvia Glasser's (2002) work on archives, performance is considered as an act that stores, preserves and transmits knowledge. However the extent to which her and others' ideas have been considered so far for what they might offer in relation to the archive as an institution, still falls short of the rich possibilities that thinking such as this opens up.

There seems to be an inherent tension, in other words, between on the one hand archival practices and theory as practiced in South African archives (including music archives) based on the core principles and methodologies outlined above, and on the other, the radical repositioning of archives in post-Apartheid South Africa, a repositioning that calls for open archival systems subject to change and contestation. How has music archives incorporated, challenged or changed these theoretical ideas or frameworks through their practice and policy? The next part of the dissertation will seek to explore this question by interrogating five South African music archives in these terms.

1.11. Conclusion

In this chapter I traced the development of the concept of the archive from its official establishment to the way it is currently understood in the humanities. Formally established as a repository for judicial and governmental documents for evidence, the archive was initially used to maintain the power of the ruling classes and gentry. Modern archives were born after the French Revolution when the proletariat exercised the right to self-governance, and archives became publically accessible. Archivists were historically accepted as the impartial guardians of truth and evidence. However, with the ever increasing accumulation of documents from modern-day administrations this understanding of an unbiased archive and archivist was challenged through new understandings of how the archival record is formed and of the role played by the archivist in selecting the documentary heritage. The increasing awareness of the political and social implications of

appraisal work coupled with new trends in historiography meant that archivists had to formulate and embrace new strategies for appraisal. New scholarship on archives also started to draw attention to its complicity in the history-making process and led to a consideration of archives as 'material' to be analysed and critically studied.

Technological revolutions in the twentieth century led to the creation of electronic records which challenged the physicality of the archive, at the same time that scholarship from the humanities challenged the very notion of 'the archive'. With a heightened awareness of the role that archives play (and could play) in the societies of which they form a part, the archive shifted from being a (more or less) passive preserver of documents to being an institution actively generative of documents and their subsequent preservation. From the 1970s the function of the archive expanded to include its potential transformative and restorative properties, especially in countries where archives had been dominated by colonial and political powers. In new political contexts archives are now expected to fill existing gaps in records and actively create new material and historical collections in areas previously neglected. The exercise of political power thus continues within and over the archive (including the music archive), albeit for new and different reasons.

Part II

Five case studies on power and the music archive

The system he invented and put into practice was so complicated, the labels he put on books were made up of so many capital letters and small letter, both Latin and Greek, so many Arabic and Roman numerals, asterisks, double asterisks, triple asterisks, and those signs which in arithmetic express powers and roots, that the mere study of it would have involved more time and labour than would have been required for the complete mastery of algebra, and as no one could be found who would give the hours, that might be more profitably employed in discovering the law of numbers, to the solving of these cryptic symbols, Monsieur Sariette remained the only one capable of finding his way among the intricacies of his system.

- Anatole France, (1922:19-20)

Introduction

Ethnography in the archive

The originary arrival of the historian in the archive is much like the arrival of the anthropologist in the field – that threshold of disciplinary certification – the magical moment when the scientist-scholar sets down upon a shore that beckons with the promise that one can finally engage in the act of discovery, [...] But while anthropologists have subjected their arrival stories to historical and critical scrutiny, the historian's arrival story is largely untold.

- Nicholas Dirks, (2002:48)

Archives, understood as specific places housing physical material, are institutions primarily concerned with preservation and collection. In order to fulfil these functions archives generate a plethora of inventories, catalogues, classifications, chronologies, descriptions, numberings, lists, finding aids and boxes. These archival systems are conceived for specific purposes and created within particular contexts and times in order to serve the information needs of those who establish and maintain them. Through all the processes, individuals, institutional spaces and contexts involved in archive making, an intricate web emerges that is continually working towards creating the archive. Therefore, scholars have increasingly started to point out that the knowledge practices and technologies that form the core of archival practice should not be regarded as neutral processes, but as practices that function within, and express, relations of power.¹ As Burton (2005:6) notes, “archives do not simply arrive or emerge fully formed; nor are they innocent of struggles for power in either their creation or their interpretive applications [...] all archives come into being [...] as a result of specific political, cultural, and socioeconomic pressures”. These pressures are mediated by archivists and archival processes, such as the people who created the archive, the systems conceived in place to turn objects into archival material worthy to be kept in a public space (while other documents are discarded) and the researchers who use them. Taking into

¹ The power of the archive has been investigated by numerous scholars such as Ann Lara Stoler (2002), who explores the archive as a State Ethnography and similarly Thomas Richards in his book *Imperial Archive* (1993). Other works include Harris (2000, 2008); Hamilton *et al.* (eds.) (2002) and Burton (ed.) (2005). See also the two special issues of the journal *Archival Science*, entitled “Archives, Records, Power” (*Archival Science*, 1 (2001), and *Archival Science*, 2 (2002)).

account that archives are mediated both internally within dynamic relationships between creators, archivists and users, as well as through the society and historical context wherein they are created as discussed in chapter 1, archives and archivists cannot be regarded as impartial custodians of documents and information but should be considered as sites active in framing and producing knowledge.

Given this understanding of the archive, ethnographic methods such as participant observation, description and interpretation of the various voices inherent in 'performing the archive' become important. The apparent logic of classification systems and the uses and forms of transmitting the content and value of archival material can only be understood through experiencing and examining how archives and the collections contained therein have resulted from procedures for collecting, compiling and ordering of knowledge.

Considering the music archive as an ethnographic field, as I do in this dissertation, is a relatively new approach, stimulated by a decade of deepening understanding of the archive as 'figured' by dynamic relationships to the past and present and by expectations of the future (Burton, 2005:6).² Such a methodology has allowed me to investigate not only archives as fields, and the processes through which archives are formed and mediated; it also allows for an interrogation of the researcher herself as a user and performer within the archival spaces. The physical space of every archive has a very definite, yet mostly unspoken influence on its users, "producing knowledge and insights which in turn impact the narratives they craft and the histories they write" (Burton, 2005:9-10). One's own presence within these spaces forms an integral part of the archival encounter. In adopting a self-reflexive ethnographic approach wherein the archive stories of myself as ethnographer are recounted, I hope to allow for an interrogation of how my own personal assumptions, ideological standpoints and disciplinary decisions influenced not only my experience 'in the field', but also what material I subsequently found and how that material is interpreted.

This section of the dissertation explores five music archives in South Africa, namely the International Library of African Music (ILAM), the South African Broadcasting Corporation

² For examples of such an approach see the collected works in Burton (ed.) (2005) and Dirks (2002) and Da Cunha (2004).

(SABC), the Gallo Records Archive, the Hidden Years Music Archive (HYMA), and the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS). These five music archives were chosen as ethnographic case studies to demonstrate as wide a perspective as possible on music archives in South Africa; they are also, arguably, the most important music archives in the country. Each archive serves or is connected to a different type of institution – universities (ILAM and DOMUS), government (SABC), and commerce (Gallo), while HYMAP is privately owned – and between them they focus on a variety of South African musics ranging from traditional African music and English South African folk music, to Western art music, jazz and popular music.

Although there are other institutions in South Africa that house music collections such as the National Film and Audio Archive (NFAA), the National Afrikaans Literary Museum (NALN)) and universities and public libraries with collections, these institutions are not primarily concerned with music collections. Notable collections are held at the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO), the Merensky collection at the University of Pretoria Library, the Percival R. Kirby collection at the University of Cape Town library and the Information Centre for Southern African Music (ISAM) at the North West University, Potchefstroom. However, of these archives, only SAMRO is a collecting archive and the collections of the other music archives are for the most part closed collections (see De Jongh, 2009).³ The five music archives chosen as case studies can be regarded as relatively active institutions, hence their significance in this dissertation.

The ethnographic case studies were conducted over the course of three years. My approach was organised primarily around four positions: first, observation on a macro level of the institution to which the particular archive is connected to or serves and the subsequent bureaucratic management and mandate of the archive. The second position required observation on a micro level, of how different music archives organise, catalogue, and function internally. The third aspect of my approach was to examine how the archivists envisioned their role and function within the particular archive, and assess the level of awareness and agency towards and within these systems. Finally, I was concerned with

³ For an exhaustive list of music collections held in private and public institutions see De Jongh (2009).

documenting my own subjective experiences and encounters while conducting the ethnographies. Due to the specific focus, time and resource restrictions of this study no attempt was made to gather empirical data relating to, for example, user numbers, economic regimes or employee turnover. The only methodological triangulation that was therefore possible was between the information gathered through my participant observations, the interviews I conducted with the various stake-holders in the archives and relevant secondary articles, books, newspaper or web-related articles.⁴

Before I started this research I had no former experience in conducting interviews or doing fieldwork, but in my reading, I found Steven Feld's notion of "ethnography as a kind of detective work" (Feld, 1990:15) the most helpful in orientating and informing my approach. Steven Feld described the process thus: "Evidence is accumulated in detail, then the work begins again with the piecing, sorting, editing, and weaving of evidence into interpretation" (Ibid.). This proved invaluable because my methodology, for the most part, did not allow for the possibility to re-interview or revisit the music archives that constituted my field. The process of accumulation and interpretation I pursued was framed within the approach of the whole dissertation and served to interrogate the processes of archive making and the archives' involvement in the establishment and maintenance of power structures.

This bracketing means that the descriptions and observations of the selected music archives are necessarily incomplete and subjective. Interpretation always involves steering towards certain things while looking away from others. In order to foreground these decisions and my own subjectivity, each case study in this dissertation is preceded by a short extract from the journals I kept during my various fieldtrips, or reflections written upon returning home with documents and information. Making use of fieldnotes as a mechanism to "situate" oneself within ethnographic writing is a technique that has been used by various

⁴ Although systematic empirical data gathering might reveal interesting results, the focus of this dissertation on the culture of each archive, its historical formation, and the systems and strategies it employs did not necessarily call for such a methodological approach. Any study that sets out into a yet unexplored field will necessarily be incomplete and various avenues for future research are suggested in this dissertation.

ethnographers.⁵ Gregory Barz (2008:206) has pointed out the importance of fieldnotes and how they form “part of the process that informs both interpretation and representation, understanding and analysis of experience – in and out of the field”. He argues for the inclusion of fieldnotes in ethnographic writing, noting that it is not only “critical in determining what we know, but also illustrative of the process of how we came to know what we know” (Barz, 2008:206,207-223; see also Yow, 2006:55).

One of the most dominant voices on power and the archive in South African archival discourse is that of the archivist and prolific writer Verne Harris.⁶ Harris’s work centres on the politics and power of the archive in Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa. He makes the arguments that “the very structure of archiving, that is the process that is recordmaking, both invites politics in and generates a politics of its own whenever ‘archive’ happens” (Harris, 2009a:254). Other theorists that have informed my approach to the archive are Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. As Foucault (1972:126-131) suggests, the archive is not only an institution of records and preservation, or all the texts that a culture preserves, but rather a “system of statements” and “rules of practice that give shape to what can and cannot be said”.⁷ Similarly Jacques Derrida has described the archive’s function both to institute and command power (1996:1, 9). Within these two texts, the archive is considered “as a way of seeing, or a way of knowing: the archive as symbol or form of power” (Steedman, 2001:2), and it is within this intellectual context that my case studies are located.

The work of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida has received both acclaim and criticism,⁸ and no longer enjoys the same vogue amongst academics as it did during the 1980s and 1990s. Some of the most salient critiques against Derrida’s philosophy concern the

⁵ For examples see Jorritsma (2011) and Bruinders (2011). Works that contain an interaction between fieldnotes as experience and interpretation see Titon (1998); Seeger (1987) and Feld (1990).

⁶ For some examples of his written and co-edited books see Harris (2009, 2000) and Hamilton, Harris, Taylor, Pickover, Reid, & Saleh (eds.) (2002). For some examples of his articles see Harris (1989, 1996, 1996a, 1997, 1998, 1998a, 1998b, 1999/2000, 2000a, 2001/2002, 2002, 2002a, 2002b, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2011).

⁷ See also Hamilton, Harris & Reid (2002:9) and Stoler (2002:89).

⁸ For examples of critical readings of Derrida’s work see Hoy (ed). (1986); as well as the special issue of *Critical Inquiry* 15(4), (1989); Cohen (ed.) (2001).

relativism, reduction to political power and the denial of personal agency in his work. However, the ethnographic methodology I employed helped to counter that: it was possible, I found, to investigate how concepts of power are constituted through archival practice “without reifying society or denying agency” (Berger, 2008:67). In light of the re-consideration of archival practice inspired by Derrida and Foucault, a recent call has been made by Verne Harris (2011) for a re-consideration of their work in relation to South African archives, given that the zealous transformational rhetoric during the first decade of democracy has given way to a passive, unquestioning and re-active archival practice. Harris’s work, as well as the work of Foucault and Derrida, present a significant theoretical body of work with which to approach the archive and has been widely used by South African and international authors.⁹ The overwhelming majority of these endeavours explore the power of the archive in relation to evidence, history and politics. Although these texts engage the classification, description and appraisal practices of certain archives, they do so for the most part without considering the large body of theoretical work on archival practices.¹⁰ The objective of this section, including chapters 2 to 6, is to explore the interstices where archival theory and practice collide, where we find both the symbolic and the pragmatic, the theoretical and the methodological.

This section aspires to illustrate the possibilities of an ethnographic approach to music archives wherein the processes of archive making such as recording, classification and description systems, collection policies, accessibility and forms of transmitting the contents in their holdings are considered. Keeping Foucault’s statement in mind, this section wishes to consider what a closer look at archival systems in South Africa would reveal and what “rules of practice” would be disclosed. Finally, in the words of Burton, I would concur that “[i]n pursuing this ethnographic re-orientation we move resolutely if experimentally beyond naïve positivism and utopian deconstructionism, beyond secrecy and revelation, towards a robust, imaginative, and interpretively responsible method of critical engagement with the past” (Burton, 2005:21).

⁹ For some example see: Hamilton (2002); Hardiman (2009); Cook (2011); Nesmith (2002); Schwartz & Cook (2002, 2002a); Hedstrom (2002); McEwan (2003); MacNeil (2005) and Jones, Abbott & Ross (2009).

¹⁰ See for example the collective works of Burton (ed.) (2005) and Hamilton *et al* (eds.) (2002); as well as Steedman (2001); Stoler (2002) and Richards (1998).

27 February 2011, Stellenbosch - Reflection upon returning from ILAM: The question of finding balance

Taking the archive as my field implies that I do not have to travel to far-away places, nor assume a place within a culture that is not my own. Unlike Hugh Tracey who had to travel for long distances through unfamiliar terrain without any form of luxury, I got into my car each morning in Grahamstown and drove to the archive. However, what I considered as familiar in the past, suddenly seemed strange to me, as if my awareness of the mechanisms of the clock made the once familiar ticking of the dials complicated and alien. I found myself wholly unprepared for the difficulties in distinguishing between getting caught up in the information contained in ILAM and keeping a critical distance, finding the balance between my commitment to ILAM as a national treasure, and the picture that unfolded when I started focussing instead on the systems that allowed for this wealth of information to become accessible to the public. Christine Lucia (2011) has recently remarked that an understanding of this archive is “messy” – viewed by some as the achievement of a brilliant collector and conservationist, and by others as evidence of the exploitation of the music of the “Other”. I find myself central in this mess, feeling elated and disheartened at the same time with the argument that is unfolding as I piece together the material that I found.

Finding the balance between building upon established layers I found in the archive, or reading underneath the various viewpoints, narratives, personal opinions and experiences of those involved in creating this archive surely reflects back on my opinion and viewpoints thereof? Using the fieldwork and archive of Hugh Tracey as my field further means that I am attempting an interpretation of someone else’s interpretation with the added benefit of hindsight. I still haven’t found the balance one might expect from research such as this, but ethnographic work will always imply the making of choices, even in representing gathered fieldwork.

Perhaps balance is not what I am looking for?

Chapter 2

The International Library of African Music:

The music archive as a methodological conduit of power

2.1. Introduction to ILAM

The International Library of African Music (ILAM) is located in Grahamstown, in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province. Its founder, Hugh Tracey (1903-1977) was born in England and emigrated to South Africa after the First World War to work on his brother's tobacco farm, in what was then called Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Inspired by the music of the local farm workers, he followed in the tradition of the European folklorists and began to record African music from the 1930s (see Tracey, in Lucia, 2005:44). Over the years Tracey developed ambitious projects for documenting and researching traditional African music in sub-Saharan Africa, and what started out as a private research initiative developed into the African Music Research Unit in 1947, the African Music Society in 1948, and finally the establishment of the International Library of African Music in 1954 at a base in Roodepoort, outside Johannesburg (Lobley, 2011:419). Initially, Hugh Tracey's field recording tours and the release of some of his recorded material was made possible through financial backing from the Gallo Record Company, and later support came from the mining industry (Tracey, 1973:4-5). Since its official establishment, ILAM has served as the headquarters of the African Music Society and is responsible for editing and issuing the annual journal *African Music*, (the only journal dedicated completely to African music). The collection has grown to include donations from ethnomusicologists such as John Blacking, Andrew Tracey, Dave Dargie and Diane Thram.

Hugh Tracey conducted several recording tours during his lifetime, spanning over four decades, in central, eastern and southern parts of Africa, building up a collection which includes over 25 000 field recordings, various instruments (most of them still playable), photographs and documents of the music he collected, as well as a library of books relating to African music. This material makes ILAM the largest single archive of sub-Saharan African music in the world. From his field recordings, Hugh Tracey published two major collections:

the *Sound of Africa* series, consisting of 218 LPs, and the *Music of Africa* series, consisting of 25 LPs. He also published several books, and delivered international as well as national seminars and talks.¹ After Hugh Tracey's death in 1977, ILAM was moved to Rhodes University in Grahamstown and Andrew Tracey took over from his father as Director in 1978. He stayed in this position until 2005 when he retired and Diane Thram became the current Director of ILAM.



Figure 1: Photograph of ILAM's interior displaying part of their instrument collection (Lambrechts, 2011)

ILAM is currently housed in a purpose-built building that includes a digitisation studio, a small library, a classroom, three offices for the director and assistants as well as a temperature controlled storage room for the collection. An outside amphitheatre spans the front corner of the building and is used for music and dance performances. Walking into ILAM one is greeted by a dark ochre interior with African instruments adorning every wall: mbiras (in all shapes and sizes), pan-pipes, horizontal bow harps, wishbone lyres, antelope

¹ See *Chopi Musicians: Their Music, Poetry, and Instruments* (1948); *African Dances of the Witwatersrand Gold Mines* (1952); *The Evolution of African Music and its Function in the Present Day* (1961). Tracey also worked as the Head of Programmes for the South African Broadcasting Corporation from 1936-1947, based at their Durban studios (Lobley, 2010:89).

horns, wrist bells, stamping tubes, rattles and flutes of all kinds which are suspended from the roof above a beautiful collection of drums and marimbas. Photographs of Hugh Tracey are arranged on one wall, along with a bronze bust, a commemorative plaque in honour of him and a photograph of his son Andrew Tracey.

Armed with my research questions, a theoretical background of reading in archival management and practice, and an awareness of some of the challenges faced by archivists, I arrived at ILAM without knowing what to expect, or exactly what I was looking for. I had even more difficulty explaining what it was that I was planning to do at the archive for a whole week – hanging around is not a natural state of being or acceptable behaviour in an archive where researchers are usually working against the clock to find what they are looking for. These feelings of uncertainty gradually abated as I started to find my feet in the role of ethnographer, gathering material and conducting interviews. Closely observing, asking questions and getting to know how the archival systems had been set up and was being run made me realise that this archive does not allow for easy classifications (see Reflection above). Although other collections and projects form part of ILAM's holdings, by far the largest part of the archive remains Hugh Tracey's recordings. It is here that Hugh Tracey's legacy and stature is most effectively disseminated worldwide, and ILAM has become a centre for Africanist scholars, teachers, composers and performers internationally. However, apart from the reverence of those working at ILAM for Tracey's legacy, his field recordings collected in colonial Africa and Apartheid South Africa are also the source of some ambivalence: on the one hand they represent the achievement of a "musical explorer", "collector" and "conservationist"; on the other the collection is seen as evidence of an "imperialist exploiter of 'Other People's' cultures, a colonialist, a puritanical preservationist" (Lucia, 2011).²

Furthermore, this archive does not only comprise a material reality that faces funding and preservation issues, but also exists of, and in, various other systems and organisations, including the bigger structure of Rhodes University and the Department of Music and

² These remarks of Lucia formed part of a speech given by her in May 2011 at ILAM (Lucia, 2011) and palpably address some of the core issues at stake in exploring ILAM as a site of cultural production. For other engagements with Tracey's legacy see Peek (1970), Pantaleoni (1971), Erlmann (1991), Agawu (2003, 2003a), Lobley (2010) and Coetzee (2011).

Musicology where Diane Thram coordinates the undergraduate and post-graduate ethnomusicological degrees.³ It belongs to an international community of scholars interested in African music, but also has local community projects in various stages of completion. These projects, mainly steered by the three consecutive directors, have to a large extent influenced the direction of the archive and its function.

Hugh Tracey, for example, had the vision of creating textbooks of ‘authentic’ African music in his Codification and Textbook Project (1969) by documenting all the musics of sub-Saharan Africa and using these to produce teaching materials. This project is still being pursued by the current director of ILAM, Diane Thram, as part of ILAM’s Music Heritage Project.⁴ Thram also developed a Hugh Tracey exhibition project called *For Future Generations* (2011) that has travelled South Africa during the past year. Andrew Tracey developed various projects to keep ILAM a ‘living archive’ through teaching, staging regular performances, research and workshop presentations. He initiated the Symposium on Ethnomusicology as an annual conference in 1980, that provided an important platform for ethnomusicological scholars during the Apartheid years. (Thram, 2010:16; Ballantine, 2010:96).⁵ Diane Thram set out to properly catalogue all of ILAM’s holdings and garner funding for a large digitisation project for ILAM’s holdings, including field recordings, photographs and documents (2008). She also launched the Eastern Cape Jazz programme (2009) in collaboration with the Red Location Museum in New Brighton outside of Port Elizabeth, which includes an oral history project that will in future become part of ILAM’s holdings (Thram, DT 16/02/2011). The varied nature of these projects clearly demonstrates the cultural, social and personal situatedness of an archive as an institution collected, maintained and produced by individuals with specific interests and focus areas.

³ With its current affiliation to the Rhodes University and specifically the Department of Music and Musicology, ILAM was ideally situated to initiate an ethnomusicological degree. Through the work of Diane Thram, who arrived in Grahamstown in 1999, and Andrew Tracey, an undergraduate and post-graduate degree in Ethnomusicology was established, coordinated by ILAM (Thram, DT 16/02/2011).

⁴ This project entails the development of material for the Arts and Culture Curriculum in South African schools from the archived recordings and images held at ILAM (Thram, 2010:17).

⁵ The Symposium for Ethnomusicology merged with the Musicological Society of Southern African in 2006 to form the South African Society for Research in Music (SASRIM).

ILAM has grown in terms of projects, focus and function since its creation in 1954, but still the vision and mission that Hugh Tracey set out at the start of ILAM stands at the core of ILAM's current vision namely "to discover, record, analyse, and archive the music of sub-Saharan Africa, with the object of establishing a theory of music making in Africa and assessing the social, cultural and artistic values of African music" (*International Library of African Music (ILAM)*). Furthermore, Hugh Tracey's collection, due to its sheer physical size as well as its conceptual and musical importance to scholars and musicians and strategic importance in leveraging funds for the archive, remains a central part of the institution he founded.

As alluded to above, it is not an un-problematic collection and due to its prominence in the archive, it still infuses ILAM with its systems of classification, codification and arrangement. This is not an occurrence confined to ILAM, but a challenge faced in numerous archives that started out as personal or ethnographic collections that reflect the interest, aims and idiosyncrasies of their creators, a point I will engage with in more detail below. In this chapter I propose that an exploration of the methodologies of archive making could provide valuable insights into the complicities and complexities of a collection such as Hugh Tracey's, forming the core of one of South Africa's most prominent music archives. These methods and processes are transformed into objects, catalogues, chronologies, criteria for value and projects that provide a material reality to interactions between the personal and the disciplinary in processes of power and control. In order to interrogate the methodological mechanisms of the archive I will explore three of the core activities of the archive during Hugh Tracey's time as director of ILAM – namely recording, cataloguing and repatriation – as instances of archive making that still lend a very distinctive character to the current functioning of ILAM.

2.2. Hugh Tracey's archive

Hugh Tracey tirelessly promoted the value and social importance of African music at a time when the public and scholarly community showed little interest in this material. This promotion was based on three principles. First and foremost, Tracey was recording and

preserving material for the future to be used by African musicians and scholars. Second, these recordings were not intended simply to remain in the archive, but were envisioned to become available for use by African musicians and scholars. Third, in order for these materials to be respected and valued it had to be documented and transcribed. Strongly influenced by the “collect and classify” paradigm of early folklore and comparative musicology (Thram, 2010:15), Tracey’s aim was more to amass and archive field recordings than to publish analytical studies about it.⁶ Because of this focus, Tracey spent very little time documenting the social contexts of the music he recorded.⁷ As Noel Lobley noted, “he was more inclined to document and publish outstanding examples of musicianship” (Lobley, 2010:83-84). For Tracey it was an imperative to record “genuine” and “authentic” traditional African music which had not been influenced by foreign elements, an imperative that he enforced throughout his life (Tracey, 1973:18).⁸

Tracey’s insistence on the importance of using and not just preserving the material in ILAM manifested in the name he chose for his institution: the International *Library* of African Music and not the International *Archive* of African Music.⁹ Diane Thram speculated that although Tracey never indicated why he made this choice, it might point to his vision of an

⁶ In his catalogue to the *Sound of Africa* series, Tracey for example recounts: “I had had discussions at the Royal College of Music in London in 1931 with two English composers, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst, when they encouraged me to concentrate upon discovering and recording the range and extent of African musics of which there was at that time little reliable information, to ignore for the time being any attempt to score the music and rather to record as much as funds would allow. Future musicians and students, they maintained, would benefit from the data so gathered. Analysis of the music would then follow on a broader, sounder foundation, based upon the evidence collected on discs and not upon hearsay or romantic imagination” (Tracey, 1973:4). There were however exceptions, for example Tracey’s work on the Chopi musicians from Mozambique (1948). See footnote 1, p. 70.

⁷ Tracey’s methods for gathering material were questioned in later years by the first full-time ethnomusicologist employed by ILAM in 1954, John Blacking. Blacking soon realised the limitations of field methods that aimed to collect as much as possible without spending enough time to establish the relationships between the music being recorded and the wider social contexts of its performance. Tension arose between Blacking and Tracey, who never fully developed a method to document and analyse the relationship of the music to society (Reily, 2006:4; Lobley, 2011:194).

⁸ Throughout his career Tracey emphasised the importance of preserving *authentic* traditional African Music. See for instance an unpublished interim report of ILAM (1954); *The Codification and Textbook Project* (Tracey, 1968:8) and the catalogue for the *Sound of Africa* series (Tracey, 1973a).

⁹ It should be noted that this ideal of Hugh Tracey never truly came to fruition. In a paper delivered by Andrew Tracey he notes the lack of engagement with the material by the African community itself (1990). Similarly, Lobley notes that very few of the communities where Hugh Tracey recorded are even aware of the existence of the archive (2010).

active research and publishing centre and not a dusty archive: “he envisioned ILAM as a clearing house for research from all over the African continent [...] [to] record and then bring those recordings back, transcribe it and build a library” (Thram, DT 16/04/2011).

Since Tracey recognised the “wide gap in the knowledge and understanding of African arts, and above all of African music” (Tracey, 1967:3), he envisioned that his project of recording, transcribing and publishing all the musics of sub-Saharan Africa would lead to a clearer understanding of the artistic and social value of traditional African music for both “Africans” and “Europeans” (Ibid.). He noted: “African music was there, for sure; but there were no marks on paper or grooves in a recording disc to tell us, or them, what kind of music it was or how much. So the significance of African music was overlooked” (Ibid.). In other words, it was through recording, writing, codification and publication that Tracey believed the African peoples, and “the outside world” would recognise “the genuineness” of indigenous African music (Tracey, 1969:7).

Although Tracey’s aim of recording traditional music for future generations of African musicians and scholars can be considered a noble claim in and of itself, the deeply patronising and colonial vocabulary with which he discussed his projects creates discomfort in today’s post-colonial world. Examples of this colonial mind-set proliferate in his work. He noted, for instance, that recording the music of Africa became his responsibility (and that of likeminded people) “only because we have found that the African is pathetically incapable of defending his own culture and indeed is largely indifferent to its fate” (Tracey, 1954:8). This principle whereby sub-Saharan Africa was described as a single monolith, and the European as stepping in to rescue and salvage before everything is lost, speaks of a colonial outlook. It is in statements such as these that the contradiction embedded in Tracey’s aims comes to the surface: even though Tracey was aware of the damage caused by colonialism in Africa and therefore wanted to preserve its music, he nevertheless approached the project of salvaging these cultures in a similarly colonial manner. Tracey at times went to great lengths to document difference in the cultures he encountered (see the *Sound of Africa* catalogue, 1973), but his aim of amassing as much material as possible without taking into account social contexts points to a documentation of surface qualities without considering what such difference might actually mean in thinking about ‘the African’.

Tracey's vision of collecting for the future ephemeral material that had been fixed in a material reality resonates strongly with the traditional understanding of the archive as an institution mainly concerned with documents, literary texts, archaeological remains, films, sound recordings; things of a material nature that will withstand the test of time, or at least outlast the living. This understanding of archives remains true today where the imperatives of the archive constitute the preservation of written texts and material objects, the salvaging of oral histories and ephemeral knowledge before they are 'lost' (i.e., consigned to a textual or material reality). Through recording what he judged as authentic traditional African music, Tracey similarly sought to protect African culture from disappearing. He consequently devised a classification system through which to order and describe his growing collection of field recordings and provide ordered material for his final aim of repatriation. These three archival methodologies of recording, cataloguing and repatriation stand at the heart of Hugh Tracey's archival strategy and will be discussed in the following section.

2.3. Hugh Tracey's recording technique

As Anthony Seeger (1986:270) has noted, "no archive preserves sounds. What it preserves are *interpretations* of sounds – interpretations made by the people who did the recordings and their equipment". Recording style and equipment thus form an important technology for analysis in exploring the make-up of an ethnographic archive. Yet, as he and others have pointed out, field recordings and the methods used for making these recordings are rarely questioned by ethnomusicologists or researchers.¹⁰ Scrutiny of Tracey's recording technique reveals an idiosyncratic approach to making field recordings which allowed him to produce records of high sound- and aesthetic quality. His recordings were largely determined by the possibilities his equipment afforded and by his pre-emptive framing of the music as traditional and authentic African music. He furthermore recorded music for specific

¹⁰ See Noel Lobley (2010) where he analyses the lack of engagement with the production of field recordings as well as possible reasons for this. See also Fargion (2005) and Seeger (1986).

audiences and purposes which included producing high quality products that could be sold or published.¹¹

Tracey's recording equipment closely followed the development of new technologies, from recording sound directly onto aluminium discs in the 1930s to the invention of the tape recorder in the 1950s. However, the earlier sound carriers deteriorated rapidly due to the aluminium surface and they were later transferred to tape (Tracey, 1973:8). In addition to cumbersome recording apparatus, Tracey had to provide the electricity for this equipment, which meant transporting a generator weighing about half a ton through mostly difficult terrain. Due to the noise caused by the generator, Tracey had to fit a double silencer and a 100 yard long cable so that "it could be placed out of ear-shot behind an anthill or a hut" (Tracey, 1973:10). In 1949 Tracey obtained one of the first models of a studio EMI tape recorder. In order to operate it, a dome had to be constructed for the recording van so that the sound engineer could stand upright during recordings. However, the rapidly changing developments in recording technology meant that "both the weight and the fidelity of the tape recorders continually improved" (Ibid.) until, finally, Tracey's equipment consisted of a stereo portable transistor recorder "weighing little over nine pounds and operated by torch batteries" (Ibid.).¹²

Tracey described his recording technique by comparing the microphone to a camera. He used to take, as it were, well-planned audio snapshots of the music he found around him (Tracey, 1969:30). However, the recording equipment imposed various limitations on the

¹¹ Many of Hugh Tracey's field recordings were published and sold by the Gallo Record Company (who was an initial sponsor of Tracey's field trips) and one could speculate that this influenced Tracey's recording of the material. His work as a radio presenter (during his shows he used many of his own recordings) and the time he served as the director of the Natal Studios of the SABC also would have had an impact on his insistence on quality recordings (Tracey, 1973:8-9).

¹² Interestingly, since the material in the archival vault is organised according to material type, a walk through the shelves physically tells the story of the evolution of technology and the development of new formats and carriers from the original acetate discs, pancake reels, 78rpm shellac records, Long Playing records, reel-to-reel tapes, DAT tapes, CDs and DVDs. All the field tapes and master tapes produced by Hugh Tracey are kept in the archive vault with the omission of a few tapes that were destroyed due to fire or damage that occurred during the move from Roodepoort to Grahamstown. The 78rpm Shellac records that are kept in the vault represent a large selection of Tracey's field recordings that were published by Gallo from 1940-1950 which includes 675 discs containing over 1350 items. Some of these items were re-published in the *Sound of Africa* series (Tracey, 1973:9).

recordings. Tracey used mainly mono-aural microphones that were only able to record in one direction (near and far) but not laterally (Tracey, 1955:7; Tracey, 1969:34). He therefore noted that the microphone should be used much like a camera to focus and select “the salient features of the music and to present them in such a way as to suggest a complete representation of the occasion” (Tracey, 1955:7). For Tracey, recording became “an art form operating within the limitations of a frame which demands its own set of rules” (Ibid.). He noted that any sound recording could subsequently be only an incomplete account of the whole event:

A recording, however good, is never the real thing, but a representation of the original. The problem, therefore, is how to make good recordings which will do justice to the original music, and, in some cases, do more than justice, by bringing out nuances which in the ordinary way might not be noticed by the audience (Ibid.).

Due to the emphasis Tracey placed on making “good” recordings and the restrictions of his microphone, it was necessary for him to plan the content of recording in advance and sometimes to re-arrange the musicians to suit acoustic conditions and accommodate the technical limits of his recording equipment. For similar reasons he also tried to avoid recording in large crowds or during rituals, which meant that he had to stage performances outside of their social contexts (Tracey, 1969:31-32). The recording equipment further restricted recording due to its limited recording time. Tracey therefore developed a system whereby he controlled the performances via hand signs, signalling for the musicians to start, stop and fade, and advised against recording full repetitive songs, regardless of whether this was an essential part of the musical expression (Ibid.; Tracey, 1955:8). Noel Loblely (2010a:174) points out that “although Tracey aspired to find a method of capturing the folk music of Africa within its actual settings, he [...] began to create artificial constructions, recordings that were not necessarily accurate records of social events”. Tracey’s recordings were thus fundamentally shaped by the act of recording that dictated the possibilities of archiving, possibilities that produced as much as it recorded the event (see Derrida, 1996:17).

Tracey's final aim of publishing and distributing these recordings further influenced him to select musicians and to arrange the music to capture and present what he thought was the most aesthetically pleasing versions of songs. Tracey was aware that his recording methodology influenced his recordings, noting that "my recording, my registration of the music, must contain some element of choice which was not African but foreign" (Tracey, 1967:3). Yet, this realisation was never developed to change or adapt the recording methodology and Tracey never sought to analyse his role in potentially distorting the "authentic" events he sought to capture. These recordings should therefore be considered as constructions shaped and influenced by Tracey's worldview and culture, the technologies he used, his intention to sell the final product commercially and his firm ideas about "authenticity" and "genuine" African music.

2.4. Classification and the *Sound of Africa* series

As Tracey's recordings started to increase, he had to develop his own classification system. This culminated in the catalogue for the *Sound of Africa* series, consisting of 210 albums and more than 3100 field recordings.¹³ These recordings were selected by Tracey as representative of the music of sub-Saharan Africa from his more than 25 000 field recordings recorded during seventeen recording tours from 1948 to 1970. This series was thus selected from the bulk of Tracey's recordings (Tracey, 1973:10), and was published to serve educational and academic purposes.¹⁴

The classification system Tracey developed was intended "to indicate the authenticity of the composition which follows musical and linguistic rules undistorted by foreign influences" (Tracey, 1973:18). When Tracey started recording and selecting items for this series in 1948, he found that "no such system for African conditions existed" (Ibid.) and he therefore had to devise his own. He subsequently decided to categorise his recordings according to the purpose or function of the songs, but was aware that his system was not unproblematic

¹³ After Hugh Tracey's death, Andrew Tracey added a further eight recordings of his own fieldwork to the series to bring the total number to 218.

¹⁴ Another series of twenty-five albums was also released. It was entitled the *Music of Africa* series and was published as a commercial product aimed at public consumption, in contrast to the *Sound of Africa* series, which was intended for educational and academic purposes.

since “no system is likely to prove faultless as so many interpretations can be given to a single complex item” (Ibid.).¹⁵

Tracey’s classification system was based on three main descriptive groups: “language and dialects”, “musical instrument” and “type of performance”.¹⁶ These groups were then divided into specific categories. “Performance,” for example, is divided into twenty-eight categories, which were in turn sub-divided into 145 specific performance types (Tracey, 1973:19-23). The twenty-eight categories of performance types that Tracey identified include songs by “children and young people”; “initiation, puberty and circumcision songs”; “school songs”; “love songs”; “wedding songs”; “burials, wakes and laments for the dead”; “religious and superstitious pagan” songs; the songs of “native Christian churches”; “Mohammedan songs”; “divination and spiritualism” songs; “spell binding and breaking” songs; “social and political” songs; “morality” songs; “fighting and military” songs; “work or occupational” songs including “domestic”, “pastoral” and “labour” songs; “ballads and songs for general entertainment including concerts”; “laments”; “self-delectative” songs “sung for one’s own delight”; “dance songs”; stories and riddles and “rhythms” and “instrumental tunes without words” (Tracey, 1973:19-23). As an example of the further sub-division, “songs for general entertainment” is divided into thirteen categories, including songs relating to “scandals”; “historic” songs “recalling famous occasions”; “praise songs”; “sentimental, emotional, wistful, nostalgic” songs; “adaptations of foreign songs (non-African)”; “humorous” songs; “pornographic, bawdy songs”; “party songs” and “begging, street selling” songs (Tracey, 1973:22).

Additionally, Tracey also employed another classificatory system designed to assess the relative merits and potential audiences for all of his recordings, divided under five headings, with “T” standing for “territorial entertainment”; “C” for “continent-wide entertainment”;

¹⁵ Tracey provides one example of such an item, where a song originally composed as a love song might be used for dancing. Apart from such complications (where a necessary choice was made) “the classification used for the ‘Sound of Africa’ series has proved reasonably adequate for the present, though it may well have to give way to some more scientific method in future” (Tracey, 1973:18).

¹⁶ Tracey’s classification system included a four-part-colour-card index and reference system to help users organise their *Sound of Africa* recordings as well as allow for cross-referencing by language and dialects, musical instrument, type of performance and numerical order. (Tracey, 1973:19-23).

“A” for “anthropological interest”; “L” for “linguistic material” and “M” for “musical interest” (Tracey, 1954:2). Capital letters were used to refer to items judged by Tracey “to be of special musical value” (Lobley, 2010a:224). This second level of classification was Hugh Tracey’s personal system in order for him to remember the recordings.¹⁷ He never specified what criteria he used to grade these recordings as aesthetically pleasing or not, as good or bad, worthy of publication or not. The system was therefore completely based on his subjective judgement.¹⁸ Although one might argue that these classifications were personal and thus not meant to be used by the general public, this system can be found alongside his other classificatory system in the two volume catalogue of his *Sound of Africa* series, at once making the personal and private, public. It created the possibility that this subjective classification system could become naturalised in processes of objectification such as monographs, articles, treaties and manuals without consideration of its genesis. As Da Cunha (2004) has noted, these private systems

are transformed by contingent, posthumous and unexpected uses, such as when object, documents and rhetorics on the “other” preserved in archives belonging to ethnographers become part of the construction of an “ethno-history” by historians, anthropologists, descendents of the studied groups/subjects or the institutions/movements that “represent” them.

In these systems of classification the power of the archive can be recognised as a “product of judgement” (Mbembe, 2002:20), since systems are designed to fix meaning, set limits and impose systems of “order on apparent randomness” that present a system of thought exotic and foreign to those outside it (Taylor, 2002:248). As Kofi Agawu has argued, these interpretations “could have decisive consequences on the work of understanding. Even the most apparently transparent categories already enshrine alternatives insofar as they are propped up by certain presuppositions” (Agawu, 2003a:38).

¹⁷ Comment by Andrew Tracey after the presentation of a paper by the present author on ILAM at the annual SASRIM conference held in Grahamstown, 2011.

¹⁸ In consulting the texts that set out Hugh Tracey’s classification systems namely the *Handbook for Librarians* (1952), the *Codification Project* (1969) and the *Catalogue to the Sound of Africa* series (1973), no mention is made of the criteria used to judge recordings.

2.5. Codification and Textbook Project

As a textual corollary to his *Sound of Africa* series, Hugh Tracey planned an ambitious project called the *Codification and Textbook Project* (1969). Although this project failed to materialise due to the absence of funding and the grand scope of Tracey's vision (DT 16/02/2011), the principles of this project encompass most of Tracey's other projects. The *Codification and Textbook Project* was designed as a ten-year research plan divided into five years of collecting and then a further five years of analysis and publication (Tracey, 1969:12). Tracey intended methodically to document all the musics of sub-Saharan Africa to "form a basis of authentic data" (Ibid.) from which to produce teaching materials for schools. This would include a complete reference book and larger research units in Africa (Ibid., 6, 52). One of the main outcomes envisioned by Tracey of this codification project was the "establishment of accepted and logical terms suited to African phenomena" (Ibid., 8). Tracey wanted to give "African musicians a certain sense of background and continuity to their art" (Ibid., 6) and "bring African music into the field of African education in its broadest sense" (Ibid., 7). It was through transcriptions, research and educational material that Tracey believed Africans and "the outside world" would recognise "the genuineness" of indigenous African music (Ibid.). Tracey wrote in 1968 that:

the major objective of the codification of African music is to provide African [...] musicians with a working knowledge of the theory of their own art and a suitable musical literacy which is essential once they are beyond the stage of composing and performing by ear alone (Tracey, 1968:8).

He believed that this recognition would "provide deep satisfaction to African musicians in the future" and "help Africans to realize their personality through their music, so that they may be a more fulfilled people" (Tracey, 1968:7, 8). These statements have been widely critiqued by scholars as a form of "paternalistic intellectual neo-colonialism" (Peek, 1970:505).¹⁹ More recently, Coetzee (2011:5) has noted that although Tracey aimed to create cultural products to be used by future African musicians and scholars, "whiteness portrays itself as central to knowledge production and reception. African musicians are

¹⁹ See also Agawu (2003:230); Erlmann (1991:1) and Pantaleoni (1971:96).

objectified as part of the discovery, requiring Western representation and dissemination – the production and circulation of texts as cultural capital within established discourses.” Tracey viewed Western systems of theory, analysis, notation and textuality as imperative to ensure the continued existence of African art. He wanted to protect “African culture” and provide Africans with a lasting legacy of what he considered as disappearing traditional African music in which ‘they’ could express themselves. The ILAM archive thus functions as both a material place of preservation as well as a site of power and control (Derrida 1996:11).

Tracey was often accused of “creating an image of African music that was biased or even out-dated” (Lobley, 2010a:235). He wanted to protect and preserve traditional African music against what he considered the threat of urban music, radio and the import of gramophone records (Tracey 1954:11, Erlmann 1991:1).²⁰ Some critics have also argued that Tracey’s collection of recordings was selected on the grounds of a Western subjective experience, “inevitably divorced from an indigenous African audience and was always destined to serve Western academic agendas” (Lobley, 2011:423; Pantaleoni, 1971:96). Lobley (2010:8) further notes that since Tracey “regularly dismissed anthropological methods and theories,” his focus fell on “recording music as a decontextualised object, at the expense of wider social analysis”. When this critique is taken seriously, Tracey’s aim of returning his recordings to communities in order for them to inspire and be used by future generations of African musicians, becomes fraught with contradictions. His vision was to repatriate constructed recordings of what he judged to be traditional African music, organised according to Western systems of theory and analysis into categories, to the African communities where the music originated from. Despite this historical perspective, the field cards Tracey completed during his recording tours which formed the basis of Tracey’s classification system, was used as the meta-data for all the sound recordings that have subsequently been digitised by ILAM (Marsh, SM 16/04/2012). Tracey’s archival methodologies and classification system is therefore still intact at ILAM. Tracey’s project and the kind of archive that ILAM became through historical contingency could be viewed as a

²⁰ For example, Tracey wrote in the catalogue to the *Sound of Africa* series: “Winds from foreign regions may bend the bough, but the object of this survey is to illustrate the nature of the tree of African music standing with its roots in its own African soil” (Tracey, 1973:18).

locus classicus of how the archive becomes a structure of power and control through codification and classification.

2.6. Staging the 'Other' archive

In exploring some of the methodologies that Hugh Tracey used to constitute his archive – including recording technology and techniques, cataloguing and codification – it becomes clear that these archival processes are by default set to create limits and boundaries. These procedures act as conduits of Western conceptions of knowledge production and preservation geared towards confining music in textuality, organising and arranging it into systems and categories, capturing it in definitions or fixing it in codes. My contention is that through these practices, the archive could not become anything other than a conduit of Western ideologies. This creates various challenges for the archive of African music. Kofi Agawu (2003a:25) has remarked that such a “European bias in the institutional ordering of knowledge” is reflected “in the fact that most of the recognised texts in the archive of African music are written rather than oral”. Andrew Tracey has similarly questioned an archival approach to African music, stressing the fact that the problem of the archive is “precisely the intangible factors that archives cannot capture” (Tracey, 1990:3). He goes further by arguing that “an archivist has to realise that what he is preserving is perhaps not the most important thing, which is the living tradition” (Tracey, 1990:3). However, even as we acknowledge the need to free ourselves from the dominance of this Western paradigm, our institutional structures and theoretical and methodological tools continue to be haunted by its presence. How can we move beyond this impasse of the Western archive and its systems?

One possible approach to answering to this question has been conceptualised by the performance theorist Diana Taylor. In her work *The Archive and the Repertoire, Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (2003), Taylor examines both the archive of supposedly lasting materials (texts, documents and objects), and the so-called ephemeral repertoire of embodied practice or knowledge (dance, rituals and songs) (Taylor, 2003:9). She does not view the archive and the repertoire as opposing structures, but as two constructions working in the silences and fractures of the other. Looking beyond the binary of

written/performed, material/ephemeral, Western/Other, Taylor convincingly shows how both the archive and repertoire exceed “the limitations of the other”, for instance when dealing with the reality of disappearance (Taylor, 2003:20). Whereas it is true that individual performances disappear, and that if captured via archival strategies they might outlive the live, archival strategies can never capture the live event and can never be “transmitted through the archive” (Taylor, 2003:20). A recording of a song or performance cannot replicate the event itself; it will always remain but a fraction and a textualisation of the performance even though “it often comes to replace the performance as a *thing* in itself” (ibid.). Although the archive has overwhelmingly been conceptualised as the final keeper of knowledge because it claims immunity to destruction (at least for a certain time-period), Taylor (2003:20-21) points out that what is often negated in this argument is that

performances as ritualised, formalised, or reiterate behaviour [...] also replicate themselves through their own structures and codes. This means that the repertoire, like the archive, is mediated. The process of selection, memorisation or internalisation and transmission takes place within (and in turn helps constitute) specific systems of re-presentation. [...] Embodied and performed acts generate, record, and transmit knowledge.²¹

Even though the archive and the repertoire work in constant interaction, the written text is still seen as the only valorisation of knowledge, the final keeper thereof. Although other cultural practices (such as oral history) are recognised as knowledge systems, the focus is always and without fail on the importance, necessity and responsibility to “capture” these knowledge systems before they disappear. The preservation of the repertoire tends to be conceptualised in terms and strategies of the archive “with its notion of the immutable and objective record” (Jones, Abbot & Ross, 2009:168). The repertoire is not recognised as a valuable site for the safekeeping and transmission of knowledge in itself. This dominance of the Western paradigm keeps alive the binary constructions of the hegemonic power of the written archive versus the anti-hegemonic challenge of the repertoire, written history versus oral memory, true versus false, modern versus primordial (Taylor, 2003:22;

²¹ See also the work of Jones, Abbot & Ross (2009), which builds further on this idea of Taylor, namely that each performance is part of an ongoing process that “is constantly feeding back on itself [so that t]he identification of immaterial traces that are in a constant state of re-enactment counters the notion that performance disappears.” (Jones, Abbott & Ross 2009:167)

Performing the archive, 2012; Nora, 2005).²² The challenge is thus not in turning the immaterial into material representations, but in recognising the value of each as sources for the safekeeping of knowledge. The contention is therefore not that African music can *only* be captured aurally, but that indigenous knowledge systems are not considered in their capacity to preserve and transmit knowledge. As Jones *et al.* (2009:168) put it:

if we consider records in their broadest sense to include these immaterial traces, we realise the archive is infinite and that only a fraction of the material that provides evidence of the past can ever be housed within the traditional confines of the archive.

Acknowledging performance as an important system of knowing and transmitting knowledge would amount to a radical shift in an archival practice only concerned with the written, captured and frozen. It would allow for dynamic institutions involved in the active curation of performance; institutions concerned with both material and repertoire where the latter is not confined in written and textual documents but understood as living, changing and breathing sites and spaces for the transmission of knowledge. During his time as director, Andrew Tracey made attempts to align the curation of the repertoire with ILAM's function. He had a Xhosa cultural village, complete with kraal and huts, built just behind ILAM. This space was regularly populated with musicians and storytellers.²³

2.7. Conclusion

Verne Harris has remarked that "instead of fixing meaning archival endeavour as a whole, should be about the releasing of meaning" (Harris, 2002:71). The archive needs to expand beyond its boundaries as a concept related to the institution, the building and a material reality to include the repertoire performed through song, dance, theatre and ritual.²⁴ But is it possible to get beyond the confines of the archive by simply expanding its boundaries to house the "mnemonic and gestural practices and specialised knowledge transmitted live?"

²² For an interesting article about the written archive versus memory see Pierre Nora (2005). The challenge presented by performances on the African continent to the conventional understandings of the archive is discussed in *Performing the archive* (2012).

²³ Unfortunately this had to be taken down due to vagrants from the community who took up residency in the huts (Madiba, EM 14/02/2011).

²⁴ See pp. 46-52, for an exposition of the development of this idea.

(Taylor, 2003:27). Is it possible to conceptualise a place in the archive for the repertoire while the very practices and methodologies of the archive and the way it is imagined and appropriated by scholars set up an essentialist either/or polarity between Western and “Other”? Perhaps it is time to dismantle and destroy the institutional archive as we got to know, nurture and trust it, for a more vibrant, dynamic alternative – an “Other” archive? An institution concerned with process and not end product, concerned with change and porousness and not fixity, institutions where the primacy of performance is acknowledged in preserving and transmitting knowledge.

Fieldnote, 25 July 2011, Johannesburg - On the personal and the subjective

The ethnography on the SABC is much more challenging than I anticipated. Certainly there are more questions than answers or solutions. I accept that it is never possible to see the entire picture, and that my own efforts will always stand central in what I find. Yet, in the vast SABC building I become ever more aware of the enormity of this structure and how fractured my knowledge is thereof. I am discomforted by having got to know the people who form part of my ethnography. They go about their daily business, laugh and get angry, while I try to build up a critique of their institution. They face practical and immediate problems which they resolve effectively on a day to day basis. Then I use what they say and do and interpret it according to my research interest. I realise that many different interpretations could have been possible.

How strong are my own convictions, how powerful my own ideologies, how influential my hypothesis in the way I approach this archive? How can my opinions be trusted? Of course opinion is always subjective, but in doing an ethnography it is surely also reasonable to aim for a degree of objectivity? I am confounded by the influence I have on what I find, what I am given, what is said and asked. To the extent that I wish I could remove 'me' from the interviews and have my interviewees speak to themselves. I was probably less aware of this issue at ILAM because I was overwhelmed by the historical world view of Hugh Tracey. The biggest part of that case study was historical, not ethnographical; yet the overbearing sense of Tracey's historical worldview could never be recorded by historical documents but could only become palpable by being in the field. Tracey's ideology formed ILAM and permeated everything from the material to the people who work there. In a sense my own ideologies were completely overshadowed. Of course they did not disappear, but they came second to the dominant paradigm of Hugh Tracey. With regard to the SABC, however, there is no such counter-ideology to keep me in check. I am staring myself in the face. My approach to this archive, my way of thinking, will determine what material I gather and the direction of my analysis.

Chapter 3

The Radio and Sound Archive of the South African Broadcasting Corporation

The 'village story teller'

The SABC is occupied, in great measure, with the past, the present and the future, an imperative imposed upon it by our history. We are a diverse, yet united society. We have come from a divided past of very painful experience[s] and memories. Our uniqueness and diversity must be highlighted if true reconciliation is to be achieved. The Public Broadcaster is the "village story teller". How it tells the story of South Africa over time will be under scrutiny.

- Matsepe-Casaburri, 1996

3.1. Introduction

The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) is South Africa's national public broadcaster. Over 78% of the adult population listen to the SABC's network of eighteen radio stations and over 40% watch the three television channels.¹ Located in Auckland Park, Johannesburg, the purpose-built building of the SABC spans an area of almost 15 hectares. Describing itself as "a microcosm of South African society" (Theunissen, Nikitin & Pillay, 1996:184) this vast building and infrastructure contains Radio and Television Broadcasting Facilities, numerous recording studios, a canteen, hair salon, banks, a travel agency, television and radio archives, a museum as well as an art collection (part of which is on display in the foyer).

¹ These are very broad estimations based on the SABC Annual reports for 2010/2011 and 2006. The SABC Annual report for 2010/2011 estimates that 20 million people out of the adult population in South African listen to the SABC's radio programmes and watch the three SABC channels on television. The Annual Report of 2006 gives the numbers as 24.4 million for radio and 19.1 for television. See *SABC Annual Report, 2010/2011:17; SABC Annual Report, 2006:3.*

The SABC was established in 1936 through legislation that allowed the formation of a public broadcasting corporation.² Before the formation of the SABC, South Africa's radio broadcasts from three agencies in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town were controlled by an independent company called the African Broadcasting Company (ABC) (Hamm, 1991:148). Upon establishment, the SABC acquired all of ABC's assets,³ and South Africa's radio services shifted from being a commercial company to becoming a State-oriented enterprise through which the state determined radio broadcasting policies. Under the later National Party (from 1948 onwards) the national broadcaster became a powerful vehicle for state ideology through its programming, propaganda and censorship (Hamm, 1991:147; Drewett, 2005:60).

With the country's transition to a democracy in 1990, the SABC was amongst the first transformation projects for the new government. However, since its transformation the SABC has had to weather numerous crises that escalated from 2007 onwards. Kate Skinner (2011:2) notes that "since 2007 there have been three boards and five CEOs at the SABC. During the 2008/2009 financial year alone the SABC lost close to R1 billion through the mismanagement of funds." Apart from the financial and management crises, the SABC has also not managed to remain free of political interference. In 2006 a blacklisting scandal revealed that anti-government political commentators had been blacklisted and censored by the then head of the news department.⁴ Similarly, a proposed revision to the Broadcasting Bill in 2010/2011 raised concerns from various organisations, trade unions and opposition parties that the SABC was once more becoming vulnerable to political interference.⁵ One could thus state that as a state-owned institution, the national broadcaster will remain biased.

² See Broadcasting Act No. 22 of 1936, section 1.

³ See Broadcasting Act No. 22 of 1936, section 16(1).

⁴ See *Stopping Censorship at the SABC Blacklisting at the SABC: Freedom of Expression Institute – blacklisting case* (2009); Haffajee (2006) and Benjamin (2011).

⁵ The revision of the Broadcasting Act of 1999 in 2010 gave the minister extended powers such as authority over the SABC's finances, power to issue directives to its board, regulatory responsibility over the SABC's editorial policy instead of it being subject to the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (Unhappiness over broadcast bill, *Mail and Guardian*, 16 Nov 2010). The *Support Public Broadcasting Coalition*, a lobby group comprising of various trade unions and organizations, has raised concerns, amongst others things, to one of the main proposals of the Bill that claims "to align public broadcasting – including community broadcasting – to the developmental

As part of the Corporations mandate, the SABC is maintaining three archives: a Television Archive, News Archive and Radio and Sound Archive. These archives were established to serve the information needs of the SABC and currently function as three separate units. The Radio and Sound archive falls under the umbrella unit of the Media Libraries, which also includes the Information Library and the Record Library. The Media Library as a unit formed the basis of my ethnography with the focus on the Radio and Sound Archive where I spent most of my time. During the week I spent at the SABC, I conducted interviews with the manager of the Media Libraries, the three sub-managers of the Media Libraries divisions, as well as with the subject specific archivists in the Radio and Sound Archive. Various other casual conversations in the day-to-day dealing with people, over lunch or coffee also proved valuable in directing my requests for material to consult in order to get to grips with the archival system, the internal organisation of the Media Library and the various functions and job descriptions of employees.

The Radio and Sound Archive was established in 1960 and an archival system was put in place. The establishment of the archive coincided with a dramatic time in the country's history when Apartheid legislation was enforced with increasing vigour and brute force than ever before.⁶ Since archival systems are created within certain contexts they often reflect the societies that created them (Schwartz & Cook, 2002b:12). As Harris has observed the system employed by the archive "both invites a politics in and generates a politics of its own wherever 'archive' happens" (Harris,2008:244). An ethnography of the SABC Radio and

state", in other words, with "government priorities" instead of encouraging and providing "a platform for vigorous debate around government's priorities". Opposition parties have also reacted strongly, fearing that the proposed Bill will make the SABC "vulnerable to political interference" and allow the public broadcaster to become "a state-run broadcaster as it was under apartheid" due to the wide-ranging powers that the minister is given and lack of accountability to its audience and citizens of South Africa. This Bill has since been withdrawn and a revised Bull is currently being passed through Parliament (see *DA: Scrap Broadcasting Bill*, 2 September 2011; Da silva, 2011; Statement: SOS concerned DoC is renegeing on broadcasting policy review, *The Media Online*, 16 March 2011).

⁶ For example, on 21 March 1960, 69 black protesters were killed in what became known as the 'Sharpeville massacre.'The incident led to widespread unrest that was aggressively suppressed by the government and resulted in the banning of the ANC and the Pan African Congress (PAC) – the latter being responsible for the Sharpeville protest against pass laws. In 1961 South Africa left the British Commonwealth and became called out a republic. The Rivonia-trial of 1962 saw several anti-Apartheid leaders convicted for treason, including Nelson Mandela.

Sound Archive is therefore potentially revealing in terms of certain forms of political interference and the role that the archive plays in maintaining these power relations. After sketching a brief historical background of the SABC and the establishment of the Radio and Sound Archive I trace the power of the archive through some of its core theoretical assumptions, systems and practical applications.

3.2. Short History of the SABC

The SABC was established in 1936 as a national radio service. At first the broadcasts were only in English but a year later, in 1937, a parallel Afrikaans service was established. The programmes became known as the 'A Service' for English and the 'B Service' for Afrikaans (Theunissen, Nikitin & Pillay, 1996:21). From its inception the SABC exercised strict control over its broadcasting material through a Director-General advised by a board of directors. They examined "every item [...] with care before broadcast so as not to offend sensitive listeners" (Ibid.). This system later developed into a full-scale censorship committee that censored music and programmes that did not support the Afrikaner nationalist discourse of the time.⁷ Initially, the programme content was modelled on that of the BBC, "with emphasis on informational, educational and cultural programming." (Hamm, 1991:148)

Three African languages, Zulu, Xhosa and South Sotho, joined transmissions via telephone lines in 1940 and on medium waves in 1942, for half an hour broadcasts on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays (Theunissen, *et al.*, 1996:75). Springbok Radio was the first bilingual and commercial radio station of the SABC and started broadcasting in 1950. The sixties saw the growth of the broadcaster into a comprehensive system of FM network radio stations and the establishment of Radio Bantu, which broadcasted "alternatively in Zulu,

⁷ Michael Drewett (2005: 60-61) notes how the SABC prohibited music thought of as "rebellious, too political or promoting political struggle (included here were misuse of the national anthem, lyrics which might inflame public opinion or songs which unfairly promoted a political party of movement); was blasphemous or because the censors decided that the songs were religiously offensive (including promotion of the occult, glorification of the devil or if the lyrics created the impression of a Christ-figure different to Christ); was sexually overt, mentioned drug use, swear words and offensive words in general; referred to the brand name of products (presumably because such songs constituted free publicity or might have led to charges of libel); or mixed different languages in a single song (which went against the government's separate development policy which helped keep cultures separate)."

Xhosa and South Sotho, over the medium wave transmitters of the established English and Afrikaans services, for an hour a day” (Ibid., 5, 69, 75). This was followed by the creation of various other regional and language radio stations with Radio Bantu broadcasting in seven languages on full-day schedules by the end of the 1960s (Muller, 2008:14).⁸ Springbok radio was discontinued in 1985 and the two pioneer English and Afrikaans services were turned into national commercial services at the beginning of 1986 (Theunissen *et al.*, 1996:5). On 5 January 1976 the SABC officially launched South Africa’s first television service, transmitting on one channel, later expanding it to include three channels (Theunissen *et al.*, 1996:5).

From its inception, the SABC also maintained three regional orchestras in their Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban studios. These orchestras gave regular performances of symphonies, chamber music and outdoor concerts in the summer months that were relayed and broadcasted (Theunissen *et al.*, 1996:165).⁹ The onset of the Second World War in 1939 meant that fewer live concerts could be given due to the security risk of having large numbers of people gathered in one place. This encouraged the trend to record and broadcast performances, “developing the first real archive material for the Corporation” (Ibid.,165,166).¹⁰ Soon after the war it became too expensive to maintain three separate orchestras and in 1953 the SABC decided to unite its three studio orchestras, with the Johannesburg City Orchestra to form the largest orchestra in South Africa, namely the

⁸ See below a list of all the SABC radio stations as well as the year they started broadcasting. All the regional black radio stations were re-launched in 1996 (their new names are given in brackets). Regional radio stations include: Ukhozi FM (Radio Zulu, 1962); Lesedi (Radio Sesotho, 1962); Highveld Radio (1964, the first full-time, all-music commercial station, Gauteng); Thobela FM (Radio Lebowa, 1964); Motswedding (Radio Setswana, 1964); Good Hope fm (1965, Cape Town); Munghana Lonene (Radio Tsonga, 1965, Northern province, parts of Gauteng, Northwest and Mpumalanga); Phalaphala (Radio Venda, 1965, Northern Province, parts of Gauteng an Mpumalanga); Umhlobo Wenene (Radio Xhosa, 1966, Northern and Western Cape, KzN, Mpumalanga); East Coast Radio (1976, KwaZulu Natal); Ligwalagwala (Radio Swazi, 1982); Ikwekwezi (Radio Ndebele, 1983); Radio Lotus (1983, KzN, Gauteng, Western Cape); Jacaranda Stereo (1985, Pretoria); Radio Oranje (1985, Free State); Radio Algoa (1986, Eastern Cape); Kfm (1990, Western and Southern Cape). And national radio stations, SAfm (1936, originally the English Service); RSG (1937, originally the Afrikaans Service); 5fm (1975); Radio Metro (1986, started in Gauteng, now national); Radio 2000 (1987, sports station). (Theunissen *et al.*, 1996:43-90)

⁹ Theunissen *et al.* (1996:22) points out that during 1937 the SABC transmitted 251 sessions of recorded symphonies, chamber music concerts, outdoor concerts (during the summer months), organ music, Indian music, military brass bands, South African music and several operas.

¹⁰ Led by Theo Wendt and Jeremy Schulman, the orchestra continued to produce studio recordings, which were stored in “an ever increasing number of classical works” (Theunissen *et al.*, 1996:166).

National Symphonic Orchestra (Ibid., 166). A Music Library was started “as supporting library” for this newly formed orchestra. Today this library houses approximately 24 000 music scores (Lombaard, 2010:1).¹¹

3.3. The establishment of an official archive

In the 1960s, almost thirty years after the SABC’s first broadcasts, a Sound Archive was established. The archive collected the radio programmes broadcasted by the SABC radio stations in Johannesburg and also included a Record Library. The content in the archive rapidly grew and already in 1999 the Radio and Sound Archive in Johannesburg had a catalogue of 73 000 tapes, constituting about 200 000 hours of radio broadcasts, a rare and irreplaceable collection of approximately 18 000 matrices and one of the biggest 78 rpm record collections of Africana in South Africa (*Training manual*, 1998:14;17;67; Phalatse, 1999:10).¹² Meanwhile the material in the various regional radio stations of the SABC also grew and by the 1980s it was decided that these stations would all maintain their own archives, albeit understaffed and without adequate equipment.¹³ Subsequently, the Johannesburg archive became a central “work archive for white news and international services, with a possible shadow archive in Cape Town” (*Minutes Nr.3*, 1982:3). For the black language services, “the centre where the programmes originated from would serve as a work archive with the shadow archive in the central archive in Johannesburg” (*Minutes Nr.3*, 1982:3).

The first archivist at the Johannesburg Sound Archive, Thys van Lill, was appointed in 1964. He was succeeded four years later by Monica Breed, who managed the archives for eleven years (*TM*, 1998:12). Her tenure included an extensive tour of Europe and the BBC in London to view and investigate methods for preservation and cataloguing (*TM*, 1998:13;

¹¹ Since its inception, the orchestra’s repertoire included various newly commissioned South African works by white composers. This commissioning practice was expanded from 1991 to include the compositions of black composers (Theunissen *et al.*, 1996:167). The orchestra is still active as the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra.

¹² The *Training manual* will henceforth be referred to as TM.

¹³ See, *Voorlegging aan die radio argiefkomitee*. Departement: Nguni-, Venda- en Tsongaradiodienste. [1982] (un-catalogued document). SABC Radio and Sound Archive, Johannesburg.

35). She submitted her recommendations in a report called the “Breed Report” (1969), and put in place the archival system that is still used today (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011; *TM*, 1998:13).¹⁴ Breed was succeeded by Isidore Davis who remained in charge of the Sound Archive until 1984 (*TM*, 1998:13). He built up the wild-life and environmental sounds in the archive to one of the most comprehensive collections of Southern African Sounds (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011). In 1984 the Radio and Sound Archive became a separate section of the Radio Production Services (*TM*, 1998:13). During that year, Leon Endemann took over as the first manager, and not archivist, of the Radio and Sound Archive. His tenure lasted until 1995. Up until this point the sound archive had functioned under an archivist with three or four assistant archivists. Due to the increasing amount of material to be archived, Endemann created various divisions to contain the job descriptions and workloads of archivists. These were “Afrikaans”, “English”, “News and Current Affairs”, “Sport”, “Radio RSA” (languages such as Spanish, French and German), “Serious Music” and “Light Music” (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011).

This division of archival material into separate entities (including the differentiation between ‘light’ and ‘serious’ music) constitutes a common practice in radio archives that deal with a staggering influx and accumulation of material daily.¹⁵ However, in South Africa the division between ‘light music’ and ‘serious music’ was not only a pragmatic decision, but one employed within a racialised strategy articulated by the nationalist government according to its Separate Development Strategy. Within this strategy radio programming was developed to ensure that each person had access to a radio station in his or her own language. People were supposed to listen to music inherent to the particular culture implied by the language. This, in the words of Hamm, stressed “the distinctiveness and separateness of ‘his’ cultural/ethnic heritage” (Hamm, 1991:169). Consequently it “led to different programming strategies for the SABC’s ‘white’ and ‘black’ services” (Hamm, 1991:155). Black radio programming was aimed towards “the culture of the ‘tribal’ group at which a given service was aimed,” which meant, for instance, that “there should be something ‘Zulu’

¹⁴ The system that Monica Breed put in place was modelled on the archival system used by the British Broadcasting Corporation in London. However, no information about this system could be obtained. After numerous requests, the “Breed Report” could not be found by the SABC Archives.

¹⁵ Other Radio Archives that follow similar divisions include the BBC Radio Archive and the German Radio Archive of Süddeutscher Rundfunk, Stuttgart. See Harrison (1984).

about a piece to be played on Radio Zulu” (Hamm, 1991:160).¹⁶ Traditional music was subsequently recorded and programmed to “heighten the listener’s pride in his own culture” (*SABC Annual Report*, 1953:32 as in Hamm, 1991:150).¹⁷ These services were geared towards attracting listeners and traditional music was supplemented and eventually replaced by popular and choir music (Hamm, 1991:160). In contrast, so-called white programme strategies were geared towards “informational, educational and cultural programming” and the programming was “largely confined to classical and religious items [...] occasional relief was afforded by semi-classical pieces and the social dance music of the educated classes” (Hamm 1991: 148). During the mid-1980s strict programming along language and ethnic lines was relaxed and after the transition to democracy these radio stations were able to play music according to their own criteria. Regional radio stations all continued to maintain their own archives. Today they remain decentralised, although they share a main frame system and are connected via an online database that allows access to any SABC radio archive in the country from any one of the stations (Jele, RJ 25/07/2011).

In 1992, an umbrella unit called the Media Libraries was established in the Johannesburg archive (*TM*, 1998:13). It includes the Library,¹⁸ the Record Library and the Radio and Sound Archives. Since 2006 this structure has existed under the general management of Ilse

¹⁶ These were judged on the following: “Performers should be of the proper ethnicity, members of the proper ‘tribe’. Beyond that, if the piece were instrumental it should draw on melodic or performance traditions of that ‘tribal’ group, or at least have a title in its language. If vocal, the piece should have a text in the appropriate African language, to help ‘promote self-development through the medium of [ones] own language’, and this text should preferably relate to the specific culture or history of that ‘tribal’ group.” (Hamm, 1991:160).

¹⁷ Much of this ‘traditional music’ that the SABC Radio services subsequently required, was recorded by the various regional branches. Reminiscent of the vision of Hugh Tracey, the SABC wanted to preserve the “folk-songs threatened with extinction” and encourage pride in its various listeners for ‘their own’ music” (Hamm, 1991:150). Hugh Tracey made the first field recordings for the SABC as the Director of the Natal Studios between 1936 and 1947 (Tracey, 1973a; Hamm, 1991:150). Under the direction of Yvonne Huskisson as the SABC’s Organiser of Bantu Music, various teams recorded music and by the late 1960s the recordings amounted to more than 10 000 recordings (see Hamm, 1991:150,161). Various *boereorkeste* were also financed and broadcasted by the SABC “in an attempt to copy and reconstruct Afrikaans traditional music” (Hamm, 1991:155).

¹⁸ A Music Library was maintained and belonged to the National Symphony Orchestra that was situated at the SABC. When this orchestra disbanded during the late 1990s the Library was entrusted to the SABC and became part of the Information Library in the Media Libraries unit (Assmann, 2011a).

Assmann.¹⁹ The Library is currently managed by Suzette Lombaard and keeps books, magazines, music scores and a collection of newspaper cuttings that date back to 1927. The Record Library, managed by Thersia Francis, houses a growing collection of 21 000 CD's and a vast collection of over half a million vinyl records. These include the transcription recordings made by the SABC, the bulk of which comprises the field recordings made by Yvonne Huskisson.²⁰ The Radio Archive, currently managed by Bennie Jacobs, houses a variety of different audio documents including speeches, interviews, sport programmes and commentaries, music programmes and supplementary material from local and international audio collections and archives such as the BBC. The collection goes back to the first broadcast by General Jan Smuts in 1927. The Media Libraries further includes a Sound Restoration Unit that does the re-mastering and restoration of the SABC Transcription collection, as well as a collection of pianos and harps that is hired out to professionals (TM 1998: 17; Assmann, 2011). In addition to these collections, the Media Libraries oversee the functions of the nine Provincial Media Libraries, connected to the various Radio Stations in those regions (Assmann, 2011).²¹

The Media Libraries has also recently become involved with the Written Archive of the SABC. The latter contains documents dealing with, amongst other things, commission agreements, contracts, recording agreements and copyright issues. However, in the seventy years of the SABC's existence, there has never been any consistent form of records management.²² The Written Archive was only built in 2008, and Ilse Assmann is leading the

¹⁹ Ilse Assmann first served as the manager of the Radio and Sound Archive from 1996 – 2006 (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011), after which Bennie Jacobs was appointed as the current manager.

²⁰ Initially the record library was divided into three sections, the black record library (which contained the music and transcriptions used for the black radio services), the white record library (containing the music and transcriptions used for the white radio services) and the commercial record library (containing the material used for Radio Springbok). (Francis, TF 28/07/2011). This was consolidated under the Media Libraries Unit. See also footnote 17, p.96.

²¹ These provinces include all nine provinces of South Africa: the Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West, and the Western Cape.

²² The file plan used to fall under the custodianship of the Company Secretariat. However with the introduction of the Information Management Plan (IMP), Assmann took over and initiated a Records Management system. She notes: "It involved drafting a corporate File Plan, getting approval from the National Archive, and getting buy-in from the SABC management and staff. It also introduced us to formal project management, which was a learning curve for me and my team. We are currently working to systematically capture all our older paper records on an indexing system we acquired for

team currently working to employ a file plan and suitable Electronic Records Management System. Assmann (IA 27/07/2011) explained the immensity of the work:

We have over two million files in the archive. I think there are 65 000 boxes in the backlog, and then I am not talking about all the boxes that are still strewn across storage rooms in all the SABC's regional branches, but only about the boxes we knew of when we built the area.²³

Assmann (IA, 27/07/2011) points out that although this "arrangement" of not archiving written material might have suited the SABC well in the past as it made it easy for documents of a sensitive nature to disappear, it is currently causing immense legal problems and hold-ups:

For years we could not exploit Springbok Radio because we did not have the contracts. We could not exploit the transcriptions because we did not have the contracts. Now with this action that we have started, the contracts are beginning to come out and we can make decisions. It was just one of those things that was completely inaccessible and that we are now trying to make accessible.

Until the 1980s, archiving at the SABC was not given a very high priority. This is illustrated by the fact that a lot of material was thrown away with the SABC's move to Auckland Park in 1975 without consideration of its archival value. The archive still keeps a low profile within the SABC structure.²⁴ The current manager of the Radio and Sound Archive, Bennie Jacobs, ascribes this to the fact that the archive is not a money generating department (Jacobs, BJ 25/07/2011). Ilse Assmann (IA 27/07/2011) points out:

this purpose. The next step will be to obtain a suitable Electronic Records Management System. This is being investigated at the moment" (Assmann, 2011).

²³ Interview material with Ilse Assmann has been translated from Afrikaans.

²⁴ Currently the archive is not a top priority at the SABC. The Media Libraries unit is situated within the Radio Broadcast Facilities department and falls under Technology and IT. Television archives, on the other hand, falls under Content Enterprise and television news archives falls under News. One of the main problems with this arrangement is that the general manager of the Media Libraries reports to Technology who then reports to Group. In other words the archive does not report straight to Group but has to rely on the enthusiasm of general managers from above, keeping the profile of the archive low (Jacobs, BJ 25/07/2011).

Our big problem is always, and this is true for any other archive or library or information service, top-management knows they need you but they are seldom sure what to do with you.

In order to enhance the profile of the archive within the SABC and make it more financially viable, a project has been initiated to consolidate all the archives (radio and television, print, audio and video), into an integrated Information Management and Archives Unit (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011). The proposed project will have a significant influence on the functioning of the archive internally as well as within the Corporation (Assmann, 2011).²⁵ Currently all of these archives function according to their own systems and protocols of selection, classification and arrangement. The Radio and Sound Archive of the SABC alone has to deal with an enormous amount of material pouring in every day from more than six radio stations. Consolidating the various criteria used for selection is therefore vital for the effective functioning of the archive.

3.4. Selection and appraisal in the SABC Radio and Sound Archive

The materials selected for preservation by the Radio and Sound Archive includes all major events of national importance. This includes festivals, opening ceremonies of parliament, state funerals, the speeches of State Presidents, Prime Ministers, and other prominent people in the economy, arts, religion, sports and sciences. It also includes a selection of programmes from all of the SABC radio services, such as dramas, features, actuality or entertainment programmes, interviews, discussions, music programmes, sport commentaries, talks, recitals and excerpts read from literary works by the authors themselves (*TM*, 1998:5, 10). In appraising their documents, the Radio and Sound Archive recognises the two Schellenbergian categories for determining archival value, namely evidential (or functional) and informational (or research) value.²⁶ In other words, material is preserved that will be of value to broadcasters in compiling their programmes, as well as for

²⁵ This project forms part of the SABC's turnaround strategy to make the company more financially viable and bring the SABC in line with the digital media environment. The push to move the archives from analogue to digital formats is a "critical funded component of the recapitalisation programme" (*SABC Annual Report*, 2006:53).

²⁶ See chapter 1, p. 28.

future scholars and journalists. However, determining archival value raises many challenges, amongst which is predicting what material will have value in the future. Bennie Jacobs, manager of the Radio Archive, explains (BJ 25/07/2011):

It is a big issue [...] you get certain programmes that don't really have archival value. Your problem [is] who decides what has got archival value, because for you it won't have archival value but for someone else it could have archival value. For instance, we don't really archive Metro-fm because it is a commercial radio station. But Metro-fm came back and said we are now ten years old, so we want clips of all our DJ's that we had, so now we sit with a problem. You don't have even one item of a DJ you know!

This uncertainty around “future value” is reflected in the contradictory language used in the *Training manual* of the SABC Sound Archive faced in appraisal: “The importance of the person, the *event*, or the information confirm archival value”; but, “a degree of crystal ball gazing is necessary to define whether the person commenting will become important in the field” (*TM*, 1998:69). A few pages earlier the *Manual* (*TM*, 1998:17) states that “the archival standards were determined scientifically, and they are always implemented when new material is selected. The basic principle is the irreplaceability or unrepeatable nature of the material, and the degree of importance of each recording”. The archivist should furthermore “be up to date with political, financial and social trends in order to be able to objectively assess the future values of current events. [...] It is vital that the archivist is capable of objectively assessing actuality. The News and Actuality archives have NO political, financial, or social agenda.” (*TM*, 1998:57) In using both “crystal ball gazing” and “scientifically determined” as notions to explain the processes and method involved in selecting material to be preserved, one of the fundamental challenges of appraisal comes to the fore: no matter how selection criteria are set up, the archivist will always have to use his or her own judgement and their perspective will therefore be central to the selections made. Since archivists are individuals with political and social views, their worldviews, personal interaction with the record creators and social and cultural environments will inevitably influence the archival record. Within the process of selection and appraisal the power inherent in archives is made plain and unavoidable (Harris, 2002:85). In appraising documents during the rule of the National Party, for instance, the politics of the time

became part of archival processes and collection through what was left out of the archive. Since the collection of the Radio and Sound Archive depends largely on broadcasted material, prohibited material was not archived. Jacobs (BJ 25/07/2011) notes:

Selection, especially before 1990, was determined by the state, when it came to the SABC. There were certain things that you couldn't touch. [...] there was a department that had a section where they would sit and select what would go out on air. So, for example, any song that had the word freedom in it, it wasn't right. With the archives, anything that dealt with black aspiration with black people and all that, it was never broadcasted.

Due to this, important events that reflected badly on the government, such as the Sharpeville Shooting (1960), the Women's March (1956), the Soweto Uprising (1976) and speeches by anti-Apartheid activists such as Steve Biko, do not form part of the archival collection (Jacobs, BJ 25/07/2011). In some cases, even when material was broadcasted, archival copies were sometimes sabotaged. Assmann (IA 27/07/2011) notes:

In the years when I started, you physically had to walk to the archive to collect the tapes and if there was a controversial tape, the journalist or programme director would have removed it before you got there. So in the process we lost a lot of material.

The archive thus became a reflection of, and complicit in, the political systems of the time through its omissions. The partial record that subsequently stemmed from the government's strategy of tightly monitoring broadcasts and removing records that did not match its ideology could be viewed as an example of the State's control (albeit indirectly) over the archival record. As Harris has pointed out "a key element in this exercise of hegemony was the state's control over social memory, a control which involved both remembering and forgetting" (Harris, 2002:69).

In order to broaden this partial catalogue, archivists at the SABC Radio and Sound Archive have a mandate to identify and collect material not in their catalogues (*TM*, 1998:4-5). This project has its origins in the *Living Archive Action* project that was instigated by the SABC Archives committee in the early 1980s. Initially its priority was to capture the background of

the SABC on record, and veteran broadcasters were identified for interviews (*Minutes Nr. 5*, 1982:2). By the late 1980s, archivists were less restricted in what they could record and used this system to fill in the gaps within the existing collection. Assmann recalls, for instance, that she took great effort in her capacity as light music archivist to record interviews with people who were in exile. She went to the Voëlvry concerts and music festivals “to record the things that were not broadcasted on the SABC during that time” (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011).²⁷ This project continued successfully until the early 2000s, but due to the financial crisis the SABC has been facing since then, this project can no longer be carried out effectively (Jacobs, BJ 25/07/2011). In addition to the oral history project, the Radio and Sound Archive is also actively involved in creating networks with other archives, whereby archivists are encouraged to make sure that they know about the existence of material that could supplement the SABC’s holdings (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011).

In the SABC’s current selection practices, everything that has been broadcasted from 2003 is kept on DVDs for legal purposes and for use by researchers or broadcasters. However, not everything is catalogued (Jele, RJ 25/07/2011; Jacobs, BJ 25/07/2011). During regular meetings, the “archival material is selected by the archivist in close collaboration with the heads and programme staff on the various services” (*TM*, 1998:3;15). These selections, called air checks, are then recorded by the main office (or tower) and collected by the archivist for cataloguing and preservation. Thus, apart from the Schellenbergian principles to determine archival value, some basic principles of macro-appraisal are also employed in the sense that the selection process takes place before the material reaches the archive.²⁸ Even though this pro-active approach to selection allows more effective archiving, it is restricted by the man-power and hours needed to catalogue these materials and contributes daily to the immense un-catalogued backlog of the Sound Archive. Retha Buys, (RB 26/07/2011) the archivist for the Afrikaans and English lifestyle programmes as well as Springbok Radio, states that:

²⁷The Voëlvry movement was driven by a group of mostly Afrikaans rock musicians including Johannes Kerkorrel, Koos Kombuis, Bernoldus Niemand and Dagga-Dirk Uys, who rebelled against the Afrikaner Apartheid establishment through their music. A large amount of their music was censored by the SABC (for more information, see Hopkins (2006)).

²⁸ Refer to chapter 1, p. 37.

The problem is, the amount of material that comes in per day is more than the hours we have to work – for half an hour’s material it can easily take you one to two hours to catalogue. You know, you have to listen and play it back to make sure you catalogue it correctly. So it is just too much. We are too few people. [...] The programmes that come in are just too much, you are working with 24 hour broadcasts. So it is huge! And the disadvantage is that there is material in the backlog that is just as important and as valuable but we don’t know about it. We don’t know that it is there. I recently came across some old Springbok Radio recordings that were lying there and I didn’t know about it. And we don’t find the time to go there and to work through the material that is there. It is bad.²⁹

Appraisal is one of the most important and most difficult tasks of an archivist. The *Training manual for the SABC archivists* (1998:7) notes: “The resources available for future research are, to a large extent, dependent on the judgement employed during appraisal”. The archivist, who has to rely on his/her intuition and knowledge to choose which material to preserve, is central to these decisions. Ilse Assmann (IA 27/07/2011) pointed out to the current writer that no matter how objective one aspires to be as an archivist, how strictly one’s criteria are designed for selection and appraisal or how experienced one is, “you inevitably leave your imprint”.

Although macro-appraisal eliminates some of the problems of determining archival value through documenting the processes of the present rather than predicting the future, Harris (2008:102-103) points out that appraisal and archival value will “always be, specific to place, time, culture and individual subjectivity. It does not dangle somewhere outside of humanity, immutable, pristine, transcendent. The appraiser creates, or re-creates, archival value with every appraisal exercise”. In our interview, Bennie Jacobs (BJ 25/07/2011) further illustrated this point:

- BJ I always say to my people, even the decisions that you make, you must make sure that you make the right decisions because your decisions influence the cause of history.
- LL What kinds of decisions?

²⁹ Interview material with Retha Buys has been translated from Afrikaans.

BJ Like decisions on what is it that you are keeping, and what is it that you are not keeping. Your decision in saying, this is not important, ok, let me give an example. One of the archivists – before [President Jacob] Zuma speaks at rallies, he will sing this song.³⁰ Now the archivist decides that the song is not important, I will only take the speech. Now ten years down the line, you want to give a speech in a context of that song, because that song, before he speaks, is a message. And that song shaped our history for the time that Zuma was president. Now you have decided that that song is not important. So history on that part, it's gone. So it means you have created history, in which way, in your way. And that is your problem. As an archivist you would have to realise that you actually have the most important job.

Even though archivists at the SABC Radio and Sound Archive are aware that they are complicit in the processes of power through their decisions on selection and appraisal, they cannot operate outside these parameters because of the archival system and the way it allows archiving to take place. Through selecting and appraising documents to be preserved, archivists bestow archival value on some records and deny it to others. Archiving as a process of judgement is intrinsically connected to certain modes of power.

3.5. Current selection of material pertaining specifically to music

The selection of material at the SABC Radio and Sound Archive is currently done by five subject specific archivists within the various portfolios that were created by Leon Endemann in 1984.³¹ The *Training manual* of the SABC Radio and Sound Archive stipulates various criteria for these portfolios and of particular interest to this chapter are the selection criteria pertaining to the two categories of “light music” and “serious music”. For “serious music”, selection criteria include the following headings: “composers”, “artists”, “young South African artists”, “foreign artists”, “musicologists”, “music for special occasions”, “talks”, “scarcity value”, “timelessness” and “relevance” (*TM*, 1998:62-64). The selection criteria for “light music” include “South African Artists”, “South African Composer”, “Foreign artists”,

³⁰ This is presumably the song that President Jacob Zuma became famous for singing before or after his speeches entitled “Umshini Wami”, translated as “Bring me my machine gun”.

³¹ The categories are “News and Actuality”, “Sport”, “Radio RSA” and “Music”. The latter is further sub-divided into “light music” and “serious music”.

“Interviews: South African Artists and Composers”, “Interviews: Foreign artists and composers”, “researchers”, “features, tributes, series” and “general”, which is further subdivided into “competitions”, “special events” and “78rpm records” (*TM*, 1998:64-67).

These subdivisions highlight some subtle yet vital differentiations made between these two categories and are revealing in terms of the value judgements inherent in them. For example, under “serious music” the scholarly function associated with music is associated with “musicologist”, while the equivalent function under “light music” is assigned to a “researcher”. This might point to the focus that existed in music departments and music studies in South Africa until the late 1980s whereby popular music was not institutionalised in music departments of the time, and was viewed pejoratively compared to classical or ‘serious’ music. Music education at university and school levels was strongly biased towards Western music and theory with the first course in Jazz and Popular music only established in 1984 at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Brubeck, 1993:303; see also Paxinos, 1986; Oehrle, 1990). The elevated position of Western art music is further emphasised by descriptive criteria such as “timelessness” and “relevance”. No equivalent categories exist under “light music”.

Indicative of the legacy of this focus, the *Training manual* notes that “light music” archivists face a huge challenge in archiving material by South African artists because “local artists have been poorly documented” and apart from commercial recordings, the “legacy of the years of culture ‘rankings’, [whereby] artists who did not fit into an archetypal profile or were socio-politically unacceptable, were marginalised” (*TM*, 1998:64). Further criteria for the selection of archival material by the “light music” archivist revolve around giving precedence to interviews, talks and discussions about subjects on which “there is little information” in order to “create a representative image of the artist/composer,” genres or a particular subject (*TM*, 1998:65-66). Archivists are also cautioned to keep in mind that “it is not only certain types of music, or certain musicians, that are of interest to the archivists, it is the sustained development and mutation of local styles as they reflect the society within which they develop” (*TM*, 1998:65).

The selection criteria for “serious music” stipulated in the *Training manual* are mainly concerned with the work of South African-born artists and composers and generally the performances of these works are “approved in principle as having archival value” (TM, 1998:62). Further criteria for consideration entail the “occasion, artist, location and quality [...] is it a *good* performance?” (TM, 1998:62, original emphasis). The archivist must further try to “present a representative image of the composer’s life and career” through archiving interviews and where necessary requesting that interviews be conducted (TM, 1998:62). Interviews conducted with musicologists, ethnologists, aestheticians, researchers etc. “are accepted unconditionally, especially if they deal with the South African scene. Interviews dealing with new trends and developments in composition, especially with younger composers and musicologists, are regarded as important provided that the interviewee can give an authoritative opinion” (TM, 1998:63). Furthermore “timelessness – anything of lasting value” and “any unique or rare recording” that has been researched to establish its uniqueness, has archival value and “should be approved unconditionally” (TM, 1998: 64).

The differences in the selection criteria for “light music” and “serious music” are telling. Serious music’s criteria revolve around the composer and voices of “authority” are given precedence along with “timeless” and “unique” material. Light music, on the other hand, is described as reflecting society, and archivists are encouraged to “fill the gaps” that exist in the current popular music collection. No mention is made of the music’s potential “timelessness” or “unique” qualities.

3.6. Catalogue and classification

The existing music catalogue of the SABC Radio and Sound Archive builds on the discrepancies outlined above, and turns them into descriptive categories. “Serious music” and “light music” are used as the two standardised categories within which various other classifications, contexts and metadata fields are placed. Originally the catalogue was built up out of about 120 000 index cards (TM, 1998:17). These were computerised in 1990, and practically all of the index cards have been added to the online catalogue (Jele, RJ

25/07/2011).³² This mainframe system functions with control fields that serve as standardising measures and open descriptive fields that provide context to the archival material.³³ These fields include details of the radio service, the specific programme, the producer, participants, descriptions of what the programme is about, broadcasting dates, and classification fields.³⁴ Classification of music happens in two phases: music is first categorised as either “serious” or “light” and then classified and described further according to genre (such as “traditional Zulu music”, “Afrikaans folk music”, “Choral music”, “Jazz- or Popular music”, etc.).

Although one may argue that the main division of “serious music” and “light music” could be motivated by pragmatic reasons, Beverley Parker (2008:57) points out that “while the use of such broad categories as ‘art music’ and ‘traditional music’ help us to describe and contextualise music quickly, they are part of a way of thinking about music that is far from value-free”. This is clearly illustrated in the division of music created by the SABC’s radio programming in accordance with state ideology. Hamm (1991:150) notes that the assumption underlying these programming strategies were “based on contemporaneous Eurocentric ideology: European music is ‘more advanced’ than non-western music; ‘natives’ will respond more readily to rhythmic than to harmonic or melodic elements”. Hamm further notes that traditional, popular, light classical and classical music were seen in “ascending levels of artistic and moral content” (Ibid.). Music genres thus carried strong ideological implications in terms of their supposed value and their use in the government’s racist strategies.

³² Since the card catalogue contained the same fields as the online database, the cards were easily fed into the system (Jele, RJ 25/07/2011).

³³ Apart from the descriptive field, all the fields are standardised. These standards are decided upon by the head archivist and technical team involved in maintaining the system and if at a later stage changes need to be made, this is possible by working with the technical team (Jele, RF 25/07/2011; Assmann, IA 27/07/2011).

³⁴ The various fields that are used to catalogue (music) is the a) Service, b) Radio Programme, c) Name and title of the programme, d) Producer, e) Participant Performers – all the participants in the programme, f) Class, (either serious or light music) , g) Concept – which gives a brief description what the program is about, h) Contents – detailed description of who sang what, duration of the song etc, i) Record Broadcast Date – the date when the programme was aired, j) Refer – here the classification is taken further to note the genre of the music, traditional, Afrikaans folk music, Jazz, Popular, etc. (Jele, RJ 25/07/2011).

This distinction in terms of archival classification also created various difficulties for the music archivist working at the SABC. Assmann, appointed as the first “light music” archivist in 1984 describes her job during that time as very hard:

It was very difficult for me, and at that time for Annalize, the serious music archivist, because we were the first archivists who had to divide the two collections. There were a lot of similarities. And the way to divide it was to listen to the sound. So you might say a black composer like Buthelezi is perhaps now classified as light, but you will have to go and listen to the music and reason for this. Just to go on his name will not work for you.

Similarly the current music archivist expressed her disdain for this system that classifies African music as “light music”, no matter the complex compositional level or intricacies of the music (Moshatana, FM 27/07/2011). This delineation further represents purely constructed categories, as does the further classification of the material into specific genres. McKay and Funjinaga (2006:2) has pointed out that many scholars have noted the severe limitations of genre classification due to the subjectivity inherent to assigning genre:

Not only can individuals differ on how they classify a given recording, but they can also differ in terms of the pool of genre labels from which they choose. Very few genres have clear definitions, and what information is available is often ambiguous and inconsistent from source to source [...] and individual recordings can belong to multiple genres to varying degrees.

The *Training manual* (1998:65) notes that in terms of genre classification “the possibilities are endless” and that “categorising the material is probably going to be the greatest headache”. In addition, Fabbri (1982:142-143) has noted that “the ideology of a genre is not to be defined as a vision of the world connoted by the genre, but as a system of values that form a hierarchy inside the principles of the genre [...] they tend to treat as natural what in actual fact is codified and conventional”.³⁵ The music that is subsequently classified as either

³⁵ Various scholars have illustrated that the notion of genre and music classification have had various political and ideological connotations in countries as diverse as Italy, Germany, Soviet Russia and South Africa. See for example the work of Fabbri (1982) and Muller (2008). For an extensive list of authors that engage with this issue see Lena & Peterson (2011:576).

“serious” or “light” and furthermore categorised in terms of a genre with unclear boundaries “inevitably privilege some views and diminish others” (Duff & Harris 2002:278). Within these descriptions and classifications the archivist is clearly moving into a realm “where power is exercised and where the dangerous processes of valorisation and silencing are unavoidable” (Ibid., 281).

The fact that these categorisations remained intact after the posts of light and serious music archivists merged in 1996 (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011), is a further indication of the power and rootedness of these classifications. Through employing only two main categories for classification encapsulating all genres of music, the SABC archival system became symptomatic of something other than mere ‘pragmatic’ classification. It developed into a system perpetuating a deeply rooted archival violence through situating and judging music in a pejorative way. The priceless archival material of Hugh Tracey for instance, who dedicated his life to the recognition of the value of traditional African music, is categorised by the SABC as ‘light music’. Whereas Tracey’s own archive can be viewed as a conduit of power (as argued in the previous chapter), in the SABC system he is subjected to a different politics of the archive. Beverley Parker (2008:58) noted that the criteria and value systems inherent in music classifications “affect our daily activities in that they implicitly affect the way we organize our lectures, concerts and libraries, as well as in the way we express ourselves when we lecture, write programme notes and make statements to the media”. These classifications at the SABC became a way of describing and pre-scribing the material in a demonstrably ideologically embedded and compromised system.

During my fieldwork at the SABC I witnessed the Record Library’s annual ‘weeding sale’ of recordings no longer deemed worthy of being kept. Again, the arrangement of discarded items on the tables around the room reflected the classification system described above. ‘Serious’ albums were neatly stacked in a corner on their own; elitist objects of interest to only a few *connoisseurs*. The rest of the recordings were scattered on tables around the room, completely un-organised and surrounded by a constant stampede of people.

3.7. Conclusion

Derrida has noted that “there could be no archiving without titles [...] without names and without the archontic principle of legitimization, without laws, without criteria of classification and of hierarchization, without order” (Derrida, 1996:40). These systems are an intrinsic part of archiving practice, and the systems archivists have adopted “fundamentally influence the composition and character of archival holdings” (Schwartz & Cook, 2002b:3). These systems carry the markers of their time and context, markers that can become visible, for example, in certain classification and selection practices and even in archival numbering systems.³⁶

What happens in a relatively new democracy when some of these naming practices, constructed within a particular ideological framework, are continued into the present? Since 1990, archives actively took part in transforming their practices to serve a democratic South Africa. Yet, as my fieldwork at the SABC has shown, some of the practices and systems that were shaped and formed during (and for) Apartheid, are still embedded in current archival practice. These cataloguing and classification systems are seen as ‘objective’ or ‘neutral’ and not subject to the imperatives of reform or transformation. Although one may argue that these systems do not hold the same value judgements today as they denoted under Apartheid, it seems inconceivable to argue that their continuation today is not informed by this history.

Parker (2008:68) has suggested that we should “reject the unreflective categorizing and valorising that results from our ingrained habits of thought and re-imagine multiple ways of contextualizing, describing and interpreting South African music in the future”. With a similar purpose in mind Hillary Duff and Verne Harris (2002) suggest a permeable descriptive system that does not acknowledge or dictate only one method of description, one type of provenance or one act of creation, but allows users to take part actively in the process of

³⁶ The numbering of the records at the SABC Radio and Sound Archives clearly indicates the segregation on racial lines that was employed within the archive during Apartheid. Recordings from the black radio services were for example numbered as BR (NS / 61)8, i.e. black, record, Northern-Sotho, the year 1961 and the record number, 8; while a record from Afrikaans Services would be numbered as A 76 / 14 – Afrikaans, year, tape number (TM, 1998:42-44).

annotating finding aids or adding descriptions. For them this permeability would “encourage the leaking of power” (Duff & Harris, 2002:279).

The proposed integrated Information Management and Archives Unit at the SABC might be suggestive of such a system. Whereas the archive used to collect broadcasted material for preservation, the new system will allow the user to become part of the collecting process and partly responsible for providing the basic descriptions. The material that is catalogued and preserved in the archive will be determined by the users (radio presenters) beforehand and subsequently they will also become part of the selection and appraisal process (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011). In this manner participation in and access to the archive will broaden.

A few short journal extracts

Red Tape and not finding what you are looking for

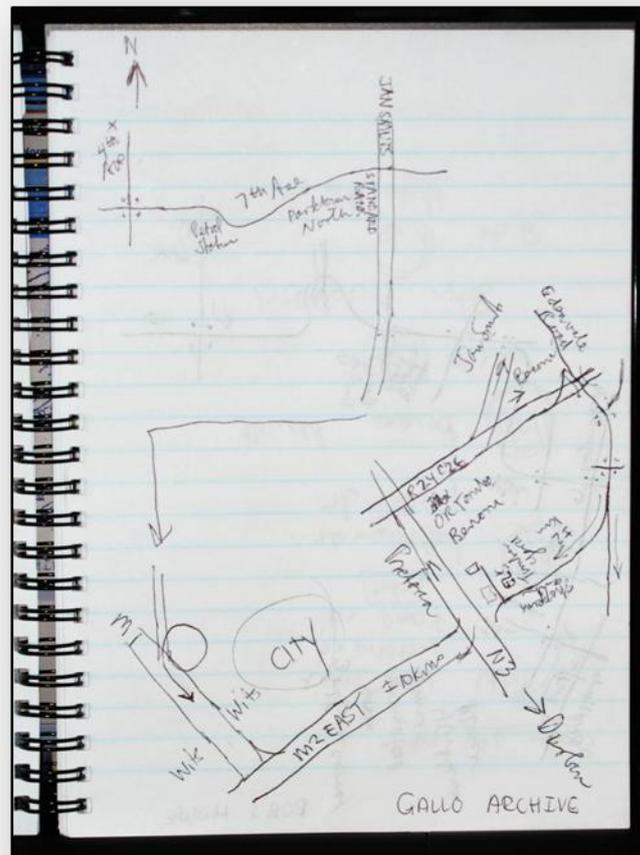


Figure 2. Rob Allingham's map of the location of the Gallo Record Archive vault, Johannesburg

1 August 2011, Guestroom, Johannesburg

I phone the Gallo Record Company to ask if I may get permission to see the archive today. Gallo tells me to call Rob Allingham. Rob then has to phone the Gallo Record Company to ask permission on my behalf to gain access to the archive. It is strange that even though he doesn't work there anymore, he remains my only access to the archive. It is so frustrating, there is no one else I can talk to.

4 February 2012, North Reef Road, Johannesburg

I have been driving around for hours, finally found the street on Rob's map just to end up at dead-man's door. I am here, in North Reef Road, but I cannot find the archive. I know it is here, but there are no signs to direct me to it. It is not meant to be found. Its content might just as well not exist. The archive is invisible. I have probably driven past it umpteen times.

5 February 2012, Johannesburg, O.R. Tambo International Airport

What exactly is an archive? Could it be an archive when it is just a silo, filled with material that will gradually disintegrate, material that cannot be accessed or used? What use, of what consequence, are documents, even the best kept documents, if they are not open and accessible to scholars and musicians or to the public?

Chapter 4
The Gallo Record Archive
A Tribute to Steam Trains



Figure 3: The first steam locomotive to arrive in South Africa, 1859, Cape Town, (van der Merwe, 2007).

4.1. Introduction

On 26 June 1860, the first scheduled journey for a train hauled by a steam locomotive in South Africa pulled out of the Durban station in KwaZulu Natal (Van Lingen, 1960:5,110).¹ People came from all over the surrounding countryside to board this marvel for a two mile journey from Market Square to the Point at Durban harbour (Holland, 1971:11). Named after its arrival from England as the “Natal,” this locomotive was active for fifteen years before being sold to a private owner (Ibid., 1971:20). After having been lost for many years,

¹ The very first locomotive in South Africa that ran on the first railway line along the Durban Bluff in Natal was not operated by steam power but hauled by oxen and operated in the 1850s (Van Lingen, 1960:2). The first steam locomotive was built by Robert Legg, City of London Engine Works, and later assembled by Henry Jacobs at the Market Square station in Durban (Ibid., 110).

the locomotive was found buried in sections on a farm near Port St. Johns and reassembled.² Today it is on display at the main station in Durban (Van Lingen, 1960:5). Although the Natal opened the first public rail service in South Africa, the first locomotive arrived in Cape Town on 8 September 1859 from Scotland (Holland, 1971:11). It embarked on its maiden journey on 13 February 1862 and was named, curiously enough, No. 9 instead of No. 1.³ Today it still stands as a national monument at the Cape Town station. The early twentieth century saw the introduction of diesel and electric locomotives in South Africa and the last steam locomotive was bought in 1968 (Durrant, Jorgensen, & Lewis, 1972:61).⁴ By 1992, almost all commercial steam locomotives were put out of service (Moore, 1998:27) and many of them have been preserved in museums or at railway stations for public viewing.⁵

Had it not been for steam trains, one of South Africa's biggest record and publishing houses might never have existed. At the age of 21, contemplating his future after having left engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand in his second year, Eric Gallo joined his railway contractor father where he was building a line from Durban northwards along the coast of Natal. It was here at Mtubatuba that he picked up a newspaper carrying an advertisement offering the Transvaal agency for Brunswick Records. All he needed was a down payment of one thousand pounds. This he borrowed from his father and so, in 1926, Eric Gallo opened a small retail shop in Johannesburg's Royal Arcade close to the city's busiest shopping thoroughfare. This humble enterprise was to flower into one of the biggest record conglomerates in South Africa (*Billboard*, 1977:3; Trehwela, 1980:34).

² For more information about how the train was lost and found again see Holland (1971:20).

³ This engine was built by Hawthorn & Company, Leith Engine Works, Scotland and used to run between Cape Town and Eersterivier (Van Lingen, 1960:110). Although it was the first locomotive to arrive, eight other locomotives had arrived between the time it took to assemble this locomotive and put it to use. It thus had to fall in line and was named No.9 (see Van Lingen, 1960:5).

⁴ In South Africa electrification and diesel trains were introduced in the early 1920s with Durban, Cape Town and the Rand gradually being electrified. Diesel locomotives were introduced on the South African Railway main lines in 1958 (Zurnamer, 1970:118).

⁵ Until recently, a few privately owned steam locomotives were operating in South Africa. These include the 5-star luxury Rovos Rail (still functional), the Outeniqua Choo Tjoe (closed in 2006), the Apple Express (closed in 2011) and until 2008 the Banana Express. One of the organisations in South Africa working towards preserving and restoring steam locomotives is Friends of the Rail (FOTR) based in Pretoria.

Steam trains, coincidentally, also brought Rob Allingham to South Africa and eventually to the Gallo record archive, where he established himself as one of the most significant archivists for South African popular music. After completing a degree in history at the University of California, Allingham left the USA in the early 1970s for South Africa – one of the few countries left in the world that still operated steam trains (Allingham, RA 30/07/2011). He quit the railways in 1979 because they were going to start replacing steam locomotives with diesel and electric trains, and spent time working in the film industry (in front of and behind the camera), before he went back to steam trains, running the Banana Express (a tourist train) on the line from Port Shepstone to Harding with a group of fellow enthusiasts. Allingham shared an equal passion for collecting records and had by this time built up a substantial collection of South African recordings. However, he found the dearth of information on these recordings frustrating and started researching the musicians, their music and the recording companies involved in making them. In order to gather information Allingham tracked down as many musicians as he could and frequently travelled up to Johannesburg to interview them (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). With his collection of music now estimated to contain one of the largest private collections of 78 rpm shellac records of South African releases,⁶ and his wealth of knowledge and research, Allingham was soon recognised as a respected authority on local music.⁷ In 1990, he became the first and only archivist thus far of the Gallo Record Archive.

The Gallo Record Archive is considered the most comprehensive archive of South African master tapes in the world (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011; Allingham, RA 30/07/2011; Allen, 2007 & 2008). Lara Allen (2007:268) points out that “it owns perhaps as much as 60% of the sum total of all recordings ever made in South Africa over the past seventy-five or so years”. As the archive of one of South Africa’s biggest record conglomerates, the Gallo Record Archive functions within various power structures, including political, corporate and commercial.

⁶ Ilse Assmann, for example, pointed out that between the collection of 78rpm at the SABC, those held at NALN (donated by Andre Roux) and Allingham’s collection, they should come as close as possible to present a comprehensive image of all the 78rpm released in South Africa (Assmann, IA 27/07/2011).

⁷ Rob Allingham’s expertise on popular music and the recording industry in South Africa is widely acknowledged. Almost every seminal book written on popular music in South Africa references or thanks him for his contributions. For examples see Erlmann (1991, 1996); Ballantine (1993); Allen (1993); Meintjies (2003); Anderson (2001) and Coplan (2008).

These structures have shaped, and continue to form, what is today the Gallo Record Company and have had a profound impact on the shape and content of the archive. One outcome of the interaction between these power structures is that due to financial mismanagement at the company that owns the Gallo Music Group, Avusa, and the subsequent financial cut-backs, the Gallo Record Archive was left without an archivist from 2008 until 2012. Since the archivist was key in allowing scholars access to the archival holdings, I was not granted access to the archive (a fate which surely also befell other scholars and academics during these years). The reason provided for first being denied access to the archive, was that Avusa was re-assessing its financial assets and I would get in the way of the auditors. Allingham, who telephoned the company on my behalf, made it clear to me that there was nothing more I could do but try again when the situation had settled down. When Allingham was re-appointed as a consultant to re-organise the archival vault on a contract basis in March 2012 (Allingham, 2012), such an opportunity arose and I visited the archive for one day in July 2012.

Due to the fact that I could not gain access to the Gallo archive during a crucial period in my research, and on a later date could only afford to spend one day at the archive, my time in the field was severely limited. It consisted of interviews with Allingham and driving through Johannesburg trying to find the Gallo Record Archive (even if it would have meant only seeing it from the outside). Subsequently this case study relies heavily on the four interviews I conducted with Rob Allingham in August 2011 and February 2012 and the subsequent correspondence we exchanged.

The Gallo Record Archive is located amongst various warehouses. The archive is well-organised and contains mostly master tapes, a few pneumatic and DAT tapes and a growing collection of CDs, as well as folders holding recent statutory notices and deeds of assignment. The shelves are marked with shelf numbers that are linked to a computerised system on which searches can be carried out. The oldest master tapes in the vault date from 1951 and from the small random sampling we did in the archive vault, the material seems to be in good condition. In this case study I will pay particular attention to the historical narrative of the Gallo Music Group to demonstrate the particular conditions that allowed for the creation of the company and its archive. This leads into a discussion of the current

political, corporate and commercial environments in which the archive is situated, to explore how it affects the shape, function, content and use of the archive. Finally, the classification and description systems put in place by Rob Allingham are investigated against the backdrop sketched by the preceding sections in this chapter.

4.2. The building of an empire

Three years after Eric Gallo opened the Brunswick Gramophone House in Johannesburg, the Brunswick label claimed their first big hit in South Africa with the advent of the talkies and Al Jolson's hit song "Sonny Boy" from one of the first (full-length) talking movies, *The Singing Fool* (Trehwela, 1980:34). That same year, Gallo saw an opportunity to record South African music and in 1930 he started sending small groups of artists to London to record their music at the Metropole Company under Gallo's newly-formed Singer and Gallotone labels (Allingham, 1999:639; Schwartz, 1974:96). When the Metropole Company went out of business, Eric Gallo bought all their recording equipment, and in 1932 he – along with the sound technician from the Metropole Company – set up South Africa's "first proper recording studio" (Anderson, 2001:38).

Initially they set up the recording studio in the basement of an old bioscope-café in Johannesburg (Trehwela, 1980:34; *Billboard*, 1977:5). However, due to the noise level, they moved the studio in 1933 to 160 Market Street and soon produced their first recorded hits: "Waar is Moeder", recorded by David de Lange in 1934 and "Mbube", recorded in 1939 by Solomon Linda's Original Evening Birds (Allen, 2007:267). In 1938 they moved their headquarters to the corner of Troye and President street (Meintjies, 2003:77), and recorded and promoted artists including Miriam Makeba, the Manhattan Brothers, the Skylarks, Hugh Masekela, Dollar Brand (later Abdullah Ibrahim), the Flames, Malambo Jazz and the Jazz Ministers (*Billboard*, 1977:5). At first, Gallo continued to press these local recordings in Britain and ship them to Cape Town (Trehwela, 1980:45; Muller, 2008:41). However, this was a costly affair and due to the fragile nature of shellac 78rpm records, many were broken during the long voyage. The additional increase in import controls after the Second World War further added to the cost, and Gallo decided to set up a local pressing plant at Roodepoort, outside of Johannesburg. The plant started producing its first 78rpm records in

1948, changing to LP disc pressing in 1952 (*Progressus*, 1978:6; see also Trehwela, 1980:45; Muller, 2008:41).⁸ It was here at the Roodepoort pressing plant where Hugh Tracey set up his offices and initially worked as the head of Gallo's African Unit (Madiba, 2009:1).⁹

In 1946 Gallo became a public company and changed its name to Gallo (Africa) Ltd (*Progressus*, 1978:6). Gallo also entered the music publishing business during this time, at first printing only the overseas music hits, but later moving on to include Afrikaans songs and indigenous black music (*Billboard*, 1977:3,7; *Progressus*, 1978:6).¹⁰ Until the late 1960s, Gallo owned the distribution rights of only one major record label, Brunswick Records.¹¹ However, this started to change when Gallo entered into a partnership with Polygram International for the joint control of Trutone Records in 1967 (*Billboard*, 1977:5).¹² Gallo continued to buy a number of other local and international companies (along with their back catalogues), including USA, Troubadour Record Industry, Teal, Meteor, RPM and Tusk (Allen, 2007:267; Allingham, 1999:640; Meintjies, 2003:78; *Billboard* 1997:54).¹³ This list

⁸ The Decca Record Company provided the pressing plant with four presses and technical personnel (Schwartz, 1974:114). The first disc pressed was "Whispering Hope" and it sold 250 000 discs in two months (*Progressus*, 1978:6). In 1952 the plant started producing LP discs and by 1953 produced one-and-a-half million discs annually. This increased to two-and-a-half million per annum by 1961, and around 1969 the plant was producing an annual figure of five million records per year (*Progressus*, 1978:6).

⁹ In addition to Hugh Tracey, Gallo also used African talent scouts and producers. Among the first employed was Griffiths Motsieloa (Coplan, 2008:163). By the late 1950s other record companies that had been established in South Africa, such as Troubadour and Teal (a local branch of EMI), made use of the same system. (Allingham, 1999:639).

¹⁰ Ralph Trehwela was hired in 1949 to start this company called the Music Publishing Co. of Africa (Pty) Limited, later changed to Gallo Music. Two sister companies, Mavuthela Music and Jabulani Music, were created in the early 1970s to focus on indigenous black music as "a vital part of the scene as several South African radio transmissions are directed specifically to this market", and with the takeover of Carstens-de-Waal Publishing in 1970, also included Afrikaans language songs (*Billboard*, 1977:7; *Progressus*, 1978:6).

¹¹ Although Gallo bought their first Independent company, USA in 1960, the first major label they acquired was the Phonogram label through Trutone Records (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012; Allingham, 2003:724).

¹² Different dates are listed for this acquisition. Allen (2007: 267) cites 1963 as the year of the Trutone acquisition, Meintjies (2003:276) cites 1962, while the *Billboard* special edition (1977:54) celebrating Gallo's 50th anniversary, cites 1967.

¹³ The dates for the acquisition of these companies are given as USA – 1960; Troubadour – 1969; Teal – 1976; Meteor 1973/74 and RPM – 1985 (Allingham, 1999:640; Allingham, 2003:724; Allingham, RA 04/02/2012; *Billboard*, 1997:54; Allen, 2007:267; Meintjies, 2003:78). Gallo obtained the Trutone recording company when the owner, Arthur Harris, left after the Sharpeville massacre, and sold Trutone to Gallo. (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). When Gallo bought Trutone (who held the licences for both Philips and Polydoor – which later merged to form PolyGram) they ran Trutone as

represented the greatest accumulation of international record licences owned by any major record label or record organisation in the world (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). Acquired over a period of seven decades, these record labels meant that Gallo owned (and continues to own) about 85% of South Africa's recorded music until the 1980s (Allen, 2007:267).

The possibility of owning so many record labels was mainly created by the political situation in South Africa during the Apartheid years. International labels were discouraged to own branches in South Africa due to the international cultural and economic boycotts (Allen, 2007:268), and subsequently an alternative system was established whereby a joint-venture company would be created, 50% owned by Gallo and 50% owned by the overseas record label – all under the name of Gallo (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). The international record companies could therefore still reap the benefits of the South African market without overtly doing business there. Within this system Gallo owned 50% of labels such as Polygram (which later became Universal), Columbia CBS (which later became Sony), MCA, Virgin, A&M, Island and Motown. The only major labels they did not own were EMI, RCA and WEA (Warner Electric Atlantic) (Allen, 2007:268).¹⁴

After countless mergers and buyouts, the South African recording industry was dominated by three companies from the late 1970s, namely Gallo, who held the major licences of Sony and Polygram; Tusk, who held the licence for WEA (which later became the Warner Music Group); and EMI SA, who was an affiliate of EMI Music (Goldstruck, 1995:49). However, this balance shifted with the transition to democracy in 1990, when it was deemed acceptable for the major licences to return to South Africa. The joint-venture companies were broken up and Gallo lost both its major licences. Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) points out that in a

an independent company, called the Trutone Division, with its own studio and staff. This division was run as a joint-venture company with Polygram owning 50% of the division. When Gallo merged with Teal in 1976, they merged Teal with Trutone and it became the Teal-Trutone division (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). With this merger the Teal management was retained and took over Gallo, but kept the more prestigious Gallo name (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).

¹⁴ EMI maintained their own record company in South Africa from the early 1950s. The RCA label was owned by Teal from 1956 until 1983, after which it was transferred to another local company, Priority Records. Priority Records was later bought by EMI South Africa. WEA maintained their own label in South Africa from the early 1950s, until the political pressure to boycott South Africa became too much. Subsequently they arranged an employee buyout in the mid-1970s and the name changed to Tusk Records, who maintained the distribution rights to the WEA label in South Africa (See Allen, 2007:268; Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).

very short space of time, Gallo went from having everything to having nothing. Since a big record company cannot survive without foreign licences, the Gallo Music Group retaliated by buying the Tusk Record Company in 1997, thereby obtaining the licence for Warner Music in South Africa (Coetzer, 2008:19; *Billboard*, 1997:54).¹⁵

In 1983, Eric Gallo sold a majority share in the company to Premier Milling, a subsidiary of Anglo-American. Anglo-American is a South African mining and financing conglomerate (Allen, 2007:272; Allingham, 2003:723). After the 1994 elections, Anglo-American stripped away some of its non-core assets, including the Gallo Group, to form Johnnic Communications in 1996 (Allen, 2007:272; see also Coetzer, 2008:19). Allen (2007:272) notes that these changes were wrought “in response to the political impetus towards establishing a black economic elite [...] and to please the equity market, which prefers smaller, focused operations to large conglomerates”. Johnnic Communications, which is owned by a “coalition of black business groups and trade unions” (*MDDA*, 2009:42),¹⁶ changed its name to Avusa Limited in November 2007 and was listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in February 2008 (*Avusa corporate overview*, 2011).

Avusa became one of the dominant companies in the South African media industry, owning more than 23 national, regional and community newspapers and over 32 magazines in consumer, business and specialist fields; digital and broadcast enterprises; cinema multiplexes; distribution licences; books and maps operatives; and music and manufacturing producers, publishers and distributives of pre-recorded music (*MDDA*, 2009:43).¹⁷ However,

¹⁵ In 2006 an agreement was reached between Gallo and Warner Music that the Warner Music licence will belong to a newly incorporated company, Warner Music Gallo Africa of which Gallo owns 40% (*Johnnic Annual Report* 2006:11).

¹⁶ The *MDDA* is a report commissioned by the “Media Development and Diversity Agency” to look into the trends of ownership and control of media in South Africa. It is entitled “Trends of ownership and control of Media in South Africa” (2009).

¹⁷ Avusa is one of the six organisations that dominate the South African media industry along with Caxton/CTP, Naspers (Media24), the Independent Newspapers Group, Kagiso Media and Primedia (*MDDA*, 2009:14). Avusa’s largest stake-holder, the Mvelaphanda group, owns 25.5 % of Avusa and the balance is owned by other public shareholders. Avusa’s assets are housed within the following companies: Avusa Media Ltd; Avusa Retail Ltd; New Holland Publishing (Pty) Ltd; Avusa Entertainment Ltd; Gallo Africa Ltd. (*MDDA*, 2009:45). A broad overview of Avusa’s assets will include national newspapers such as *The Times*, *Sowetan*, *Daily Dispatch*; *Business Day* (50% owned), *The Herald*, *The Sunday Times* (50% owned) and online titles such as *TimesLive* and *SowetanLive*.

due to mismanagement and the economic recession of 2009/2010, Avusa ran into financial trouble. Its shares plunged from an initial R40 in 2008 to R22/25 in 2011 (Bruce, 2011). In order to salvage the company, plans were forged to strip Avusa of its non-core assets, which could include the Gallo Music Group (Radebe, 2011; Allingham, RA 30/07/2011). Already in 2007 Lara Allen had noted that company politics plays a significant and destructive role in the running of the Gallo archive (Allen 2007 & 2008). With a renewed shift of owners immanent, the future of the company and its archive is again hanging in the balance.

4.3. The formation of the Gallo Archive



Figure 4: The Gallo Record Archive vault, (Lambrechts, 2012)

Magazines include *Car Magazine*, *Getaway*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Wine*, *Financial Mail*, *Elle*, *Elle Decoration*, *Home Owner* and *Longevity*. Avusa furthermore controls Exclusive Books, Van Schaik's retailers, five major publishing companies and distributing licences including Random House, Struik, Struik Christian Books, Zebra and Umuzi. It also owns Nu Metro and licences from Hollywood and Bollywood, as well as distribution and retail licences of 20th Century Fox, Disney, Warner, the BBC and Universal (*Avusa, Corporate Overview*, 2011).

The Gallo archive was established in 1990 during a vital turning point in South Africa's history, a time when the focus was on transformation and the heritage sector started to look at ways to represent the "new" nation (see for instance Hamilton *et al.*, 2002). During this time, Geoff Paynter, the head of Gallo Africa's publishing division, realised the commercial value that an archive such as Gallo could have and effectively created a post for Rob Allingham within the publishing company as the Gallo archivist in 1990 (Allingham, RA 30/07/2011). However, establishing the archive as a functional department was difficult.¹⁸ Within the Gallo Music Group there were three separate and competing record companies that held their own master copies: RPM (with connections to Virgin and MCA), the Gramophone Record Company (who had a 50% joint-venture company with CBS) and Teal-Trutone (who had a 50% joint-venture company with Polygram) (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012; see also Allen, 2007:268). None of these companies were remotely interested in the idea of starting a Gallo Record Archive. Only Geoff Paynter, who ran the music publishing company, believed in the value of the archive. Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) notes: "The three record companies just thought this was the stupidest idea. They practically called it 'Paynter's folly'".

Paynter eventually managed to convince the company of his vision and the archival post was created within the publishing division. Allingham points out that two of the main reasons for situating the archive within the publishing division (which was concerned with composers and not with records) was that Geoff Paynter was the only one of the executives who was interested in the idea. Secondly, each of the three competing record companies had to be serviced equally and it was therefore decided that an independent entity was to house the archive (Allingham, 2012a)

One of Allingham's first big tasks was to design a storage facility for the master tape collection. These masters used to be stored at the vinyl pressing facility at Steeledale, Johannesburg, which was closed down in 1992 and eventually sub-let to a new tenant (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012; Allingham, 2012a). The management's hand was forced when

¹⁸ Before the archive was created officially, there was a vault that contained all of Gallo's masters. However, the archive was not a functional division before the post of archivist was created for Allingham in 1990.

the new tenant demanded the removal of the tapes from the premises and Allingham was given the task of designing a storage facility. Subsequently a state-of-the art storage facility based on international standards and specifications derived from master tape archives around the world, with exact temperature and humidity control mechanisms, steel shelving and fire-proof measures and facilities, was built in 1994 (Allingham, 2012; Allingham, 2012a). The master tapes were moved there in 1995 (Allen, 2007:271). However, due to internal company politics, this archival storage facility was torn down a few years later.

This puzzling turn of events came about after Johnnic Entertainment announced a restructuring plan in 2001 to try and curb financial losses (*Johnnic Entertainment Restructuring Announcement*, 2001). Accordingly, the company was split into two competing sections, namely “the businesses that focus on content and those that support its distribution” (Ibid.). The content providers included Gallo Record Company and Gallo Music Publishers and the support providers (which included Manufacturing, Distribution, Warehousing, Debtors, and Royalty Administration) were renamed as Entertainment Logistics Services (ELS) (Ibid.; Allingham, 2012a). This arrangement broke up the vertical structure of Gallo whereby every stage of the record producing process was either directly owned by Gallo or controlled by Gallo ranging from studio recording and pressing, to distribution and marketing (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). Due to the restructuring, the vault that Allingham designed – originally built on a Gallo-owned premise, now belongs to ELS, “who’s business decisions were no longer in concert with Gallo’s interest” (Ibid.). ELS subsequently tore down the vault to extend their warehouse and the material was moved to what used to be the old cassette plant (Ibid.). Although there is some degree of humidity control, no fire proofing or fire prevention strategies are in place.¹⁹ The current storage of the vault is still located on ELS premises, who are now demanding that the material be moved somewhere else (Ibid.). In order to deal with this development, Gallo is looking to digitise their holdings and get rid of the masters in order to save on storage space and fees. The primary concern is thus not archival, i.e. digitising intended to improve accessibility or preserve material more effectively for the future, but commercial. Allingham, who was

¹⁹ This would include, for example, locating the archive 20 meters from the closest wall so that in case the warehouse were to burn down, the archival material would be safe (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).

subsequently re-hired in March 2012 to oversee this project, has estimated that he can reduce the volume of the Gallo vault by at least 50% by getting rid of all the foreign copy-masters that were sent to South Africa to press records locally that were issued overseas (Allingham, 2012). Although the company would just have these masters discarded, Allingham has suggested that through an auditing process, the records be sent to the national archive (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).

As a recording company, Gallo is not primarily interested in conservation, but functions as a commercial enterprise driven by musical hits and big turnover. Within this environment, the Gallo Record Archive was not established to preserve or make its material accessible, but to commercially exploit the Gallo catalogue and legacy (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). In creating this archive during the country's transitional period to democracy, Gallo believed that the "music of the past would be recognised and valued by the country's new citizens, and would therefore be bought by them" (Allen, 2008:32). As Allen (2008:32) points out, the archive's function was thus "to convert the cultural and symbolic capital inherent in its holdings into economic capital". However, the re-issues from Gallo's archive sold very modestly, and for the first couple of years it lost money before it started to break even (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). Nevertheless, the archive gradually started to generate an income through licensing of archive masters to companies outside of Gallo who wished to make compilation albums (Allingham, 2012a).

However, after 1994, sales started to increase, especially "the sales of older Afrikaans-audience music began to take off" and "the Gallo Record Company became increasingly agitated about how the Archive was licensing 'our' music to their competitors" (Allingham, 2012a). When management found out that other companies were making money from their material, a clampdown was enforced on Allingham's activities, preventing him from giving licences to any third parties as well as severely restricting the re-issue of material. The result of this was a period of six years during which almost no re-issues were produced from the Gallo Record Archive (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). This situation changed in 2005 when new management was appointed who saw some value in re-issuing Gallo's catalogue. This resulted in the re-release of over 100 albums in two years (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012; Allen, 2007:272).

Apart from the re-issue of material, Allingham took it upon himself to identify and fully annotate and catalogue the masters in the vault. Many of these were unmarked or contained only patchy details regarding content or production history. However, finding all of these details were complicated by various factors such as the non-delivery of assets by the record companies Gallo acquired, the disposal of valuable material relating to the recordings as well as by haphazard archival techniques. Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) notes:

When a master was sent from overseas, all of the details were there, but when it came to a local master, if the engineer was feeling a little lazy that day, or the assistant wasn't keen, the details just weren't written [...] because we have it on a card index system somewhere.

However, parts of the initial card index system were thrown away when the Record Company moved in 1989 to the newly built Gallo Centre in Rosebank. During the relocation, a storeroom where all Gallo's records, original photographs, studio log-books, statutory notices, the index card system etc. were kept had to be cleaned out. Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) recounts that an employee was charged with deciding what to keep and what to throw away: "He basically threw out just about everything – he was one of those guys who walked around saying '63 cents per square meter, that's what it costs' and so it all went!"²⁰ Without these statutory notes and the studio logbooks it has become very difficult to identify the unmarked masters in the Gallo vault. Most of these masters have no other information attached to them except for a master number. Allingham points out that there is a large quantity of unidentified masters that can only be identified through finding the records and using the catalogue number on the record to try and find the master tape (Ibid).

In some cases, recordings produced by Gallo are extremely difficult to find. The records sold in the regional markets during the 1950s, for example, are particularly hard to come by.²¹ Allingham notes (RA 04/02/2012) that within these markets, for instance, "Xhosa material

²⁰ Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) notes that after the move, what was left of Gallo's paper archive is still a mess, with large amounts of material either having been taken by employees or thrown away.

²¹ Ballantine similarly notes that Gallo "does not possess an archival collection of the thousands of records of urban black popular music the company produced or sold before the 1950s" (Ballantine, 1993:3).

would only be sold in the Transkei, or Shangaan material would only be sold north of Pietersburg". All these masters are in Gallo, but Allingham (Ibid.) points out that it is virtually impossible to identify them or to know where they are, since there is no catalogue and the material was never advertised. Unfortunately Gallo never kept a library of its records, a decision that would have facilitated this process greatly. Gallo's library was only established in 2004 (Allen, 2007:270). Even in rare cases where record companies bought by Gallo had record libraries, these did not always end up in the Gallo vault. A case in point is the Teal Record Company. Geoff Paynter, who worked for Teal in the 1970s before he joined Gallo, built up a library of every local and international LP the company had released during his time there. However, when Gallo bought Teal in 1976, the LP library was not delivered as part of the assets because it had been sold to the Hillbrow Record Library to make up for lost revenue during a bad quarter (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).²² In addition to not actively keeping a library, Gallo never kept record of the album sleeves of the records it released, and some original sleeves of albums are nearly impossible to find (Ibid.).

During all of Gallo's acquisitions and mergers with other companies, non-delivery of assets substantially influenced the contents of the current archive. When Gallo bought Troubadour in 1969 for example, less than a dozen of their masters arrived at Gallo out of a catalogue of more than 200 Afrikaans LP's and 3000 African singles (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). Allen (2007:270) points out that apart from the 1300 African singles and 30 Afrikaans records owned by Allingham and the 50 records at the SABC, "there is no way of telling what more than 50% of the Troubadour catalogue consisted of." The back catalogue of Teal Records, one of EMI's local subsidiaries before it merged with Gallo in 1976, was also severely damaged during a fire at the EMI storage facility in 1973 where all the masters recorded by EMI and Teal from 1956 to 1972 were kept (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012; Allingham, 2012a). There is thus a significant quantity of intellectual property owned by Gallo that is not backed up by masters or by library copies of the published records, "a huge amount of stuff that Gallo owns but doesn't have access to" (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).

²² According to Allen (2007:271) the Teal library contained thousands of LPs, some of which are almost impossible to find today.

At present, masters are still being added to the archive and every record that is released by Gallo, locally or internationally, is catalogued and shelved after it comes back from the production plant according to the system that Allingham set in place. Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) notes that keeping masters is becoming less of a necessity in the digital era where you can use a production DVD as a primary source. However, during the time when analogues were still used, most record companies kept their masters, either in “master stores” or archives (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).

4.4. Catalogue and index system

In order for the Gallo Record Archive to answer to its commercial imperatives, it had to be organised so that master tapes could easily be accessed for potential clients inside and outside the company. The subsequent indexing system Allingham devised, after the previous one fell into disarray and parts of it were thrown away, only contained six fields: album title, track, date, performers, catalogue number and master tape number (Allingham, RA 30/07/2011). It was thus built strictly from information that could be taken off the back of album covers. There were two main objectives for Allingham in setting up the system in this manner. First, he wanted to stay clear of generic classification which is “subjective to a certain degree”, and second, the staff who were loading the metadata into the system did not have the time to actually listen to the music in order to identify the genre (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). Allingham (Ibid.) points out that the system was based on “totally definable information, so if you had a master number, you could find the master. If you had a catalogue number, you could find the master etc. Those were the parameters.”

In practice, this system worked well because the archive it served was never intended to be publicly accessible. The system served its archival purpose, in other words. In principle, what the system demonstrates is that the avoidance of subjective genre classification came at the price of general accessibility. Implementing this system in a public archive would make it difficult to use for people who did not know exactly what they were looking for. Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) points out that “you could not press a button and say, I want to call up every maskandi master, there was no musical classification whatsoever”. Similarly “if you wanted to make a 1980s disco compilation” it would be near impossible if you did not have

the artist's names or track titles (Ibid.). But "if you wanted to do an Elton John compilation, you could call up every Elton John master, because you got the name and it is linked" (Ibid.).

However, before being processed in this system set up by Allingham, what would eventually become archival material was created within the systems and practices of the record industry which, amongst other things, created a complicated grid of numbering systems. These numbering systems further serve to limit possible users to "those in the know". Allingham explains that when you search for a specific track on his computerised system, it will not show you whether it was an original or a copy master, and sometimes the specific track "could effectively be three or four generations down the line from the original" (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). Every time an analogue copy is made, sound quality is lost (White, 1996:168) and with many compilation records producers would not work with the original master. Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) explains:

What they would do is they would have in their library a copy of the seven single, and so they would [...] send those to the studio. Then the studio would make a copy of that, and then that would become the LP. So from the tape-master to the seven-single is one, from the seven single to the tape is two, from that to the LP is three, so you are three down already. And in some cases it got worse than that – there would be the one LP and then there would be a greatest hits LP, and then they would go back to the LP and just make a copy from that – then you are five down! And it happened with anything that had any kind of success in the 1950s/60s, so you had to know, you had to actually trace it back to the source. If you knew what you were doing, you could actually look on the screen and do it.

However, tracing a source-master is not always easy. One source-master, a ten inch reel, could contain as many as six different singles from six different artists, on six different labels (who could also have different prefixes) only with catalogue numbers.²³ The reason one source-master was often used for different artists was that due to expensive studio time, the standard practice was to get a group of artists together during the same session who would all record one or two singles. In this way the musicians could also session for each

²³ For example, Gallo changed the prefix of its catalogue numbers for African issues from GE to GB in 1951 (in the catalogue this roughly falls around GE 1277 or GE 1278). Prior to that GE was used for both Afrikaans and African issues (Mogotsi, Connor, Rasmussen & Patterson, 2002:124).

other, further minimising cost (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012). In addition to the confusing array of artists, labels and prefixes, these masters were not always properly catalogued, and the only way to identify them would be by working backwards from the record or consulting a statutory notice or a catalogue. Unfortunately, all the studio log books and most of the statutory notices were thrown away in 1989 (Ibid.).

The architecture of the archival system at Gallo clearly reflects the practices, numbering systems and cataloguing of the record industry in South Africa that now also form the backbone of the index and cataloguing system set in place by Allingham. But also within Allingham's system, formulated as simply as possible, one finds that "descriptions inevitably privilege some views and diminish others" (Duff & Harris, 2002:278). Even though Allingham tried to stay clear of what he saw as pitfalls in other descriptive systems, what becomes clear is that "no approach to archival description, no descriptive system or architecture, can escape the reality that it is a way of constructing knowledge through processes of inscription, mediation, and narration." (Ibid., 2002:275).

As demonstrated above, the Gallo archive was not created to allow access to its holdings, but was established as a commercial enterprise to be exploited. The archival system that was subsequently set in place functionally reinforces this purpose: instead of aiming to make the material easily available, it serves to close off the archive to all but expert knowledge producers. Derrida refers to the marks made by the "people, and the institutions, who produce the archive" as the "language" of the archive that is "the beginning of the very project of the archive, the very institution of the archive" (Derrida, 2002:64,66). Following Derrida one could argue that because of the particular "language" of an archival system, the functional commercial archive could become complicit in the oblivion imposed on material by the same archive when it is viewed as a national asset with a public function.

4.5. Archival value

The core assets of a record company lies in its catalogue, in the recordings it owns and can continue to release into the market and sell. Subsequently the value of the material in the Gallo Record Archive is primarily determined by its commercial value. This is far removed from Schellenberg's two categories, namely evidential and informational value. In public statements from the Gallo Music Group concerning the Gallo Record Archive, the company seems content to boast about the "priceless archive of over 275 000 masters" (*Avusa Integrated Annual Report, 2011:17*), without considering its cultural value.²⁴ Allen (2008:29) similarly notes that it does not seem as if the company is considering "the contribution the archive could make to national heritage" (Allen, 2008:29). With a vault containing approximately 150 000 South African titles, some of which would be near impossible to find anywhere else (Allen, 2007:270; Allingham, 2012), the value of the Gallo Record Archive to the South African society is inestimable.

It is important to refer here to the different perspectives on preservation and access between non-commercial and commercial archives. Edmondson notes that non-commercial archives "tend to view their collections as cultural objects" and their motivation to "preserve and provide access arises from perceptions of cultural value and research demand" (Edmondson, 2004:21). In contrast, commercial archives "are engaged in a form of asset management, and preservation priorities are determined by marketing imperatives" such as the re-issue of albums (*ibid.*; see also Harrison, 1987:31). However, even though the Gallo Record Archive is a privately owned entity, the Gallo Music Group was built up during a time when the skewed political policies of South Africa greatly benefited their situation. Allen points out that "these extraordinary near-monopoly circumstances, where one local company controlled the distribution of all but three of the major western labels, could only have happened under peculiar political circumstances such as those engendered by

²⁴ For instance, in a recent article in the *Billboard Magazine*, Ivor Haarburger, the managing director of the Gallo Music Group until 2008, points out that Gallo has built up a catalogue that includes 85% of all recordings made in the country prior to the mid-'80s (Coetzer, 2008:19) Haarburger's successor, Lazarus Serobe, referred in the same article to the commercial benefit of the Gallo Record Archive noting how the repackaging of material from the catalogue "has seen us through tough times" (Serobe in Coetzer, 2008:19). See also *Johnnic Communications Annual Report, (2006:14)*; *Avusa Integrated Annual Report, (2011:17)*.

Apartheid and the struggle against it" (Allen, 2007:268). Due to these circumstances, the Gallo Music group owns the majority of South African recordings until the 1980s, which creates strain between the "effective curatorship of public heritage versus the drive for private commercial gain" (Allen, 2008:30).

Does the company's history not engender a responsibility towards the public of South Africa to make their holdings accessible? The question is, of course, whether one can expect any form of social responsibility towards South African music and the scholarly community from a commercial record company such as Gallo? In response to this question Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) notes that the primary imperative for a company such as Gallo is sustainable commerce: "virtually every record company since the beginning of the record industry has hit a brick wall. [...] If you really believe a company has that sort of social responsibility, what happens when they no longer have the money to sustain it?" (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).²⁵ In another response to the question, Veit Erlmann (1991:xix-xx) has noted that even though these "representatives of private capital" have played an unashamedly public role in shaping South African musical history the same effort is not spent on "efforts to preserve the evidence of that heritage". This preservation, I argue here, includes ensuring that the material is stored correctly, and open to users. Hence the relevance of decisions pertaining to archival systems, also with regard to an archive that remains in private ownership.

Due to the commercial imperatives of the Gallo Record Archive, the only way researchers could get access to the Gallo vault was through the archivist, Rob Allingham, who realised the informational value of this archive for scholars. Not only did he figuratively hold the key to the Gallo vault, but Allingham's broad knowledge about the record industry, both local and international, and his knowledge about the archive itself and its systems, makes him invaluable to the scholarly community as well as to the archive and its holdings in terms of

²⁵ Financially it is getting harder and harder for record companies to survive. For example, apart from a few independent record labels, the global record market was owned by five major labels, Warner, BMG, Polygram International, EMI-Virgin, and Sony. However, Sony bought BMG, Universal first bought Polygram and in November 2011 bought EMI which means that the global market is currently dominated by only three companies, namely the Warner Music Group, Sony and Universal (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012; Leyshon, Matless & Revill, 1998:10).

identifying material.²⁶ However, Allingham has helped only “scholars who were serious and had specific and definite requests”, from the Gallo vault and also from his private collection of music and documents (Allingham, RA 30/07/2011). People with general requests, wanting to listen to records or learn about the history of African jazz for instance, were shown the door (Ibid.). In one interview with him, Allingham (RA 04/02/2012) noted:

I am happy to help focused requests [...] I don't know if you want to call it social responsibility, I did not really think of it as being responsible but there's only so much time, and you know [...] given the logistics you could never have an easily accessible situation. If sometime in the future, it's all on a disc, and you could pull a disc and say well have a listen, it might be different.

Since the archiving system was not set up to allow access to its content, one can understand Allingham's reservation in helping with “general requests”, but this does raise serious issues regarding the gate-keepers of South Africa's musical past. The position of the Gallo Record Archive and its archivist is unstable and fragile within the Avusa Company. The only force behind the protection of this archive is private capital and the consequence for scholarship is significant: a privately owned commercial company acts as the custodian of a significant portion of South Africa's recorded musical past and has the power to open or close the archive, hire or fire the archivist, in an instant.

4.6. Conclusion: An archive in suspense

In conclusion, I turn now to Michel de Certeau and simultaneously to the steam trains of my title and my introduction. Like the de-commissioned steam trains that, many years ago, took Eric Gallo to Mtubatuba where he read the advertisement leading to the establishment of his music empire and that brought Rob Allingham to South Africa to live his steam train dream, the archive produced by Gallo's empire and eventually curated by Allingham ended

²⁶ For instance he notes that, “I can go down and I know every prefix, I know every Sony prefix [...] in those days it was Columbia CBS with an ASF prefix. The ASF prefix is a mixture of local and overseas recordings, but I know all the engineers, I know all the producers, and I know all the overseas record producers as well. So I could actually pull out a master and tell you who was who” (Allingham, RA 04/02/2012).

up as a problem of storage, an unwelcome by-product of music-as-commerce, a logistically challenging reminder of something that once had a function, but now only exists as a storage place and its contents.

De Certeau (1988:117) provides us with a striking dual dynamic to use when thinking about archives, namely “space” (*espace*) and “place” (*lieu*). Place is considered as a stable concept in a “distinct location, a location it defines,” it “excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location”. On the other hand, De Certeau considers space as something fluid with “none of the univocity or stability of a ‘proper’.” Space is “in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it [...] In short, space is practiced place” (Ibid.). An archive is first and foremost a place, a location. A “place” is signified “through objects that are ultimately reducible to the being-there of something,” an immovable object (Ibid., 118). However, like the railway line that “allows us to move through” places (Ibid., 112), archival systems should provide the ‘flow’ within an archive from outside to inside, from one box of material to the next. It should be what facilitates the making of connections and the production of knowledge. Yet, when this system is conceived within commercially limited, bounded parameters, I argue here, the archive is frozen into immobility. It remains “place” as opposed to becoming “space”. The contents of such an archive are permanently de-commissioned.

The railway, however, also functions in a connective capacity: the placing of railway lines “define, categorize and regulate” space (Lennon, 2004:2). This setting up of borders becomes a way through which place “can be delimited”, it can be owned and can serve “as the base from which relations with an exteriority [...] can be managed” (De Certeau, 1988:117).²⁷ This creation of a place allows “the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that become possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated” (Ibid.). Through being the biggest record company in South Africa for a number of decades, Gallo managed to define the local record industry, and delimit a section of it as their place. In doing so they have managed to

²⁷ De Certeau points to these “exteriorities” as “targets or threats (customers or competitors, enemies, the country surrounding the city, objectives and objects of research etc)” (De Certeau, 1988:117).

privatise a large part of the South African musical heritage.²⁸ Through establishing their closed archive they subsequently planned to capitalise on their “property” by “renting” this heritage back to the public through re-issues and compilation albums (Žižek, 2012).²⁹ Yet, clearly the capitalist mindset of guarding assets and only valuing its monetary worth has not paid off.

The archive never managed to make large amounts of money. It can be argued that the commercial imperatives of the company and the record archive would have been better served by envisioning the archive as a space. Shifting their practices to something that resembles responsible capitalism would mean a coming to terms with the past – an opening of the archive. The financial rewards from material within the archive itself might have been substantially more if the public were aware of its existence and its importance in preserving South Africa’s national heritage. Ironically, then, one could argue that because this archive is currently a closed place, it is not fulfilling its commercial potential. It is instructive that, without the informational and evidential concerns characterizing the work of scholars and academics, the commercial potential of the archive cannot be fulfilled.

This chapter asks for corporate responsibility in the recognition of music archives of national importance. Furthermore, it advocates the empowerment of archival knowledge sources, such as Rob Allingham, in the construction of archival systems that will liberate material and allow South African music history to be explored and written with the rich recorded history of well over seven decades. It issues a challenge to think of the archive as a “space” rather than a “place”, a circulation and flow of stories, ideas and sounds. Such an archive would encourage the creation of new knowledge that could lead to an un-balancing of the current

²⁸ Within the South African constitution South African’s are guaranteed a right to information. This right is encapsulated by the Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000 (PAIA). Harris (2007:338) points out that this act “which came into operation in March 2011, defines the parameters to the right in relation to information held both by public and private bodies”. Its effective implementation is however hampered by various factors and few scholars or public sectors have the time or legal representation to move through this process (see Harris, 2009a). Scholars could however apply for help from the South African History Archive, an NGO that specialises in making information available.

²⁹ For the concept of privatising of intellectual property and appropriating the rent that flows from this privatisation, see Žižek, (2012).

power structures within which the largely invisible, closed and inaccessible Gallo Record Archive is suspended.

Describing the sound of a train, De Certeau (1988:112-113) writes:

There is a beating of the rails, a vibrato of the windowpanes – a sort of rubbing together of spaces at the vanishing points of their frontier. These junctions have no place. They indicate themselves by passing cries and momentary noises. These frontiers are illegible, they can only be heard as a single stream of sounds, so continuous is the tearing off that annihilates the points through which it passes.

In describing the movement of the train in terms of sounds emanating from the machine, De Certeau gives us another link between the Gallo Record Archive and the steam train. Not only were Eric Gallo and Rob Allingham “transported” to their respective futures by these monuments of a previous era of travel, but their journeys were also journeys in sound and towards what became the core of South African popular recorded music produced in the twentieth century. This music, like the steam trains that journeyed “towards” it, deserves to be heard and not only to be looked at.

24 February 2012, Melville Beach, Kwazulu-Natal - Hero worship

David Marks is an incredible man, and the stories he has to tell! Woodstock, the Free People's concerts, the Market Café, Brenda Fassie in King's Park stadium, Roger Lucey ... He is almost seventy, yet he stands tall and imposing, a striking picture of pride and strength with his cowboy hat, beaded bracelets and long white hair. As he shows me his collection and plays some of the recordings I cannot help but stand in awe of what he has been a part of, and played a role in sustaining. What I see is one man's journey through life: recorded, preserved and in shambles.

I am working through some files David gave me, but I keep on looking over my shoulder to the room where part of the collection is kept. The archive's door is standing open because David is scuttling in and out getting and replacing material. The archive creates an intriguing presence in the house. Like the watchful dead, I can feel its eyes on me the whole time I am working. I know that I am romanticising this archive, and I should not. This is an academic enterprise, after all. But what happens if one takes the romance out of archives, stop dreaming about the secrets they are bound to hold? What will be left but gloomy, dusty boxes filled with dust-mites that cannot wait to devour the past?

At the same time I cannot help but wonder if this archive is really as valuable as David would like me to believe. On his website, politicians, musicians and even an academic or two refer to its value, but why has no-one been willing to sort, catalogue and store this archive? Why has no institution accepted responsibility for this heritage? A crazy thought, I know. Of course this collection is valuable: recordings, photographs and diaries of a single individual and his extraordinary life, a man who also happened to record an important part of South Africa's history. But why has no one picked up on this archive and actually done the work? Am I missing something?

Chapter 5
The Hidden Years Music Archive
The permanence of loss

“If it murmured or moved, we recorded it” – David Marks (2006)

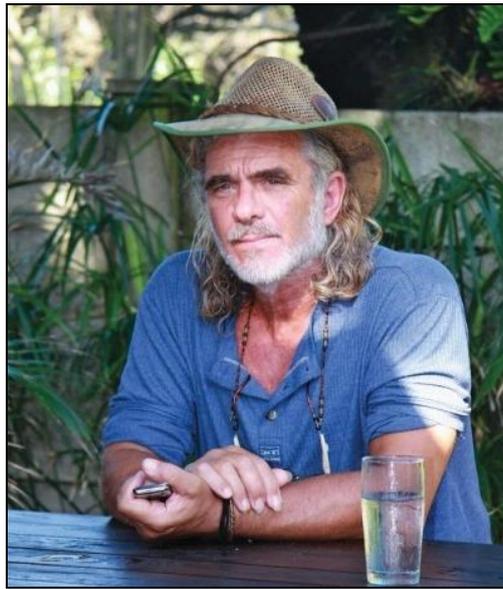


Figure 5: David Marks (Sinkins, 2011)

5.1. Introduction to HYMAP

Apart from the mainstream record companies and publishers such as the Gallo Music Group, EMI South Africa, the Teal Record Company and Tusk Records, a few smaller and more peripheral record companies were active in South Africa from the early 1970s to the 1990s. These included Shifty Records, the 3rd Ear Music Company, Mavuthela Music Company, Sunshine Records and Satbel Records.¹ Of these companies, perhaps the most

¹ Shifty Records is owned by Lloyd Ross and functioned from 1983 till the mid-1990s (Ross, no date); Mavuthela Music Company was created in 1964 as a Gallo subsidiary and run by Rupert Bopane (Lotay, 2009); Sunshine Records was established in 1971 and owned by Grahame Beggs (Anderson,

marginal was the 3rd Ear Music Company, largely because they were involved with non-commercial acts that other companies did not want to produce (Anderson, 2001:61).

The 3rd Ear Music Company was founded by Ben Segal and Audrey Smith in 1967 as an independent record label and music publisher. They were joined in 1970 by David Marks as sound engineer, and one year later he took over the ownership, recording, production and publishing of the 3rd Ear Music Company (Marks, 2002). The aim of the company was to serve the local folk musicians and “to protect, promote and produce South African live-music performances that was not heard within the mainstream record and broadcast industries” (*National Research Foundation Grant*, 2005). Various live and studio recordings were subsequently made by the 3rd Ear Music Company, eventually representing diverse musical styles including “Urban Folk, Township Jazz, Country Rock and Maskanda” (*National Research Foundation Grant*, 2005).

What makes 3rd Ear Music significant to scholars is the tremendous collection of sound recordings (music and spoken word), photographs, posters, programmes, documents, press cuttings, notebooks and diaries that were collected by the company from 1960 to 1995. The collection has been estimated to contain around 175 000 items, amounting to seven tons of material (Marks, DM 03/11/2011). In order to make the material from the 3rd Ear Music collection available and accessible to a wider public, David Marks launched the Hidden Years Music Archive Project (HYMAP) in 1990 (*Proposal to the National Research Foundation*, 2008). However, a lack of substantial- and sustained funding has hindered the HYMA Project from establishing the infrastructure needed to preserve this historical collection and to date it remains largely un-catalogued and unorganised. The collection, kept at a location on the south coast of KwaZulu-Natal, also lacked proper storage and the material rapidly deteriorated due to the salt air and humidity characteristic of south coast conditions. Consequently, the South African Music Rights Organization (SAMRO) intervened to try and save the 3rd Ear Music collection from further deterioration and in 2008 part of the collection was moved to their archival vault in Johannesburg.

2001:67) and Satbel (*Suid-Afrikaanse Teaterbelange Beperk*) established a music division including a record company in 1973, managed by Robyn Taylor until 1984 (*Satbel*, 2012).

My encounters with David Marks and the HYMAP collection occurred over a period of seven months, roughly from August 2011 till February 2012, during which time I met Marks twice and saw his entire collection. This includes the section held in Johannesburg (Gauteng Province) and the rest of the collection kept at Marks's home in Melville Beach (KwaZulu-Natal). I first met Marks in November 2011 when he came to Stellenbosch at the invitation of the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS) to start investigating the possibility of moving his collection there.² I played a part in setting up the meetings between the various stake-holders on behalf of DOMUS, and I thus met Marks in a very different context than the other archivists in my case studies. Our interactions happened on my terms, in my academic space and discussing a possible future for his collection thus gave me an unusual position of power. Our conversations during these two days were quite general in relation to his collection, including numerous stories of Woodstock and 'the road', but some key issues were mentioned in passing that I was able to explore in more detail during our second meeting. This took place at his house in Melville Beach from 22 February to 25 February 2012. During the time that elapsed between these two meetings, as well as after the second meeting, we exchanged regular emails, with Marks updating me on new developments and possibilities for his collection. Perhaps because of these regular exchanges and the personalities of those involved, our interaction during the second meeting was more familiar than my other ethnographic contexts allowed.

Although I enjoyed the easy rapport this established in our interviews, it did cause some tension in the almost parental manner Marks and his wife, Fran Marks, were treating me. They were kind and generous in sharing their food, home, time and stories with me but I was left with serious qualms about writing up the results of our interactions. I was increasingly aware of the "implied audience" (Wong, 2008:83) of this piece of work, in this case not the academic community, but Marks and his family. As Portelli (2006:41) puts it, "no matter what their personal histories and beliefs may be, historians and 'sources' are hardly ever on the same 'side'". I found myself having to compromise either my relationship

² On 4 November 2011 the current writer, David Marks and Stephanus Muller, the Director of DOMUS, visited Craig Mathew at his Virtual History Archive (VHA) in Woodstock, Cape Town. The purpose of the visit was to determine the feasibility of digitising Marks's archive. After the meeting Mathew was sceptical about the value and feasibility of productively working with Marks's archive. However, DOMUS's involvement in the future of the archive has not been ruled out.

with Marks or my academic credibility, wanting to leave things out, or not write down what I thought.

The first time I saw part of Marks's collection was on 2 August 2011 at the SAMRO archive in Johannesburg, where a large part of the HYMAP collection had been moved into storage. I was allowed to browse through the material freely, but could not do much more than stare in bewilderment at the chaos on the steel shelves. Tapes were unrolling and getting in the way of the rollers of the archival shelves, a white fungus was growing on some of the tapes, black plastic bags filled to the brim with newspaper cuttings were stuffed onto shelves, and files were spilling over. In short, it was a complete mess, and there was no way of making sense out of any of it. The only form of order I could gather was that it was arranged according to material type on the shelves: the tapes, LP sleeves and recordings were stacked in rows, while plastic bags and large quantities of paper files covered the rest of the space designated for this collection.³ In comparison the material kept in Melville Beach seemed more organised and was being used on a daily basis by Marks. Due to his efforts, the material at his house is the only part of the collection that is partly accessible to scholars upon request.

The HYAMP collection has been collected over a period of 45 years, spanning the height and demise of Apartheid. However, it does not concern itself with the orthodox anti-Apartheid narrative of struggle heroes and protests. Instead, the HYMAP represents musicians who protested through singing "about the struggles of everyday people living their everyday lives in a very unusual time" (Dardagan, 2011:8). It is through recording these concerts and events that the HYMAP collection became representative of a social context that exists on the periphery of South African history. Yet it is an archive that strongly reflects the effects and lingering after-effects of the power of the Apartheid dispensation. In order to explore the collection and its content, I will briefly sketch the history of the 3rd Ear Music Company, which will give some indication of what material is collected therein. Apart from the interview material I gathered from David Marks, the 3rd Ear Music website (run by David

³ It should be mentioned here that SAMRO did not offer to catalogue the collection, but merely to move it into suitable storage. They moved this collection at their own expense to their archival vault in Johannesburg and it was only meant as a temporary arrangement until such time as an institution would take the collection and properly pre-sort and catalogue it (Kotzé, NK 02/08/2011).

Marks), an interview I conducted with the head archivist at SAMRO, Noelene Kotzé, a small section in Anderson (2001) and a few newspaper articles, no other sources on the history of the 3rd Ear Music Company and its archive exist. Subsequent to the history I will proceed with an exploration of the archive, its inception as a formal entity and its current state and function.

5.2. History

From its establishment in 1967, during almost fifty years of being active in the South African folk and popular music landscape, the ambition of the 3rd Ear Music Company remained to record and document, wherever possible, local South African music. The co-founder of the company, Ben Segal, was the manager of an upholstery business in Johannesburg and an avid amateur musicologist who served as the chairperson of the (then) *South African Folk Music Association* from 1964-1970. He made his first recording in 1965 of the group called Malombo on his domestic quarter-track tape deck (Marks, 2004; 2012c). Audrey Smith, a publisher for Teal Records, joined Segal in 1967 and they continued to make informal recordings, mainly in Segal's lounge. In this manner they started to promote folk musicians such as Count "Wellington" Judge, the Malombo Jazz Makers, Allen Kwela, Kippie Moeketsi, Jeremy Taylor, Aaron "Big Voice Jake" Lerole, Colin Shamley, Mike Dickman, Cornelia and Creda Mutwa (Marks, 2003).

In August 1969, two years after its establishment, the 3rd Ear Music Company became an officially registered company (Marks, 2002). Apart from being a legal requirement in order to benefit from commercial sales, official registration also served a political purpose: the music Segal and Smith were recording included black township music and white English protest folksingers and they did not want to draw unwanted attention to their recording activities from the Apartheid government at that time. Marks notes that "the reason for forming 3rd Ear Music as a company was to escape the glare of it [...] it made us look like any other commercial company" (Marks, DM 23/02/2012).

David Marks joined the company in 1970 and took over the ownership, recording, production and publishing of 3rd Ear Music a year later (Marks, 2002).⁴ Soon after 3rd Ear Music was established as a legal company, Segal and Smith started pulling out of the company, mainly because it was not making money (Marks, 2012c). Smith still helped Marks with the administration involved in publishing records but eventually started her own company, Reveille Records. Segal remained active in the folk scene, organising festivals and events along with Marks and recording folk singers' events and songs, but had to focus on managing his father's upholstery business (Ibid.) Marks thus remained the only active partner of the company and the sole proprietor and director. Not surprisingly then, 3rd Ear Music became a vehicle to facilitate his projects and ventures. From 1971 onwards, the life of David Marks and that of the development of 3rd Ear Music Company present an entwined history of a man and his passion that led to one of the biggest collections of folk music in South Africa.⁵

5.2.1. The house that Master Jack built

Marks started his music- and recording careers while working on the gold mines in Johannesburg from 1963 to 1968 (Marks, DM 24/02/2021).⁶ During his time working underground as a blaster, he started writing songs, some of which became popular (these include "Mr. Nico", "Mountains of Men", "Fairygold", "Hey Mister" and "Master Jack" (Marks, 2002). After the mine management saw some of the cartoons Marks were drawing, they instructed him to create Fanagalo instruction manuals for foreign miners.⁷ However,

⁴ During his time actively serving as music director of 3rd Ear Music, David Marks was also involved in various other organisations, including founding the *Natal Folk Music Association* (NAFMA) in 1968 in Durban with Bob Wilson and Ginger Seipp. He also served as the chairman of the *South African Folk Music Association* (SAFMA) from 1971-1973 and formed the *Musician's Association of Natal* (MANA). He was also the co-founder of the *Natal Cultural Council* (NCC) (Marks, 2002).

⁵ David Marks collected mostly South African folk music in the style of American folk music.

⁶ David Marks was born in 1944 and grew up in District Six, Cape Town. He started to work on the mines right after school in 1963 and worked as a blaster (he had a blasting license). The first band in which he played while still in high school was called *The Boys Band*, and when he went to work at the mines after school in 1963 he continued to play in a variety of other bands. He spent five years working in the mines in Grootvlei, Welkom and Springs (Marks, DM 24/02/2012; Kockott, 2008).

⁷ Fanagalo can be viewed as a pidgin language. It originated as a lingua franca on the mines in South Africa and is primarily based on a simplified version of Zulu, combining Xhosa, English and Afrikaans words.

some confusion arose over his drawings and he was instructed to supplement them with sound recordings, for which purpose the mine provided Marks with a tape recorder (Marks, DM 24/02/2012). It was with this tape recorder that Marks made his first recordings of folk singers in Johannesburg. During an interview with Richard Haslop (2004), Marks recounted the story:

at that time I was singing with my friend Mac who also worked underground with me, we had a little duo and we used to sing, inspired by Jeremy Taylor by the way, greatly inspired by him, we used to go to the Troubadour every Tuesday night, open mic night. And one evening I snuck the tape recorder out, this was about 1966/65 and I recorded Keith Blandell, Des Lindberg, John Rice and Kyle Blather and I was so impressed by that one microphone recording that it seemed to have become a habit. I always kept diaries and journals anyway, so now I had the audio to go with the notes.

After leaving the mines in 1968, Marks spent a brief time working for Hugh Tracey at ILAM in Roodepoort where he transposed the tapes in the library that would be sent to Gallo (Marks, DM 23/02/2012).⁸ Later that same year Marks travelled to the USA where he found work with Bill Hanley, the owner of the Hanley Sound Company, based in Boston. While touring with this company, Marks gained invaluable experience as a sound engineer working for musicians such as The Rolling Stones, Joan Baez, the Turtles, Jimi Hendrix and at the Newport Folk Festival. His first live mixing event was at the legendary Woodstock festival of 1969 for John Lennon's *Plastic Ono Band* (Marks, 2002). Marks took photographs of all these events and concerts which became sought after in international publications.⁹

⁸ Marks claims that his time at ILAM "formally introduced me to Malombo music." Hugh Tracey had been documenting the group from the start as he considered them as "being un-industrialized enough to necessitate serious archiving" (Marks, 2004).

⁹ The photographs Marks took from the mixing desk of the John Lennon band are rare images that captured the whole band (including the drummer Allen White) together on stage. These have been used in various international publications (see Kane, 2007; Blaney, 2005; Littleproud & Hague, 2009; Kessler, 2006).

Upon his return to South Africa, Marks joined the 3rd Ear Music Company and established 3rd Ear Sound.¹⁰ The establishment of 3rd Ear Sound was made possible through Bill Hanley, who donated his sound system to David Marks in 1970 (Marks, 2003).¹¹ This system was made up of bits and pieces of gear that was used at the 1969 Woodstock Music and Arts Fair and became known as the Woodstock Bins (Marks, 2004). This sound system became a regular feature at most of the music festivals in South Africa, as well as various music festivals in Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique, Malawi, Lesotho and Botswana (Marks, 2002).¹² 3rd Ear Sound formed a “vital part of the label’s functioning” and through its sound system various live events were recorded to become part of the Hidden Years Music Archive (Marks, 2004). Some of these music festivals were funded by the royalties Marks earned from the numerous popular songs he wrote, especially his international hit song, “Master Jack”.¹³ The royalties of this song was also used to open a variety of mixed folk clubs and coffee bars around Durban and Johannesburg between 1971 and 1983 and funded various musicians’ concerts (Marks, 2012c; 2002). Subsequently 3rd Ear Music became known as “the house that Master Jack built” (Marks, 2002).

¹⁰ He was joined a few years later by Toma Simons, Don Williams and Jurgen Zahringer (Marks, 2012c).

¹¹ This Hanley and 3rd Ear Sound System was “a unique state-of-the-art system for that time in Africa” from 1970 to 1985 (Marks, 2003). For more information about the sound system and the role it has played in Northern America as well as later in South Africa, see Kane, (2011).

¹² The first show where the Woodstock Bins were used was in 1971 at the Eyethu Cinema in Soweto for the Brooke Benton tour of South Africa (Marks, 2002; 2012b). Other international and national musicians that Marks provided the sound for in the mid-1970s included Mungo Jerry, Uri Geller, Spike Milligan, Margaret Singana, Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Johnny Clegg (Sinkins 2010). The sound system was a McIntosh system and Marks later handed the Woodstock Bins over to MSC Sound Company which later became ProSound (Marks, 2002).

¹³ “Master Jack” was recorded by the music group *Four Jacks and a Jill*. In 1968 they hit the American charts with this song, rising to number 18 on the Billboard hot 100. This song was no.1 in South Africa, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Malaysia and Zimbabwe (Trehwela, 1980:76-77).



Figure 6: David Marks behind his mixing desk at a Free Peoples Concert, University of the Witwatersrand, 1974 (Black, 1974).

Further financial investment continued to come from Ben Segal who personally financed many events and recordings (Marks, 2002). One example of such a privately sponsored festival was the *Free Peoples Concerts* conceptualised by Marks and Tony Campbell, a photographer who was closely involved in documenting 3rd Ear Music events. The first of these festivals was held in 1970 on a deserted beach near Balito outside of Durban, a highly restricted area used by the South African Defence Force for target practice (Marks, 2012a). Approximately one hundred people came to the first concert but in the following years the concert was moved to the University of the Witwatersrand where the numbers steadily rose to 15 000 people in the mid-1980s (Marks, 2012a; 2012c).¹⁴ These were inter-racial events organised under the auspices of the *South African Folk Music Association* in collaboration with various student organisations. Marks believes these festivals provided an important outlet for new South African music and songwriters at the time (Marks, 2002).

Apart from these festivals, Marks was also involved in setting up and running various annual concerts and clubs. This included working alongside Mannie Manim and Barney Simon at the Market Theatre where Marks and his wife, Fran Marks, ran the Market Theatre Café in Johannesburg from 1976 till the early 1980s (Marks 2012a). Almost all of

¹⁴ The *Free Peoples Concert* was held on the Wits campus from 1972 to 1975, banned in 1976 and 1977, and continued again from 1978 to 1986 (Marks, 2012a).

the above mentioned festivals were recorded by Marks and rarely was a performance given at the Market Theatre – be it theatre, musicals or musicians – that Marks did not capture it on tape (Marks, 2004). However, recording all of these shows meant that finding the money to buy enough tape became a huge burden. Marks remarked that because they used so much tape it often led to “much financial angst at home; to buy bread or tape?” (Marks, 2004). Marks (2004a) recounts how he and some of his friends starting scrounging for tape in order to get by:

We used to go around [to] commercial recording studios and even the SABC on occasion, [...] to pick up the floored edited magnetic-tape off-cuts, [...] we’d then spend hours splicing old tape together; much of the Hidden Years Archive is recorded on that kind of tape.¹⁵

During the 1970s, 3rd Ear Music released a limited number of commercial albums of singer/songwriters described by Richard Haslop as musicians “who flourished artistically, if not commercially,” and who “were pretty much ignored by the mainstream industry” (Haslop, 2010). Most of these releases were live recordings, of which the first relatively successful album release was of the band Hawk, recorded live in Ben Segal’s lounge in 1971 (Marks, 2012c; Marks, DM 24/02/2012).¹⁶ Some other artists released on the 3rd Ear record label included Colin Shamley, Mike Dickman, Jannie Hofmeyr, Paul Clingham, Brian Finch, Roger Lucey and John Oakley-Smith (Haslop, 2010). The compilation album *Bringing back the good times* (1974) was one of the earliest studio recorded albums released by 3rd Ear and included tracks by Lofty Schultz, Matt Lange, Mike Dickman and Kenny Arthur. Other studio recordings that were released in the 1970s by 3rd Ear included groups such as Raven, Flibbertigibbet and Brian Finch (Marks, DM 24/02/2012).

¹⁵ Splicing refers to a technique used to either fix a broken video or audio tape by sticking the two pieces back together or creating a tape from off-cut pieces that were discarded during, for example, the editing process. A special adhesive is used in this process as other glues damage or destroy the tape.

¹⁶ The first group that 3rd Ear Music issued on the commercial market was Malombo, at that stage including Julian Bahula, Abe Cindi and Lucky Ranku. The album was entitled *Music of the Spirit*, a live desk mix (Marks, 2004) that Marks recorded at Cy Jaffe’s “Television Centre” in 1970. Although South Africa had no television at that stage, Jaffe had the idea of training young people for its eventuality in South Africa and therefore the name “Television Centre” (Marks, 2012c). Although this album was 3rd Ear Music’s first commercial release, it did not do well commercially. Marks notes “we couldn’t even sell 50 copies. I paid for the pressing of 150 units, and gave away about 100” (Marks, 2012c).

3rd Ear Music as a publisher had a few minor hits, such as Laurika Rauch and David Scobie, but due to the relative obscurity of these groups and musicians, sales were never very good. Marks (DM 24/02/2012) notes that because they were “realising stuff like Roger Lucey or Madosini you are not going to get anywhere, but it did not matter.” Subsequently, it was never possible for 3rd Ear Music to give artists big record deals and many artists, initially recorded by 3rd Ear Music, moved on to bigger deals and commercial companies including groups such as Spirits Rejoice, Juluka and Malombo (Anderson, 2001:8).¹⁷ For many musicians who did not manage to find record deals of their own accord, 3rd Ear Music functioned as a scouting agency – finding the musicians and in many instances introducing them to established labels in South Africa (Marks, 2003a). In turn for making these connections between musicians and various record companies or producers, 3rd Ear Music bargained for “the retention of the publishing rights – for one song per album at least” (Marks, 2003a). Around a 1000 plus songs, of which Marks owns the masters in the Hidden Years Music Archive, belong to the 3rd Ear Music Publishing Company. These songs were licensed and released under a variety of different labels, including 3rd Ear Music (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). In terms of the music archive, these songs constitute the only fully catalogued material and form part of the collection that was collated out of all the material recorded and collected in relation to the 3rd Ear Music Company.

5.3. The Hidden Years Music Archive

In 1990 Marks established a formal archive for his collection, entitled the Hidden Years Music Archive Project. Through calling it an “Archive Project” Marks hoped to garner enough funding to collaborate with various other music collectors and archives in order to catalogue and digitise as much material as possible (Marks, 2009). His ambitious aim was to connect with other music collectors and existing collections to make their material as well as

¹⁷ Simon Frith explains that independent producers (such as the 3rd Ear Music Company) function as mini record companies: They find and contract their own artists, record them at their own expense and take the “finished tape” to a record company who presses and releases it on one of their labels – the producer is then paid a royalty by the record company for every copy that is sold. This is a great deal for record companies, because “if the record flops it’s a cheap deal for the record company which has been spared the production costs” (Frith in Anderson, 2001:61).

his own available online or through reissues for researchers, teachers and learners (*Proposal to the National Research Foundation*, 2008:6).¹⁸ Since the establishment of the Hidden Years Music Archive Project various organisations and individuals have funded the project. Some of these include the National Lotteries Board (2001), MMINO (the South African/Norwegian Education and Music Programme) (2002-2004) and the National Research Foundation (NRF) (2005-2008). The NRF funding for the HYMAP archive was obtained in partnership with the University of Kwazulu-Natal (UKZN) but the project ended acrimoniously, the consequences of which were dire for Marks's collection.

In 2005 Marks applied for funding from the NRF and was given a one-year grant to save, catalogue and digitise part of the collection. In 2006 a group of concerned individuals at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in collaboration with Marks, applied for further funding from the NRF, and set up a project through which to apply this funding called the South African Music Archive Project (SAMAP).¹⁹ Through this project the university envisioned that part of Marks's collection would be catalogued and digitised as well as parts from other archives, most notably ILAM (Ballantine, 2012). In contrast, Marks was under the impression that this funding was awarded specifically and only to his archive project, solely to be managed and administered by the university (Marks, 2008). However, Christopher Ballantine (2012) who was involved in the project from the UKZN notes that since it was NRF funding, the funding application had to be structured as a research project, and therefore included funding masters, PhD and post-doctoral students. The project was awarded a two-year grant (eventually extended to three years), and Marks was hired as a consultant to be paid for deliverables (defined items of information that he was to create) since the NRF funding cannot be used to pay salaries (Ballantine, 2012). In order to house the HYMAP collection, the university rented a large house from 2005 till 2008 where Marks and his wife stayed (Ballantine, 2012; Marks, 2008). However, since Marks believed that the NRF grant was awarded specifically to be used for his archive project, he accused the university of un-

¹⁸ There are many more such private collections, including Rob Allingham's archive and for example a recently revealed archive of live jazz recordings and music from the Cape Town area (circa 1960s) collected and recorded by Ian Bruce Huntley (amongst other things containing rare photographs of jazz musicians such as Tete Mbamisa performing) (Albertyn, 2012).

¹⁹ SAMAP is an online resource on South African music and associated cultural heritage (*South African Music Archive Project*).

lawfully using these funds to start their own project (SAMAP) and to digitise other archival holdings (Marks, 2008; 2008a, Ballantine, 2012). Marks, in turn, was described as being uncooperative and not fulfilling expectations of digitising his collection (Ballantine, 2012). Eventually a settlement was reached in 2008, with Marks being paid R400 000 for the completion of five “pilot projects” (Marks, 2008; Ballantine, 2012).²⁰ Since Marks believed that his archive project was awarded R4 million, he expected that upon its completion his archive would be fully catalogued, digitised and available online (Marks, 2008). The frustration at the failure of the project was devastating to the Marks family, who finally thought they would be able to save this collection in its entirety (Marks, 2006). However, Ballantine (2012) notes that the NRF insisted that this was only a pilot project and required the project to focus on two or three collections in the HYMAP archive. When the funds ran out the project stopped and the NRF accepted the project’s final report (Ballantine, 2012). Marks still does not feel that adequate answers have been given to his questions regarding the awarding of the funding and its subsequent management (Marks, DM 23/02/2012).²¹

After the project ended, the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) stepped in and provided a storage space for the collection. At their own expense they transported the bulk of the 3rd Ear analogue reel-, cassette tape-, and DAT-collection, newspaper cuttings, LP records, posters and 3rd Ear documents (amounting to about seven tons of material), to their premises in Braamfontein, Johannesburg where it is currently stored in a temperature and humidity controlled archive vault (Marks, DM 23/02/2012; Kotzé, NK 02/08/2011). Marks did not send his entire collection to SAMRO, but decided to keep some items in order to continue digitising his material and provide access to at least a part of his collection to scholars and researchers. The material he kept included LPs, cassettes, reel tapes and almost all of the photographs and negatives, his diaries and notebooks, as well as the 3rd

²⁰ These five pilot projects included the digitisation and compilation of data from Marks’s collection that related to these recordings. The finished projects included: the Market Theatre in Johannesburg (1976-1982); Hugh Masekela, live in Lesotho (1979-1982); Lefifi Victor Tladi, from Mamelodi to Sweden (1970-2007); Lefifi Victor Tladi, from Mamelodi to Tanzania and Sweden (1976-2006); Roger Lucey, 21 Years Down the Road (1979-2000); John Oakley-Smith, Zimbabwe and South Africa (1972-1982) (Marks, 2008).

²¹ A few newspaper articles concerned with these events were published, although they solely reflect Marks’s point of view (see Dardagan (2011); Kockott (2008) and Sinkins (2011)).

Ear LP releases, and all the contracts signed by the musicians with 3rd Ear Music (Marks, DM 23/02/2012).

Currently Marks has about 15 hard drives filled with digitised posters, photographs and some analogue music. However, the deterioration and preservation of this archive is reaching a critical stage and Marks is desperately trying to save and digitise what he can, acknowledging that his efforts don't readily confirm to archival standards (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). Already in 2008, before the material was moved to SAMRO, Marks (in Kockott, 2008) noted:

I'm 64 already and suddenly I note, as does Fran, to her horror, that all we have to show after 45 years in music is a bunch of decomposing oxidised magnetic tapes, vinegar-smelling black and white negatives, yellow posters and cockroach-eaten Rand Daily Mails.

Although the deterioration process of the material at SAMRO has been slowed down, it will also need to be digitised before the material becomes unusable. Marks's collection, both at his house in Melville beach and at SAMRO in Johannesburg, remains largely inaccessible, unsorted and in-sufficiently catalogued.

5.4. David Marks's recording and collecting methods

During all his years as a sound engineer and owner of the 3rd Ear Music Company, Marks always pressed the record button whenever he was at the mixer (Marks, 2006). He notes: "I would just let the tape run, in those days it was only a desk feed, and then you just let the tape run. So I used to record blind as they say" (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). Some of the events and concerts Marks recorded were good recordings, but "others were not so great, and some of the musicians we recorded back then aren't keen for those early recordings to be released now" (Marks in Sinkins, 2011). Even though many of these recordings are not "good" recordings, Marks believes "the quality of the recordings is not the point, it's about the context of when it was recorded ... the context of the music being played at folk clubs, jazz restaurants and free concerts." (Ibid.)

Richard Haslop (2010) describes Marks's approach to recording as a simple one:

an ardent advocate of live music, which he has always preferred to studio versions, he'll record or film anything that 'murmurs or moves', always provided that he considers it worth recording or filming – and what he considers worth recording has almost invariably been at odds with what the local industry has recorded or, with very few exceptions, what the draconian, separatist local radio has deemed worth playing.

Marks's obsessive collecting and subsequent recording technique led to the HYMAP archive containing material referring to the South African folk musical landscape that, as Richard Haslop (2010) has noted, would "not have been preserved, or perhaps even noticed" had it not been for David Marks. For Marks, the most important aspect of music was the live event, which he feverishly recorded. During an interview with Muff Anderson (2001:8) he noted:

A record isn't art, it's a memento. The contact is important. [...] If Jethro Butow played his guitar too loudly, or too softly, that's the way he played. The live thing breaks down all barriers. Rock 'n Roll – and I use the term to mean all popular music – is a big party. How do you get it across to people who aren't at the party? The live gig is where we the writers always made do during the folk era. And this is where a lot of what has come out of the guys who are writing has been missed commercially, or has been dismissed as cliquey, specialist, *avant garde* and communist by the record companies.

Due to Marks's recording approach of recording almost everything that he was involved in, his collection includes rare recordings of the early performances of Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu (who later formed the group Juluka together); folk singer Phil Ochs; the Malombo group; the Zulu maskandi guitarist Shiyani Ngcobo; the Xhosa composer and mouth-bow player Madosini; and the hard rock group of Piet Botha called *Raven*.²² Also in the archive are studio recordings of Mchunu's first solo album after Juluka split up; Carlo Mombelli's first recording and published song (by 3rd Ear Music); recordings with Roger Lucey and

²² Some of these recordings, such as Madosini's songs, were sampled by artists such as Manfred Mann (South Africa) as well as New Zealand pop rockers Crowded House on their single "Weather With You". Madosini did receive royalties for this use of her material (Haslop, 2010).

Johnny Clegg playing the mouth bow and live recordings of Hugh Masekela playing in Lesotho (Marks, DM 24/02/2012; Haslop, 2010). Accordingly, the collection contains music that was never commercially recorded but only performed live (Marks, 2002). Such material poses an immediate challenge to the archivist, because the 3rd Ear Music Company does not own the rights to most of these recordings (Marks, 2001). Thus, although most of the material would be available for researchers and scholars, any creative project, performance or concert based on the use of material from the archive that is not owned by Marks, would incur great trouble on the part of the archivist who would have to find the rightful owners, obtain permission for its use and pay the necessary royalties.²³ Similarly, the spliced tapes used by Marks to record most of his material, suggest various preservation issues for the archivist, and “is one of the biggest problems associated with audio tape preservation (*National Recording and Preservation Board, 2006:24*).

Amongst these recordings are also spoken words recorded and collected by Marks including the various plays and musicals performed at the Market Theatre, Dorkay House,²⁴ and at the Bantu Men’s Social Club in Eloff Street, Johannesburg. Various union meetings were also recorded at mine hostels,²⁵ as well as some other idiosyncratic recordings including Kalahari desert farmers talking (1983) about how to find water with a gun and a coat hanger²⁶ and recordings of animal sounds including a variety of frogs and recording of an ostrich’s roar (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). Marks has also received various donations of materials from collectors in South Africa and Zimbabwe, including some field recordings made by David

²³ Some of the challenges inherent in the HYMAP collection in relation to copyright and ownership are for example illustrated in David Kramer’s biography (De Villiers & Slabbert, 2011). The authors note that during the 1970s, the folk-rock musician Roger Lucey started to perform the song *Dry Wine* during live concerts. The song had been written by Kramer. They explain: “Late in 1979, Lucey made a live recording of the song for inclusion on his second album *Half a Live* (1980), and the label [3rd Ear Music] approached David [Kramer] to acquire the rights, explaining that this would allow him to procure royalties, and offering him a R50 advance. Not realising that the label had transgressed in recording the song without his permission in the first place, and assuming he had little choice but to assign the rights, David accepted the deal, signing the contract on 8 April 1980” (Ibid., 115).

²⁴ Some of these pieces include *Godspell*, *Phiri*, *King Kong* and *Wait a Minim*. Marks notes on his website that the recordings he made of *Phiri* at Dorkay House contain “songs that have become unheard hidden classics in the un-archived annuals of township theatre history” (Marks, 2003).

²⁵ Marks recorded a few mine hostel performances and union meetings for the UKZN’s *Culture and Working Life Project* that are housed in the Killie Campbell Museum in Durban (Marks, 2011).

²⁶ Marks recorded these Kalahari farmers talking while doing the sound for Katinka Heyns’s production *Sonneblom* (Marks, DM 23/02/2012).

Rycroft and Dave Dargie, recordings from the white folk scene of 1960-1970 in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), as well as pre-recorded radio broadcasts from Peter Brumfield and his colleagues who worked for the SABC studios in Durban. Marks notes that these recordings were sent to him as a precaution against the SABC's strict censorship measures that would edit anything considered as derogatory (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). A significant part of this archive also contains photographs taken by various people of music events as well as those photographs taken by Marks. Part of what makes the photographs taken by Marks from the mixing desk unique, is that they differ substantially from those taken by the media at the time because the placement of the mixing desk usually allowed Marks to photograph the audience as well as the full stage. Some of these photographs, recordings and material from Marks's collection have been used in various international publications as well as in TV and Film documentaries, in biographies, academic works and websites.²⁷

Apart from miscellanea such as programmes (Marks kept every programme of the events he was involved in), concert tickets, personal letters and photographic negatives, the collection also contains Marks's diaries and journals that go as far back as 1959. His childhood diaries mostly contain sport clippings, little drawings and comments while Marks's later diaries and journals now serve as important reference sources to find dates, names and events of the recorded material in the archive. Some of these journals are filled with longhand entries, while most contain the daily schedule of "things to do". These diaries were not overly important to Marks at the time (Marks, DM 23/02/2012), but due to his compulsion of not throwing anything away, they now provide the details needed to connect the various materials such as recordings, programmes and photographs in the collection. From the late 1970s Marks started to make use of little notebooks in addition to A4 diaries because they were less obtrusive and could be hidden more easily. Marks felt compelled to hide his notes

²⁷ The collection has been used by various students working on Woodstock, the Free Peoples Concerts, censorship, and the folk music movement in South Africa from the 1960s (Marks, 2012a). Some examples include a PhD thesis on Bill Hanley by Kane, (2011); books on South African music by Trehwela (1980), Anderson (2001), and Coplan (2007, [1985]); international publications on John Lennon by Kane, (2007), and on Woodstock by Littleproud, (2009); McIntosh sound systems by Kessler, (2006); and local documentaries such as *Bearing witness: 30 years of the Market Theatre* directed by Key (2007), *The Lion's Trail* directed by Verster (2002) and *The Invincibles* directed by Kaplan (2009) (Marks, 2012a).

because of fears that his diaries might endanger the musicians he was involved with. He notes (DM 23/02/2012):

I'd already had visits from the security police, and I was just afraid that somebody would take these or scrutinise them. So I started making the actual notes of what was happening in little books. I got four boxes of those.

Marks's collection is extensive because he has built it up haphazardly around his own musical, professional and political interests. The collection is interspersed with family photographs, videos and mementoes, recordings made directly from the radio or television of musicians, concerts, films, speeches and documentaries that were important to Marks – all of which serve to illustrate the entwined nature of the collection with Marks's personal life.

5.5. Archival value

Marks established the Hidden Years Music Archive Project in 1990 during South Africa's transition to democracy. Until 1990, he did not think this collection would be deemed valuable by anyone, apart from its nostalgic value. Marks (DM 23/02/2012) notes:

I did not think that what we had recorded would be of any value to anybody other than to those who were there, those who might remember for whatever reason. [...] But then in 1990 it struck me and everybody else, including Chris Ballantine and Andrew Tracey, many said, you know, have you still got those tapes, do you still have that collection? It is very important, you must look into this. So suddenly I thought, well look, I have been dragging these tapes along with me and all these photographs and stuff maybe there is something in it.

Clearly the transition to democracy played an important part in establishing this archive as not just a physical token of personal nostalgia, but as a "vital piece of the country's history" (Marks in Dardagan, 2011:8). It provided the historical context for the material in this collection to be considered for its evidential, informational and commercial value. Although the commercial aspects of the collection is not Marks's main interest, he notes that "there is

a historic gold mine of words, music and events here – as entertaining and informative, as they could be commercially viable” (Marks, 2004a). These recordings could have potential commercial value in the “nostalgia industry” – sold to the people who went to those concerts, but Marks notes that “telling the story first” could potentially expand this market (Marks, DM 23/02/2012; *HYMAP Masters*).

South Africa’s tumultuous history further provides the recording of these events and musicians with a certain political importance. Although Marks never thought of the recordings he gathered as acts of political activism (DM 23/02/2012), he realised post-1990 that his material represented an important part of South Africa’s musical history during Apartheid that has largely been ignored. Marks (DM 23/02/2012) notes:

Initially, there was no thought you know, of breaking into the charts, or joining the revolution, either of the extremes. But in 1990 when I started with the Hidden Years, [...] I suddenly saw the value of what people were singing and writing about and the events we were putting on in relation to the times. The social environment, and that’s where it became more and more important.

The realisation of the value of the archive thus grew in relation to the social contexts of which these recordings spoke. Marks (DM 23/02/2012) notes that “the value of what we were doing and saying and playing during those turbulent times and how we did it is important [...] and makes for a great story”. This informational value in the HYMAP collection covers nearly 45 years of South African music that was for the most part “played on the streets and in small nightclubs” and not recorded by mainstream record companies (Clegg in Dardagan, 2011:8). However, due to the fact that the collection remains relatively unknown and for the most part inaccessible, its evidential and informational content cannot be exploited.²⁸ Only once the collection has been organised, catalogued and made accessible will “we know the value” of the material (Marks, DM 23/02/2012; Ballantine, 2012). Marks (DM 23/02/2012) acknowledges that this will not be an easy task and would

²⁸ During our interviews Marks recounted numerous stories of partial historical information or absence of legal proof regarding the ownership of songs, stories that could be refuted by the information held in the HYMAP archive (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). An enquiry into these cases would only become possible once the archive is accessible to scholars and researchers.

require good management, administrative staff and equipment: “the reason why it hasn’t gotten to the point where it should be at is simply because I can’t do it on my own”.

In spite of this Marks gladly assists researchers, freely sharing his knowledge and the material he has access to. He insists, however, that the material that is provided to researchers has been properly annotated with the relevant cover, liner notes and item details such as track number, artists and track time (Marks, DM 24/02/2012). He notes, “It has to be done properly. In terms of archives, let’s face it, there’s a lot of things I just don’t do properly, I mean this stuff is in shambles all over the place. But I do what I can” (Marks, DM 24/02/2012).

5.6. Archival system

Marks is struggling to keep up with the demands of his collection, evidence of which can be seen in the lack of proper filling, sorting, arrangement or cataloguing. Taking out material from Marks’s collection at home might lead to an avalanche of material falling and getting mixed up. He notes,

you see, this is the sad thing about not having it properly filled, this is an archivist’s nightmare ... [more things falling] ... Not having them shelved properly, I just put them so that they are at least a little visible, then I know that I have to do [digitise] this one. [...] I often can’t find things (Marks, DM 23/02/2012).

It is clear that Marks did not have an archival project in mind when he started collecting material. Unlike Hugh Tracey who had conceptualised an archival collection of academic merit and subsequently ordered and structured the archive to serve this purpose from the start, David Marks collected for the sake of collecting and his love for the music. As he puts it (Marks, DM 23/02/2012):

One of the important things about the archive is that I never collected it for any other reason at the time. In other words I was not thinking of the future or archiving per se. I had

worked for Doc Tracey in the 60s and I understood the value of capturing the moment but I never thought that it will be that important to take further.

Although he believed in the importance of documenting what events he could, his collection was never intended to serve as an archive (DM, 23/02/2012). If it initially fulfilled a function it was as evidential material for the 3rd Ear Music Company, including storing contracts and master copies. However, after establishing the Hidden Years Music Archive Project, the direction of the collection was changed towards a more academic and scholarly purpose. Marks thus took on the role of curating his collection, with a wish to make it accessible to scholars and the public.²⁹ Marks's role as curator is exemplified by the liner notes he compiled for a variety of compilation albums. These albums (and the liner notes) were compiled from material in the HYMAP collection and were either intended for re-issue or for archival use.³⁰ However, due to a lack of interest from any formal institution to archive this collection, Marks also had to take on the role of archivist in setting up archival systems of ordering, numbering and cataloguing as well as digitising the collection. The obsessive collector became his own archivist.

Throughout the many years of collecting materials, Marks has employed various different systems to mark his recordings and to order the items. These systems, for the most part, were not applied consistently. After Marks moved from Johannesburg to Durban in the mid-1980s, the archive was moved many times in and around Durban. This accounts for the fact that many of these systems, which were also used to order the archive, fell into disarray (Marks, 2002). Fran Marks (FM 23/02/2012) mentioned during an interview that although Marks tries to be organised about his packing and storage, they have moved house so many times that "you toss it in the boxes, and then you have to bring everything out. It's out of order, so he has to re-organise everything". Some of the systems Marks used included writing descriptive detail on the covers of recordings, such as the event, the musician, the

²⁹ Curators are those individuals that are involved with the informational content of the material, will write papers, give seminars and set up exhibitions of the material. Archivists can also function in this capacity, but are primarily concerned with enforcing the systems of the archive: selection, arrangement and classification.

³⁰ See for examples the compilation albums: *Market Theatre*, (1976-1983); *Market Café*, (1976-1978); *Celebrating 30 Years of 3rd Ear Music*, Malombo, (2011 [1971]) and *Jannie Hofmeyr*, (1972-1976).

place and the date or using a colour coded system whereby the recordings were marked according to different colours with green representing festivals, red for recordings made from the radio (recordings of pre-recorded material) and yellow for composers (Marks, DM 23/02/2012).

The social and political circumstances during the time that Marks collected most of his recordings also gave rise to other methods. Some musicians recorded and promoted by 3rd Ear Music were making radical political statements through their songs, and the security police showed interest in the events Marks was involved in (Erasmus, 2001). They knew that he was recording these concerts and on occasion threatened him and his family. Even though Marks notes that “it would be naïve to inflate the importance that we were to the police” (Marks, DM 23/02/2012), the awareness that the recordings he was making could implicate and endanger the musicians should the security police find it, influenced the numbering and cataloguing methods he used for some recordings. In order to keep the content of these recordings hidden, Marks would often leave the tapes unmarked or not marked in detail, or change the labels. He fondly remembers how he labelled Lefifi Tladi’s recordings under Abba’s Greatest Hits, or used a cut-out from *Mad Magazine*, “weight lifting for Catholics” as a label on a Roger Lucey recording (Marks, DM 03/11/2011; DM 23/02/2012).

In some cases the master copies would also be marked with genre classifications, but since most tapes contain more than one genre they were not marked as such. Marks (DM 23/02/2012) notes for example:

At the Market [Theatre] we had everything; we had jazz, folk, rock, theatre [...] and I used to let the tape run so there would be four or five different musicians on the one take [...] and then we used to turn them over to record on both sides.

Apart from these master copies, genre classification is only used on the final digitised products produced by Marks. These, for the most part, take the form of compilation CD’s, where descriptive classifications are used such as country ballad, Zulu gospel, Venda style beat poem, Afrikaans ballad, Children’s song, suburban singer/songwriter folk, foreign

country and blues, revolting (sic) South African rock music, etc. (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). Such classifications are not used on the lists Marks draws up as he is digitising material.

Due to the urgency Marks feels to save the collection before it deteriorates beyond use, he has devised his own digitisation process whereby he saves the material he considers of particular importance “two or three times, just for in case” (Marks, 23/02/2012). Keeping relevant material together is not of primary importance to Marks, and as a consideration it is overshadowed by his concern to digitise the material as soon as possible (Ibid.). The decision of what to digitise is not systematised, but determined by research requests and Marks’s personal wishes. Subsequently as requests are made, Marks digitises the required materials but he doesn’t proceed in any particular order (Ibid.).

Marks has thus far managed to digitise some analogue recordings, photographs, programmes, posters and newspaper cuttings which are saved on a variety of hard drives. From the hard drives back-up copies are made and saved onto other hard drives, burned onto DVDs and kept in stacks in Marks’s archive at home. Marks (DM 23/02/2012) estimates that he has not even digitised 20% of the collection, and already the DVD’s number around 2000 (although some of these will be duplicates due to Marks’s system of saving and re-saving material). These stacks of DVDs are not individually marked (on the physical material) but each stack will get a number on the outside, for example 763-820. In order to facilitate finding the master copy, Marks would then mark the original master copy with the number of the DVD where he has migrated the material to, and on which hard drive it is stored. This means that one can only find the digitised copy from the master copy, but not find the master from the DVD copy. Once material has been digitised, it is replaced in the archive at random, which means that digitised and un-digitised material gets mixed up (Marks, DM 23/02/2012).

This adds to the confusion of the amount of unmarked items in the archive, most of which could probably only be identified by Marks, unless one is familiar with the voice of the singer/songwriter and could decipher Marks’s notebooks to find the event or concert where the recording was made. Marks (DM 23/02/2012) admits that these unmarked recordings will need a lot of time and attention. Although he estimates that he could identify some

records instinctively by their covers, the reel or labels, he pre-empts that he would have to listen to most of the unmarked recordings (Ibid.). The consequence of this to the archive is significant. Apart from Marks being able to contextualise the material in his collection in terms of the diaries and photographs (which includes deciphering his handwriting and shorthand in the notebooks), there are various items that only he will be able to identify (Marks, DM 03/11/2011).

When Marks established the 'official' archive project under the Hidden Years Music Archive Project, he did not go through some of the standard archival practices which would have included first and foremost pre-sorting the material, setting up a standard descriptive and ordering system, cataloguing and then digitising the material. Without any prior knowledge or experience of archival practices, the systems Marks put in place could be considered as those of a collector and not an archivist. For instance, pre-selection should have been an imperative for the preservation of this collection as Marks himself has noted (DM 23/02/2012):

I'm sure a lot of the stuff is rubbish, because unlike Shifty who recorded music – as alternative and as politically relevant as it was, they did it to make records and to put onto records [...] but we never did that. I just let the tapes run. So a lot of it would be rubbish.

Furthermore, renaming his collection as the Hidden Years Music Archive Project, created various levels of confusion. Whereas Marks's bigger plan with the Archive Project was to link his collection with other similar collections, digitise their material and make it available online as an archive project, to date this has not happened. Marks's own archive functions more on the level of a collection than an archive. One of the characteristics of an institutional archive is the importance of selection and pre-sorting for permanent preservation. Problematically, Marks has kept the title of 'Archive Project', whereas his material should rather be considered a *collection* waiting to be archived. Further confusion arises between the archive project as a research repository and the 3rd Ear Music as a

Commercial Company. Both SAMRO and the SABC have indicated that Marks might make things clearer by calling it the “David Marks collection” (Marks, DM 24/02/2012).³¹

These systems that Marks have employed has for the most part served the opposite purpose for which they are normally created. For example, he started to digitise what he could – urged on by the reality of deteriorating material. However, digitising material within the disarray of previous systems for ordering and describing material, as well as digitising without having undertaken a process of pre-selection, has served to disorganise and clutter the archive to an even greater extent. Apart from the lists noting the material that Marks has digitised, the list drawn up by Marks of the material that went to SAMRO and a catalogue of the songs owned by 3rd Ear Music, no inventory or catalogue exists of the material in the Hidden Years Music Archive.

5.6.1. The lists

During my first encounter with the collection at SAMRO, what I saw was material arranged on the shelves in stacks, material type with material type. There were shelves with recorded tapes, shelves with VHS tapes, shelves filled to the brim with LP sleeves, shelves with reel-to-reel tapes, shelves spilling out newspaper cuttings, shelves stuffed with documents and papers. What struck me was that these materials were not yet in archival boxes, but exposed on the shelves – where the spines of the exposed material formed physical lists in their shelf positions. I became aware that these lists continued behind the stacks that I could see (one can fit at least four rows of tapes behind one another), implying the existence of yet more lists representing the enormity of this collection. At David Marks’s home in KwaZulu-Natal we spent a whole afternoon looking for the lists that record the contents of the shelves at SAMRO, and a significant amount of time was spent looking at these lists and other lists pertaining to the HYMAP archive.

³¹ Since more than 90% of the material in the collection belongs to Marks, he is not against the idea but would prefer not to “personalise” the collection. He notes that “this hobby of mine – some would say passion or obsession [...] has gone far further than my personal preference” (*National Research Foundation Grant*, 2005).

One of the core and most basic functions of the archive is putting together a list in the form of a catalogue. After pre-sorting lists have been compiled, the material is ordered and a formal list is drawn up that can be perused in order to look for material. These lists do not only fulfil an organising function but also serve to make the archive accessible (and useable) by archivists, scholars and the public. In some way, the list or catalogue is a representation of the archive, presenting its contents in a way that can be fathomed in its entirety.

The HYMAP archive is subject to lists for many diverse reasons. When things started to unravel with the NRF project and the UKZN, Marks drew up a list detailing the hours he had spent working on digitising material and what had been completed (a list to justify and prove). This work list also served to show Marks the amount of work that he had done (a list of encouragement). There is a list compiled by students detailing the tape collection which formed part of the NRF funding project, but which was never completed (a list to keep others busy).³² Then there is a list of all the songs that 3rd Ear Music owns (a list of ownership), and a constantly expanding list of the material Marks has been digitising over the years (a work list). Finally there is a list documenting the material that was sent to SAMRO, a list of which only Marks has a handwritten copy (a list for keeping track). These lists exist in various electronic versions in different states of completion and incompleteness, saved on numerous places on the hard drives. Some are exact duplicates while others display small additions. Some of these lists are coherent and easy to understand while others are complicated to unravel and decipher.

These lists can be regarded as symptomatic of the archive's disorder and David Marks's attempts to impose order. Umberto Eco (2009) has pointed out in his book, *The Infinity of Lists*, that just beneath the surface of the list "we always glimpse the outline of a possible order, the desire to give things a form" (Eco, 2009:245). As noted in this chapter, the HYMAP archive has not yet been catalogued or even pre-sorted, and no system is in place systematically to deal with these challenges. Within this environment, the list functions as an effort to determine a graspable quantity within the vast unknowns of this collection. These lists do not serve as a method or means to find materials (as one would find in, for

³² According to Marks sixteen students were assigned to work part-time in the HYMAP during the period of the NRF funding (Marks, 2006).

example, a pre-sorting list). Compiled out of a cluttered, disorganised collection, Marks's lists are desperate efforts to exercise control in an unpractical situation.

Even in instances where lists had the potential to order, they did not end up serving the purposes for which they were created. The lists of the boxes sent to SAMRO, which contained the bulk of the HYMAP collection, are examples. Marks ordered the material by putting it into boxes and broadly numbering and listing the contents of each box. However, standard archival procedure is to dispose of these boxes as soon as possible because their high acid level deteriorates the archival material inside. Subsequently these boxes were thrown away, and what was a list that potentially could have served to order the archival material (taking time and effort to compile), was turned into a list representing (very broadly) the material sent to SAMRO, an inventory by default. SAMRO was unaware of this list, however, and what signified a form of order and control for Marks, became a signifier of disorder and clutter for SAMRO.³³

Marks's lists are practical lists, even though they do not always end up serving practical purposes. However, as Eco notes, "the voraciousness of lists often prompts us to interpret practical lists as if they were poetic lists – and in effect what often distinguishes a poetic list from a practical one is only the intention with which we contemplate it" (Eco, 2009:371,374). The list compiled by UKZN students of Marks's tape collection, for example, has a practical purpose. Yet reading through all those names unknown, places and events that have taken on almost mythic qualities in South African music history (the Market Theatre, Dorkay House, Free Peoples Concerts), turns the inventory into something with the qualities of an incantation (Eco, 2009:377).

³³ Noelene Kotzé (NK 02/08/2011), the SAMRO head archivist at that time, remarked that it seemed as if Marks had just sent up all the boxes that were in his garage: "There are for example Dolly Parton albums, and no-one knows what it is doing there. [...] sometimes whole newspapers are put in a file and one does not know why".

5.7. Conclusion: The 'Not-Apartheid' archive

David Marks never considered his practice of recording or collecting as a political act or statement: “we weren’t doing it for any political reasons, we were doing it because we felt that this music needs to be shared” (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). The purpose was to protect and promote music not deemed important to record or save by other record companies, radio stations or most academics and scholars. These were the stories and music of everyday people during the Apartheid years and not necessarily those of struggle heroes or those of protest and survival that one finds in the Anti-Apartheid Archive.³⁴ The Anti-Apartheid Archive was institutionally enabled in 1994 in direct opposition to the Apartheid Archive that sought to silence ‘the other’ and all that was ideologically suspect under Apartheid. The Anti-Apartheid Archive would create a counter-narrative to this exclusionary history by actively gathering and promoting that which was closed, forgotten, deemed unimportant and subsequently left out of or distorted in history.³⁵

Whereas the Apartheid Archive was driven by an ideology to control and determine history, and was meticulous in what became part of the archival record and what was excluded,³⁶ the Anti-Apartheid Archive is driven to make the histories known that were subjugated by the Apartheid Archive.³⁷ However, I would argue that the Anti-Apartheid Archive is locked into the binary of engaging Apartheid and thus into endless repetitions of narratives of heroism, struggle against adversity and survival. In the process, the communities on the periphery, the ordinary and everyday citizens, remain marginalised. The collection contained in the Hidden Years Music Archive Project, in my view, does not function within either of these opposing ideologies. It is driven by something quite different, something I call the ‘Not-Apartheid Archive’. The archive of Not-Apartheid is all that the Apartheid Archive is not: eccentric, amateur, excessive, obsessive, cluttered and non-discriminatory.

³⁴ This is an appellation I use to connote the ideological subservience of the archive to master narratives of resistance.

³⁵ See for instance the publication of the *New History of South Africa* (Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007).

³⁶ See for example the work of Harris (2000; 2009)

³⁷ Refer to footnote 93, p.57.

Without using any discretion towards inclusion and exclusion, Marks recorded and collected wherever he went and whatever music concerts, events, clubs, festivals, theatre and political meetings he was involved with. He also filled the collection with historical events, speeches, documentaries, concerts and films that he saw on television or heard on the radio. Thus, due to his obsession with collecting, Marks flooded the archive with the everyday and the personal. The collection of the everyday directly caused a relentless sedimentation of the archive because no discerning decisions regarding its content were made. The excess and obsessive collecting of David Marks became an indirect stand against the ruling structure and system of Apartheid.

Today the Hidden Years Music Archive has the potential to open up an interesting and fruitful counter-narrative to the popular narrative of Anti-Apartheid. Marks (2005) himself has noted that through music it tells South Africa's story from another perspective, one which is little known today, of musicians and songwriters, white and black "who played and stayed together and who helped changed hearts and minds, in spite of the political and social situation at the time." However, the Hidden Years Music Archive Project has slipped through the cracks of South African society on both sides of the historic moment of 1994 when the new democracy was born. During the Apartheid years, Marks's collection and his work was shunned for being too "liberal" – he recorded English folk singers who were banned by the government and promoted township artists (Marks, DM 23/02/2012). In the post-Apartheid era, the collection is yet again evidence of the 'wrong' history: stories of racially mixed clubs, festivals and events that do not fit into the anti-Apartheid narrative supported and fostered by the current ANC government.

The Anti-Apartheid Archive actively tries to replace what was lost during Apartheid, to set the record straight, to acknowledge the material banned during Apartheid. However, I want to suggest that loss cannot be overcome only by privileging the opposite extreme of a conceptual binary. Archives, in their material optimism, do not respect the permanence of loss. In its newly endorsed legitimacy, the Anti-Apartheid archive can easily induce a negation of the permanence of loss and the extent of destruction caused by Apartheid. In contrast, I posit, the Not-Apartheid Archive in its disempowered, unordered and unorderable state, in its chaos and material weight, lives as the shadow world of a time during

which so much was destroyed. In its current state the HYMAP archive thus stands as a placeholder for permanent loss, a silent symbol of the time during which it was collected (1960-1995). It is exactly the impenetrable presence of history in Marks's equally impenetrable collection that gives HYMAP its mythical quality. HYMAP infuses South African music history not through its content, but through historians' awareness of its existence and the inevitable incompleteness of their historical endeavours.

28 March 2012, Stellenbosch - A reflection on being biased

I have been learning the archival systems of DOMUS – how they are applied in the archive and how they function – for little over two years now. I have been working in the archive as an assistant tasked with pre-sorting, cataloguing and numbering material. During my time as archival assistant, I have rarely questioned these systems. Instead I became caught up in trying to understand the intricate ordering and numberings I had to assign to documents, all the while struggling not to get confused between 1.1a12 and 1.1.1a, or to mess up the order of the documents and make a mistake that would usually mean re-doing a lot of work. Despite my best efforts, this inevitably did happen from time to time.

Instead of problematising these systems while I was working with them, I found that I became sensitised and intrigued by the projects and interactions an archive can sustain. I experienced some of these engagements first-hand. I heard the stories of success and failure over a period of three years, I saw the faces of people coming and going, bringing with them their prized (or unwanted) collections of boxes. I remember walking into the archive on a Monday afternoon to find a space filled with new boxes, piles of records, books and music manuscripts of donated material waiting to be sorted. Perhaps if I had spent the same amount of time at any of the other archives that I treat as case studies in this dissertation, I would have understood them differently. The narratives I was able to construct of ILAM, the SABC, Gallo and HYMAP were uncomplicated by personal allegiances and involvement.

Although this sense of belonging to DOMUS gave me the freedom to ask endless questions and to take part in debates and conversations with the archivist, archive director and my colleagues, in retrospect this case study seems more cluttered, muddied and positively glossed by my experiences and allegiances. I am researching DOMUS while I am also a PhD student supervised by DOMUS's director. How does loyalty shape bias?

Chapter 6
The Documentation Centre for Music
An archive created out of crisis, envisioning the future

6.1. Introduction

The Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS) was established in August 2005 by Stephanus Muller at the University of Stellenbosch. It is located in the Music Library at the Music Department where it functions as a separate entity with one full-time, subject-specific archivist, Santie de Jongh. The archive is therefore ideally situated to benefit both from institutional support and infrastructure as well as the individual motivation and impetus of its Director. As an archive located at a university its vision is both to preserve, protect and promote South African music as well as advance research into this subject (*Vision*, 2008).

Upon its establishment, DOMUS inherited existing special music collections in the Music Library which needed to be sorted, catalogued and made accessible, a point which will be discussed in more detail below. Various other music libraries at South African Universities house special music collections. Examples are the Percival Kirby collection at the library of the University of Cape Town, the music collections in the Merensky Library of the University of Pretoria and the archives at the University of South Africa (UNISA). However, these collections were mostly acquired through donations and not through active collection strategies. Similarly, other archival institutions in South Africa such as the Nasionale Afrikaanse Letterkundige Museum en Navorsingsentrum (NALN)¹ and the National Film and Audio Archive, accept donations of music collections, but do not search for and acquire music collections. Various private collections of music companies, musicians, composers, pedagogues and academics are therefore not actively preserved and run the risk of being

¹ National Afrikaans Literary Museum and Research Centre.

lost or thrown away.² This awareness coupled with the lack of archives that focus specifically on collecting and acquiring South African music collections, has influenced DOMUS to become an active collecting institution. In the seven years since its inception, the existing twenty collections of mainly Western art music expanded to more than fifty collections covering a wide spread of South African music including opera, contemporary art music, punk music, jazz, boeremusiek, popular music, klezmer music and a film collection (*Finding Aids*, 2012).

When I initially started working at DOMUS in 2010 as a part-time assistant, I was unaware of the covert frictions that existed within DOMUS and the Department of Music. However, since Stellenbosch was my home during the time I was doing my PhD, I gradually became aware of a tension that existed between the functioning of DOMUS as an institute of preservation and research on the one hand, and an institute envisioned by its Director, Stephanus Muller, as a tool with which to effect change and push at the boundaries of what was seen by some as a largely 'conservative' music department on the other.³ Picking up on these subtle tensions, rarely expressed overtly, would not have been possible had I not been able to observe the unfolding of a variety of projects over the span of three years. My regular attendance of departmental colloquia and seminars and the opportunity to take part and observe countless conversations and debates about DOMUS with colleagues as well as with my supervisor (who is also the Director of DOMUS) also enabled these observations. My involvement with this archive over a longer time span than my other case studies thus

² It must be noted that this is not an uncommon or particularly South African problem (see *Archives of the Future*, 2011). In South Africa this situation already existed before the transition to democracy. Cases of indifference towards historical materials and deteriorating archives under the previous political dispensation include the now defunct National Documentation Centre of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the precarious state of NALN since the 1980s (De Jongh, 2011:2). De Jongh however points out that this situation has been aggravated in the post-94 period where lack of skills, shortage of staff, and an over-stretched National Archive cannot deal with all the problems and challenges (De Jongh, 2011:2).

³ I am aware that the word 'conservative' is loaded with various ideological implications, but its use here is relevant in relation to how the Director of DOMUS positions this institution within the Music Department. The use of the term 'conservative' here denotes a department whose curriculum privileges Western classical art music above any other as well as the rigid preservation of the division between performers, composers, and musicologists (I will return to this in more detail below). This is being countered in the department by an ever expanding certificate programme that is geared towards light music, jazz and brass instruments.

allowed me to focus much more on the cultural politics of this archive than was possible in my other case studies.

Although all of the discussions and experiences mentioned above played a significant role in helping me shape my thoughts, not just on DOMUS but on music archives in general, the challenges in writing about an archive invested with personal loyalties and sympathies, proved challenging. Portelli (2006:41) has pointed out that “oral history can never be told without taking sides, since the ‘sides’ exist inside the telling”. Oral histories and interviews are necessarily partial, subjective and unfinished (Ibid.). However, where on previous occasions I rarely found myself on the same “side” as my “sources” (Ibid.), here the situation was reversed. For example, during the formal interviews I had with Muller as the Director of DOMUS, I already knew his stance on the standard questions that I asked my other interviewees and could thus prod deeper into his understanding and vision for the archive. He was perhaps also more open about the challenges he faces in managing the archive and I could ask direct questions based on more than two years’ participation in, and knowledge of the archive. Within these interviews, Muller subsequently presented me with a very sophisticated argument about the archive that also resonated with my own work. In fact, it is probable that Muller’s own thinking had developed theoretically precisely in tandem with his engagement with my work. This existing interaction between researcher and researched, with knowledge passing both ways, made it extremely difficult to find my own voice and opinion in relation to his argument when I eventually started to write this chapter.

However, having had access to more time and opportunities to build deeper personal relationships with the people who functioned as my DOMUS ‘sources’, also provided me with much detail and experience into archival practice. Apart from the theoretical knowledge I gained of archival practice through researching this dissertation, I had the opportunity to encounter these systems first hand, working as a part-time assistant at DOMUS for three hours a week over a period of two years. During this time I gained practical experience in applying and using archival techniques and invaluable information on standard archival procedures and practices from the archivist, Santie de Jongh. Without this practical experience, understanding the archival systems employed at other archives that form part of this dissertation, might have proved much more difficult. My prolonged

engagement with DOMUS thus also influenced the other case studies I conducted. It is important to note here that my exposure to DOMUS happened primarily in my capacity as an assistant to the archivist and as a student of the Director and not as an ethnographer, a point which I will return to in chapter 7. However, these experiences overlapped and reinforced one another and influenced the outcome of the conscious ethnographic methodology.

DOMUS functions within a complex relationship with the music department at the University of Stellenbosch. In order to explore this relationship and the various moments of friction that characterise this archive, I will discuss DOMUS's collection policies, storage and descriptive practices as well as some of the projects DOMUS's growing archival vault allowed. This will lead to a discussion of the function of the archive within the Department of Music at the University of Stellenbosch.

6.2. The Creation of DOMUS



Figure 7: The DOMUS archive (Lambrechts, 2012)

The idea of a music archive at the Department of Music was first considered in the early 1980s after the vast private collection of Commander Michael Scott was obtained by the University of Stellenbosch. This collection contained more than thirty thousand books, nine thousand music items (mostly manuscripts) and a collection of ten thousand LP recordings,

considered amongst the finest music collections in South Africa (Ross, 2007:331).⁴ Upon its arrival, the collection was first housed in the J.S. Gericke Library, but shortly thereafter the music items (including scores, facsimiles and music-related books) were moved to the Music Library, a subject library of the J.S. Gericke located at the Department of Music (Ross, 2007:333). Although the Music Library did contain a few other special music collections that had been donated through the years, the Scott collection provided the impetus to collate all these collections in a storage room to form an informal archive (Lüdemann, WL 12/04/2012). Not unlike the music libraries that house special collections mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, this informal archive did not actively collect material, but its collection grew through donations. These collections were initially administered by Reino Ottermann, head of the musicology division at that stage and later (from 1988) head of the Department of Music. After Ottermann retired in 1998, Izak Grové (head of musicology) took over the responsibility of the informal archive and started encouraging his students to become involved in cataloguing parts of it. Of these small-scale cataloguing projects the most notable was the electronic database of the Scott collection that Chris Coetzee, a postgraduate student at the time, began compiling in 2004 (Ross, 2007:333). However, for the most part the special collections held at the Music Library remained un-processed and un-catalogued.

During that same year, 2004, Stephanus Muller became involved at the Department of Music as an independent scholar (he was at that time a part-time lecturer at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein). Two years prior to this, in 2002, Muller had started an extended research project on the composer Arnold van Wyk, whose main collection was held at the J.S. Gericke Library. Muller experienced various challenges in unlocking this collection, which had remained un-catalogued and largely inaccessible in a university archive where the necessary specialised skills and expertise for dealing with a music archive (such as being able to read notation, order music sketches and autographs), were lacking. Due to his experience with the Van Wyk collection, Muller realised the need for a music archive with subject specific archivists who could process and catalogue collections

⁴ Due to the significant amount of music material and his personal interest in medieval material, the head of musicology at that stage, Reino Ottermann, became involved in the process of acquiring the collection for the university (Ross, 2007:332;346, Lüdemann, WL 12/04/2012).

efficiently. He also saw the need for and value of an archive that actively collected and preserved collections of South African musicians, composers, scholars and music institutions. Consequently, in 2004, Muller initiated discussions with the head of the J.S. Gericke library (Hennie Viljoen), the head of the special collections unit at the library (Hanna Botha) and the head of the music department (Hans Roosenschoon) to discuss the possibility of such a centre (Muller, SM 04/04/2012).

Due to Muller's initiative and his subsequent appointment at Stellenbosch University as a lecturer in musicology, an official archive, the Documentation Centre for Music (DOMUS) was established in 2005 under his management. The Music Library provided the space for housing the archive and a subject specific archivist, Santie de Jongh, was appointed on a contract basis by the Department of Music (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012).⁵ Muller's appointment in the department made provision for him to spend one third of his time managing DOMUS and two thirds of his time on academic work and teaching (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). In 2008, the Faculty of Arts at the university created a permanent post for De Jongh at the Music Library as the archivist of DOMUS (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). DOMUS was therefore fortunate to enjoy joint support from the Library and Information Department, the Department of Music and the Faculty in its early years. This support entailed provision of infrastructure and the creation of posts to create minimum conditions of functionality.

It was not only Muller's vision of a music archive with specialised archivists and an active collecting policy that shaped his thinking about DOMUS. When Muller returned to South Africa, after finishing his doctoral degree at the University of Oxford, he settled with his family in the Cape Town area. However, he struggled to find a permanent position at a university, partly because of what he describes as "the nature of my scholarly work" (Muller, SM 04/04/2012).⁶ Influenced by what was then called 'new musicology', Muller's approached called for an engagement of musicology with the political past and present (see

⁵ De Jongh held both a music degree and a post-graduate diploma in library and information studies (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012).

⁶ Muller relates how he was shortlisted for a post at the University of Cape Town in 2003, but removed after having refused to give a lecture on the fugue as part of his application screening (Muller, 2012).

Muller, 2000).⁷ However, to enable such engagement he also saw it as imperative that the past should be preserved. This urge for preservation was motivated by the fear that a lack of interest in the Western art music tradition that flourished under Apartheid and the subsequent work of its composers and scholars would, in the new democracy, be handled with disdain and subsequently lost or discarded (Muller, 2011:2). Muller thus saw the establishment of an archive at a music department such as Stellenbosch as potentially productive for experimental work precisely because of its appreciation of this imperative for conservation. Ultimately he hoped that his understanding of the need of preserving an endangered past would lead to an appointment within a conservatively-minded department, in spite of his own approach in his scholarly work. This was an aspiration that eventually came to fruition (Muller, SM 04/04/2012).

However, since Muller was aware from the onset that his scholarly interests and those of the majority of the individuals in the department were not in accord, he managed to position DOMUS as an institution that functions semi-autonomously from the Department of Music (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). Subsequently the head of musicology was not further involved (as used to be the case in terms of the informal archive) and no advisory board was appointed to take part in the decision making and policy formation of the archive. Muller saw this autonomy of DOMUS as a necessity in order to start pushing at the boundaries of the department's ethos. He saw the archive in terms of an interventionist strategy meant to evoke change in a department where there were too little publications, not enough post-graduate students and a curriculum that did not engage with the broad contexts of South African music (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). DOMUS was thus never viewed as 'just' an archive or solely a place of collection and preservation, but was envisioned from the start as a tool with which to effect change.

As such, Muller envisaged DOMUS to function on two levels: as an active collecting archive focused on the preservation of manuscripts, documents and recordings, and as an archive through which to facilitate research, practice as research and collaboration. An important

⁷ Middleton (2003:2) notes that the development of 'new' or 'critical musicology' has largely been influenced by Joseph Kerman's book *Musicology* (1985), and is represented in the work of authors such as Susan McClary, Gary Tomlinson and Lawrence Kramer.

part of this strategy was facilitating the performance of music preserved in the archive in order to “stimulate contemporary creative engagements with archived material and recordings as part of an expanding archival awareness and acts of curatorship” (Muller, 2010:4-5). This was to be achieved through launching a variety of projects (discussed below) through which not only the immediate academic environment of the university’s academics, scholars and students could be involved, but also a broader community of individuals, musicians and composers outside the university structures.

6.3. Collection policies

Initially, DOMUS set about sorting and cataloguing the collections of Western art music that already constituted its holdings. However, Muller’s involvement with individuals in the communities around Stellenbosch as well as his rapidly growing post-graduate cohort⁸ led to the gradual collection of more and more diverse collections. DOMUS thus adopted a fluid collection policy with a disciplinary dimension (music) and no collection was turned away (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). Although this could be seen as a potentially problematic conception (to which I will return later), Muller (2010:2) notes:

The acquisition policy of DOMUS has continued to expand from its initial interest of preserving the legacy of Western art music in South Africa to one based on a broad notion of [South African] ‘music’ that now includes art music, indigenous African orally composed and notated music, popular music and jazz, from various historical periods and different communities.

This broad notion of South African music resonates strongly with the work of musicologists such as Christine Lucia and Christopher Ballantine, who called for an expansion of what is considered as valuable to study, teach and perform (see Lucia, 2005; Ballantine, 1993). The fifty collections currently in DOMUS have been acquired through acquisitions, donations or bequests from institutions, communities, individuals, scholars or musicians. Post-graduate students are encouraged to pursue obtaining interesting collections within their subject

⁸ In 2012 there are eleven PhD candidates and thirty-three master students registered at the Department of Music (Valentine, 2012). Of these, Muller supervises seven PhD candidates and three master students.

areas and this has already led to DOMUS obtaining the EOAN collection, the collection of Nico Carstens, the Jewish music collection of Fay Singer, and the collection of Anton Goosen.⁹ This involvement of students as well as individuals outside the institution has expanded the collection significantly. To a large extent it has meant that the archive has grown in interesting and unexpected ways and that DOMUS's holdings have "partly [been] shaped by what has come its way" (Muller, 2010:2). However, it would be a mistake to see this strategy as haphazard or innocent. Muller actively works towards building up contacts outside of the Stellenbosch academic community and the acquisition of donations to strategically align the archive in terms of "funding, strategic positioning, kudos, need, redress, research opportunities and graduate interest" (Muller, 2011:7). DOMUS's acquisition policy should thus be understood as both disciplinary driven and opportunistic.

Due to the open collection policy, DOMUS's holdings expanded to include collections "from the full gamut ranging from social and political anarchists to musical traditionalists" (Muller, 2011:4). A broad sweep of the current collections would show Western art music collections such as those of Arnold van Wyk, Walter Swanson, Graham Newcater, Hubert du Plessis, and Rosa Nepgen, alongside the NewMusic SA collection, the Obelisk Music collection, the EOAN Opera Group's archive, the Nico Carstens Boeremusiek collection, the collection of the filmmaker Aryan Kaganof, the Fay Singer South African Jewish Music Centre collection, and music collections of individuals including Michael Blake, Surendran Reddy, Cloete Breytenbach and Anton Goosen (*Finding Aids*, 2012; Muller & De Jongh, 2012:2-3).¹⁰

⁹ The EOAN Collection was discovered after an enquiry to the archivist, Santie De Jongh, led to the eventual discovery of an immense collection stored under the stage of the Joseph Stone Theatre. Hilde Roos helped process this archive and wrote part of her PhD thesis on this group (Roos, 2012). Willemien Froneman completed her PhD thesis in 2012 on Boeremusiek and donated part of her fieldwork material to DOMUS. She has subsequently been instrumental in securing the donation of the Nico Carstens archive to DOMUS. The Jewish music collection was donated to DOMUS by Fay Singer after Annemie Stimie started research on Jewish music in South Africa during her Masters studies and the Anton Goosen collection was obtained by Etienne Viviers, a PhD candidate working on (amongst others) popular Afrikaans music. Various archives situated at universities function in this way, for example the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University (*Archives of Traditional Music*, 2007) and the Yale Music Archives (Samuel, 1994).

¹⁰ For a full list see *Finding Aids* (2012).

6.4. Sorting, cataloguing and digitisation

During the initial phases of DOMUS a workflow was set in place from a collection arriving till its final cataloguing. This workflow is still in use today and ranges from preliminary sorting, listing, arranging, describing and final cataloguing to the creation of finding aids. The first completed catalogues were those of the Michael Scott collection, and the collection of the conductor Albert Coates (donated to the university in 1957, but only opened in 2007) (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012; Muller 2011:3).¹¹

The first step once a collection comes into the archive is a preliminary sorting process, after which the material is arranged in boxes and roughly listed. The idea behind this rough list (or preliminary sorting list) is to give the archivist a broad estimate of what is contained in the collection and the state it is in. Since the final processing stages of cataloguing and numbering take very long, this preliminary (temporary) list could also assist researchers in finding material in the interim. This makes a collection relatively searchable without it having been completely processed. It also means that a researcher doesn't have to work through unsorted and un-catalogued collections (which would be restricted in most cases), but can use the list/box ratio to find material (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012). To date all the collections in DOMUS have been sorted and listed in this manner.

During the preliminary sorting process the material is sorted according to material type (photographs, letters, personal documents, etc.), and arranged chronologically or alphabetically (in the case of letters). These are then placed in boxes that contain folders and in some cases it is further subdivided using legers, taking great care to maintain the provenance of the collection.¹² It is also during this stage that the archivist removes rusted

¹¹ De Jongh states that this delay in processing collections is a common problem at all archives, not only in South Africa. For example, the Coates collection of about 1500 items took a year and a half to process. Although some work had been done previously on the Coates collection by lecturers at the department and some of their students, De Jongh indicated that this was very fragmented and she had to start from the beginning in order to process the collection efficiently (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012).

¹² De Jongh has noted that it should always be an imperative for the archivist to retain the provenance of the collection. Her own practice in this regard is that when something is taken from an original folder and split into two or three pamphlet boxes to make the material more manageable, it will be noted. In some cases the books or music scores within collections are sent to

staplers, pins and elastic bands that could prove damaging to the material. A rough list is then drawn up that refers to the boxes and folders. Hereafter the final time-consuming process begins according to which each document is described and given a unique number. These descriptions contain only information found on the documents, supplemented by keywords usually of people, institutions and musical compositions mentioned in the particular document. According to De Jongh (SdJ 02/04/2012) it is important for the archivist to note as much information as possible about the item in the final record. In this way the possibility for researchers to find the items they are searching for, is enlarged. The number of items in each folder is also broadly estimated and added to the catalogue, as well as notes on whether the material is under embargo or damaged (Ibid.; De Jongh 2011:3; Muller & De Jongh, 2005). Since most of the collections are by individuals or particular institutions, no generic genre classification is used in the description of music manuscripts or recordings. Collections as units are described by broad categories such as Western art music, contemporary music, Afrikaans popular music, punk music and boeremusiek.

Although De Jongh (SdJ 02/04/2012) notes that there are certain standard practices such as keeping specific content carriers together (for example photographs, letters and newspaper cuttings), each collection has its own unique problems and solutions.¹³ Therefore the sorting and cataloguing systems are reviewed with each collection and adapted to its requirements. This would include, for example, strict separation of photographs, letters and post cards from each other in one collection containing a large photographic component (for example the Michael Blake collection) or, in another case, leaving the photographs originally attached to the letters with the correspondence since the photograph collection is small (for example the Ivy Angove collection). In another context, letters would be arranged strictly

the open shelves of the library because it is impossible to keep, for example, multiple copies of standard repertoire scores within the archive. In the cases where these books contain inscriptions, annotations or for example fingerings, they are kept. A complete list is always drawn up of the contents of the collection when parts thereof are sent to the open shelves or sold. In some cases, the wills of donors stipulate that everything be kept together (such as the case with Arnold van Wyk) and in the case of prominent collections like Hubert du Plessis the books are all kept together.

¹³ As example De Jongh notes that in the Stegman collection, which mostly contained letters and photographs, it was unpractical to make cross references between every photograph and letter, whereas in smaller collections such as the Ivy Angove collection, cross references would be made between all the letters, photographs and other material. The Albert Coates collection, for instance, was described in a lot of detail because of its international importance. (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012).

alphabetically (Albert Coates collection), while in a different collection they would be left in the sequence maintained by the original donor (Graham Newcater collection). The finding aids of collections that have been catalogued and processed are then posted on the DOMUS website in PDF format, so that researchers may gain access to these materials, whereas preliminary inventories of collections (not finally catalogued) are available on request (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012). Although De Jongh (Ibid.) notes that the advantage of using a standard PDF file lies in its relative sustainability and the option of viewing an entire collection as a unit and not in fragments on a database, it causes certain problems. A researcher, for example, would have to do several searches in DOMUS after downloading various PDF files to see if relevant material is also contained in other collections.¹⁴ This system does in other words make cross-examination difficult and does not make provision for the diverse collections of DOMUS to interact with each other (collections are mostly used in isolation). The archivist may be able to assist the researcher in some cases, but a searchable database would ease this process considerably.

De Jongh is sceptical, however, about simply installing a database without it being “thoroughly tested and investigated because I don’t want to make something now just for it to change in two years’ time” (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012).¹⁵ To this end she relies on the infrastructure at the Library and Information Department at the University of Stellenbosch. As part of an extensive digitisation project, this department has started a process to investigate a new digital database and interface along with digital storage possibilities for the university and library (Ibid.). Although implementing such a new system is going to take a significant amount of time due to the various bureaucratic procedures required, De Jongh is of the opinion that the institution already has certain systems in place which will include all the test runs in the wake of introducing a new database. In addition she notes that such a new database will be worked on by people with the necessary skills and expertise to create the exact system wanted and sort out any technical problems and difficulties as they arise (Ibid.). In addition to these resources, the Library Department has launched a digitisation project and funding has been made available for DOMUS to identify an amount of material

¹⁴ More general collections such as “Theses and dissertations”, “Programmes” and “Music examinations”, which contain a variety of material, will therefore have to be searched separately in addition to the main collection the researcher is consulting.

¹⁵ The interview with Santie De Jongh has been translated from Afrikaans.

to be digitised.¹⁶ Until the launch of this project, DOMUS has mainly digitised small amounts of material “on demand”, i.e. material that was needed for exhibitions or requested by scholars (De Jongh, SdJ 02/04/2012). An added benefit of forming part of the existing university infrastructure is that the finding aids of DOMUS are added to the library catalogue and search engine in PDF format, making it available nationally as well as internationally through the Worldcat database (an international database linked to various libraries around the world). From time to time the Music Library also makes funds available for obtaining certain material, such as buying printed scores of composers already represented in the archive so that these works can be preserved, performed and studied (Ibid.).

The current level on which the archival practices of DOMUS function can be described as rather laborious and overly time-consuming in comparison with some of the more standard and automated systems described in the previous chapters. Lists are mostly drawn up in Microsoft Word, where one mistake would mean re-numbering all the following items or, finding a photograph in a stack of letters that was missed during preliminary sorting, could prove time consuming and frustrating work for the cataloguer who has to redo that entire section of the document. Since the archive is still relatively small and the collections come in one at a time and are manageable in terms of size, the system is still working. The question is, however, with DOMUS increasingly establishing itself as an archive of national renown, what will happen when collections start arriving more frequently and in bigger boxes?

6.5. Projects

Due to increasingly diverse collections in DOMUS’s holdings, the archive started hosting a large variety of projects within a wide spectrum of communities and musics of South Africa. The aims of these projects, according to Muller, are manifold. On one level they seek to “interact and collaborate with artists and composers who work and practice in their communities, with the public, as well as with scholars and musicians of other universities” (Muller, 2010:4-5). Muller believes that a multitude of interesting and diverse projects and the engagement of composers, performers, scholars and the community will serve to

¹⁶ The material to be digitised has been selected by Santie de Jongh from the Albert Coates and Stefans Grové collections.

generate questions that could lead “both to new knowledge and the creation of new music and fresh engagements with established music” (Ibid., 3). The involvement of composers and performers with the archive could, for example, facilitate the flow of material gathered in the archive into performances and the public domain (Muller, 2011a). Apart from generating knowledge, these projects have stimulated the creation of new material that has fed back into the archive. For example, when the permanent loan agreement for the EOAN Group collection was negotiated in 2008, a community engagement and oral history project became part of DOMUS’s activities, leading to the addition of new interview and film material to the existing collection (Muller, 2011:3).

In addition to facilitating these projects, DOMUS’s website provides access to the catalogued collections in the archive and serves as the platform hosting RILM South Africa’s activities,¹⁷ and a database compiled by Santie de Jongh that provides information on the existence, location and status of special music collections, both private and public, in South Africa (De Jongh 2009:24).¹⁸ Apart from hosting these databases, DOMUS, in collaboration with the Department of Library Services of the University of Pretoria, is creating an online database of historic South African journals and newspapers pertaining to music,¹⁹ and collecting the scores and recordings of composers active in the field of art music in Africa in an attempt to disseminate these works. Through acting as a platform for these initiatives, DOMUS hopes to facilitate other archives, archivists and scholars by providing information about the “existence, location and status of relevant primary sources” (Muller 2010:2; 2011).

DOMUS would thus appear to be driven to become an enabling space both for researchers, performers, composers and the community at large, ever expanding its own holdings and

¹⁷ The *Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale* (RILM), with the support of its global network, currently contains more than 540 000 records in 215 languages from 151 countries of both current and historic literature. De Jongh, with the help of an assistant, maintains the South African section of the bibliography relating to published music scholarship (RILM, 2010).

¹⁸ This database is currently not functioning, but efforts are being made to get it back online. For more information on this project see *South African Music Collections Database* (2011).

¹⁹ Currently the database consists of digitised Afrikaans material dating from the early 1900s to the 1950s and formed part of the master thesis of Annemie Stimie (2010). The potential of this database is envisioned to move beyond this collection to open up a larger body of knowledge that has previously been inaccessible or challenging to access. This database can be accessed via the DOMUS website (<http://www.domus.ac.za>).

generating critical debates and engagements.²⁰ Past projects included various exhibitions, three symposia held for composers Kevin Volans (2009), Michael Blake (2011), and Stefans Grové (2012); lecture demonstrations by Daniel-Ben Pienaar and Ray Holden (2010); workshops by Hannes Taljaard on set theory (2009) and workshops by Latozi Mpahleni Madosini on traditional Xhosa music (2009); two panel discussions entitled “Music and Exile” (2010) and “State of the Discipline” (2011) at national conferences; sponsoring the recording of Tete Mbambisa’s first solo album entitled *Black Heroes* (2011); contributing towards the first recording of the reggae group *Blaze* from Hangberg, Hout Bay (2011); hosting various concerts and performances as well as three film events of the work of Aryan Kaganof including the *Exhibition of Vandalizm* (2010), the *AK47* film festival where Kaganof’s films on kwaito, jazz and blues were screened (2011) and *The Uprising of Hangberg* by Dylan Valley and Aryan Kaganof (2011).

The screening of an *Exhibition of Vandalizm*, which documents a performance of Zim Ngqawana and Kyle Sheperd on the broken instruments and vandalised building of the Zimology Institute outside Johannesburg, inspired a group of post-graduate students to invite the two musicians to present the performance in a scrap yard in Stellenbosch. The *Uprising of Hangberg* was screened in Kayamandi, a mainly black township outside Stellenbosch, and documents eyewitness accounts of the attempts by the Western Cape Provincial Administration and the City of Cape Town to evict residents from their homes in Hangberg, Hout Bay. This film makes a strong statement as a political intervention and the community members of Hangberg were invited to attend the screening and take part in the discussion that followed afterwards. As part of this screening event, DOMUS arranged for the Rastafarian community from Cloeteville, another neighbouring township of Stellenbosch, to open proceedings with Nyabingi chanting and drumming and a reggae band called *Blaze* from the Hangberg community was invited to perform after the screening and discussion.

Thus, from enabling academic discussions and seminars, curating traditional Xhosa music, screening radical and political films (in the context of Stellenbosch), to the recording of a

²⁰ The success or failure of this enabling space is not being evaluated here, but could be a subject for further research.

local reggae rap group and the recording of renowned jazz pianist Tete Mbambisa, and supporting avant-garde jazz concerts and concerts for art music composers such as Graham Newcater and Michael Blake, DOMUS would seem, at least on the surface, to be actively involved in a range of radical events as well as pursuing eclectic collections: it appears to be an institution where the boundaries of what is possible within a fairly conservative music department is continuously pushed and pressured. It becomes clear from these projects that the archive takes on a far more active role within the community on an academic as well as a political plane than any of the other four archives discussed in this dissertation does.

However, since DOMUS does not have an advisory board, the decisions to get involved with so many diverse projects are determined solely by Muller's own disciplinary, political and personal strategies. For example, Muller (SM 04/04/2012) has noted that the decision to screen *The Uprising of Hangberg* was a particularly uncomfortable decision to make, and this is not unproblematic for the director of an archive:

I have an exceptionally good relationship with Aryan, I respect his work, but I thought that this fell outside the boundaries of what we were supposed to do. At the same time, he needed institutional backing for what he wanted to do. The question was whether I should be the one to give it to him. [...] Whether I would have done it if it was someone else who asked and not Aryan Kaganof, no.²¹

In the end, Muller decided to screen the film based on the quality of the work and on the grounds that Kaganof's collection was already in DOMUS. He pointed out (Muller, SM 04/04/2012):

if he made the request, even though it is something that I would not have done, I do it because it is almost an inevitable consequence of the original decision to make that contact. Perhaps this is an example of where, even against my own academic understanding of what DOMUS should do, we did things where the imperative of the archive took over to a certain degree.

²¹ The interviews and conversations with Stephanus Muller have been translated from Afrikaans.

Muller thus believes that even though he plays an integral part in determining DOMUS's character through the decisions he makes, the nature of the collection contained within its vaults and the networks the archive continues to establish, push even against his own boundaries. His eventual aim is that the archival core of DOMUS grows big enough so that it becomes a surplus of material that starts to inform and push decisions and actions, in this way starting to shape the discipline of musicology in an "un-policed manner" (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). However, Muller (Ibid.) notes that this will only become possible once more substantial funding is obtained:

we are beholden to money, it is terrible. Until we get that kind of money, we are functioning as a medieval organisation with non-medieval ideas. The function of DOMUS, until we can get the sort of money that will materialise these ideas, is basically a medieval function whereby we bring material in and preserve it against destruction and oblivion. We can do much more than that.

Although one can question whether the screening of *The Uprising of Hangberg* was the outcome of preserving that material, or whether it was mostly motivated by the Director's personal relationships, or both, one needs to ask whether this is a sustainable manner through which to move away from authoritarian decision-making to a situation where the archival material will start forcing the hand of those in charge. One could argue that an advisory board could easily fulfil that same purpose without necessarily changing the maverick character of the archive.

Ironically, since DOMUS does not allegedly align itself with a certain identifiable ideology, it becomes extremely difficult to obtain funding for the archive as a whole (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). DOMUS thus receives funding from various donors for particular projects ranging "from people concerned with urgent reform and different funding from people concerned with preserving the status quo" (Muller, 2011:4). For the projects that fall through the cracks, Muller uses his own research funds to cover basic expenses. This politics of funding, which I come back to in chapter 7, create an interesting friction between Muller's ideological aims for DOMUS and the ideology of the music department as a whole.

6.6. Frictions

As illustrated through its projects, DOMUS is not only interested in addressing preservation and collection needs, but is actively striving towards generating new and stimulating research and engagements with music (Muller, 2010:3). Although both Muller and his colleagues in the music department recognise that the core function of the archive should be preservation and the stimulation of research, the manner in which this was to be achieved was understood from the beginning in different ways. Both the previous head of the music department, Hans Roosenschoon, (who acted as head during the time DOMUS was established) and the current head of the music department, Winfried Lüdemann, were interviewed. Roosenschoon asked to speak off the record, and therefore cannot be quoted here. The current head of the Department observed (Lüdemann, WL 12/04/2012):

I think the main activity should be the research of material that is there. Of course DOMUS could do projects as such, also the project on Madosini and so on, collect and make sound recordings thereof, but I don't think DOMUS should in the first place... it can be one of those side activities, but I don't think DOMUS should in the first instance be a concert agency, and it should also not in the first instance be a training Centre.²²

Lüdemann's idea of what DOMUS should be doing is to encourage research mainly on the collections already housed in the archive, with perhaps a few extra functions such as recordings and occasional concerts on the side. However, these 'peripheral' activities are seen by Muller as far more central and imperative to his idea of how an archive should function – stimulating creative engagements with the material. Muller's imperatives, observed from my perspective as an insider albeit a post-graduate student (under his supervision), are considered by some people within the department as overtly political, advancing a personal agenda. This is a perception that Muller readily admits to (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). Yet, he says (Ibid.):

²² The interview with Winfried Lüdemann has been translated from Afrikaans.

nothing that DOMUS was doing could have been argued as academically suspicious – everything it stood for, the stimulation of post-graduate study, the unlocking of documentation, the rise in productivity and publications, the exploration of new fields or bringing various things in dialogue – nothing of which could be seen as academically unsound.

Since DOMUS and the group of post-graduate students connected to its activities through the supervision of Muller has led to a marked increase in publications, conference papers and interesting and challenging academic work,²³ and since Muller cannot be accused of mismanagement, the cause of friction and tension has to lie elsewhere. In my observation, DOMUS is on the faultline of divergent ideological positions in the department, the effect being a kind of disciplinary friction entangled with questions of departmental and personal politics, between a musicology apparently still rooted in the 1960s, and an allegedly more radical and political ‘new musicology’ (although dating from the 1980s). There thus seem to be two frictions at play here, illustrating the diffuse nature of power and politics as found in this archival institution and environment. On the one hand, DOMUS is departing from the traditional role of the archive as a storage place to be used for research, to a promoter of South African music, broadening the function of the archive and its role in the music society; and on the other hand it creates a friction between different disciplinary approaches and personal motivations to the scholarly study of music.

Muller points out that on one level DOMUS was accepted by the department as a project on the grounds of its function to conserve, collect and preserve, especially DOMUS’s initial focus “on the conservation of Western art music in South Africa, appealed to the department and the university” (Muller, 2011:3). However, due to the involvement of an increasingly diverse community of musicians, the holdings of DOMUS expanded to include more and more diverse musics which gave Muller the impetus to start launching a wider range of projects that in some cases might be seen as politically radical projects. As the archival collections expanded and the projects Muller launched grew in number and frequency, Muller started to experience an increasing passive resistance towards the project

²³ See footnote 9, p.177.

of DOMUS (Ibid., 4). He notes: “I was, after all, supposed to be making catalogues and not to be holding community meetings or hosting composers or performers” (Ibid., 3).

A further level of friction between DOMUS and the Department of Music results from the way Muller is seen to have positioned and continues to manage DOMUS.²⁴ Without an advisory board, his decisions and scholarly approach alone determine the character of the archive. In addition, he also maintains the biggest single group of post-graduate students in the department, almost all of whom are involved in the projects related to DOMUS or whose research will become part of DOMUS’s holdings.²⁵ Muller (04/04/2012) is aware of the dangers in this very significant dual role he plays:

I don’t find anything that I do unproblematic. Everything is problematic: the political involvement is problematic, the complicities of the discipline from within are problematic and necessary, the distance between the department and DOMUS is problematic and necessary. Nothing about it is secure or safe. I am not secure in an ideology of liberalism, or allied with a type of communist workers class ideology, or allied with an Afrikaans nationalist environment. We sit, like that prophet outside Niniveh, without even a cucumber plant that comes up to give us shelter against the sun.

This quote speaks of a deep vulnerability and sense of responsibility – perhaps the most important aspects of Muller’s management of DOMUS. Nothing in his relationship to the archive is sure or pre-determined, but calculatedly opened up to the outside, inviting to various manifestations of difference and problematisation. The above mentioned quote also speaks to his disillusionment with a system that Muller experiences as oppressive and limiting, and to a responsibility towards South Africa’s recent past. Muller believes that this responsibility is inescapable and crucial to the Afrikaans environment in which DOMUS originated (Muller, SM 04/04/2012):

Afrikaners like me have an outspoken relationship with the complicities of our past [...] we are geared differently towards how we are positioned in the past, there is a responsibility

²⁴ This emerged during my interviews with both the current and former heads of the Department of Music.

²⁵ Refer to footnote 8, p.176.

towards the past, but also towards what is happening now and towards the future.

Responsible Afrikaners do not have an opt out clause regarding the future.

For Muller (ibid.), this past goes hand in hand with a moral responsibility. Through DOMUS's archival activities this responsibility found expression in expanding the remit of the archive beyond merely collection, preservation and cataloguing to actively engaging with the community at large. Muller (2011:4) notes, "collections poured in from the full gamut ranging from social and political cultural anarchists to musical traditionalists," tension grew, and "by 2011 the Documentation Centre for Music had, to my considerable amazement, become a pivot between competing ideologies" (ibid.).

However, within all of these processes, projects and performances, the ordering and cataloguing of material is seen "as an indispensable first step towards enabling original research" (Muller 2010:4). DOMUS thus emerge as a site of contradictions – at once conservative and radical, traditional and experimental (Muller, 2011a). In spite of these ideas and DOMUS's vision, the archival system on which it currently depends is less than optimal and prohibits the testing of the archive's main hypotheses regarding dialogue and connections and the enabling of interesting and creative research. Only a PDF system and no searchable database is not sufficient to make this happen.

6.7. Envisioning the future

DOMUS is still a relatively young institution in comparison with the other archives discussed in this dissertation. In addition, it has been run, managed and structured by the same individual since its establishment eight years ago. Where other archivists such as those at the SABC have had to deal with a long institutionalised past, DOMUS in comparison has had the opportunity to grapple with relative ease and autonomy with its positioning within the institution where it is situated, and develop its mandate, policies and practices. In some ways the aspirations of the Director of DOMUS for the archive, discussed above, are ahead of the archive's physical reality; yet, it has already had an impact on its immediate academic environment. The next section will explore some of these aspirations.

6.7.1. Informing the discipline

DOMUS is an archive that has been created to serve the discipline of music, both in terms of housing a body of physical material and in terms of stimulating research, projects, performances, seminars, etc. Robert Post defines a discipline as a body of knowledge and “a set of practices by which that knowledge is acquired, confirmed, implemented, preserved, and reproduced” (Post, 2009:751). This is a generally accepted definition,²⁶ and its apparent links to the archive cannot be mistaken. In general an archive preserves a body of documents or knowledge that is used and reproduced (in various ways) by scholars or the public. In its capacity as a music archive, DOMUS serves to maintain the discipline through preserving its material and stimulating research, but it could also challenge the very parameters of that discipline by the collections it houses and the subsequent research it invites.

From its onset, Muller conceptualised DOMUS as an interventionist strategy to effect change within a department and discipline that Muller perceived as deeply in crisis with too little publication and post-graduate students and a curriculum that refuses to engage with the broad context of South African music (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). For Muller, this crisis does not lie with the department’s focus on Western art music, but with the lack of engagement with the possibilities that South Africa offers to composers, researchers and performers (Ibid.). A recent *Consensus Study on the State of the Humanities in South Africa*, drawn up by the Academy of Science of South Africa, has confirmed that “there is a crisis in the Humanities” (ASSAF, 2011). Within the report there has been an overarching consensus amongst the individuals at tertiary institutions interviewed for this study that the curriculum and research agendas within Humanities Departments in South Africa need to be addressed: “we can’t transform the demographics of the staff and then have a curriculum that’s hanging over from the ‘60s, or ‘70s or ‘80s that is not dynamic” (Ibid. 40).²⁷

²⁶ See for instance the themed journal of *Critical Enquiry* vol. 35(4) that came out in 2009 under the title “The Fate of the Disciplines”.

²⁷ Some of the tertiary institutions consulted in drawing up the report included the Central University of Technology, Durban University of Technology, Rhodes University, Stellenbosch University, Tshwane University of Technology, University of Cape Town, University of Fort Hare, University of

This crisis is arguably expressed when an undeniably affluent music department with significant infrastructure at its disposal, situated at a university with uncontested ties to the Apartheid past,²⁸ makes little progress in engaging with a wider context than Western art music and adapting its curriculum to reflect the greater society of which it forms a part. Within this context, Muller (2011:6) sees DOMUS as fulfilling a pivotal role through “maintaining the intellectual integrity of music as an academic discipline on the one hand, and stimulating radical disciplinary reform within the context of crisis on the other”. Muller (SM, 04/04/2012) notes that through the acquisition of collections, and the projects launched by DOMUS, contacts are established with people. These contacts, he continues,

create the opportunity for a deeply conservative university and departmental environment to connect with people in a bona fide manner; people who may not feel welcome here under normal circumstances. [...] the moment we start getting those collections other types of studies will become possible and we cannot police it.

Due to DOMUS’s open acquisitions policy, according to which no collection is turned away and the department has no influence in deciding on the value of collections, studies in popular music, perhaps even jazz and African music will become possible in future despite the fact that the current curriculum does not encourage engagement with these musics on a serious and critical level (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). This policy has already facilitated the work of Willemien Froneman on boeremusiek (the collection now forms part of DOMUS) and Hilde Roos on the EOAN opera group. Recently a part-time lecturer, Graham Pringle, has also used the Ernie Papp punk music collection in his module on rock music. Although

Johannesburg, University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Pretoria, University of South Africa and the University of the Free State. For a full list see ASSAF, (2011:53).

²⁸ The University of Stellenbosch has a historical past with some of the founding fathers of Apartheid including D. F. Malan, B. J. Voster and Hendrik Verwoerd, who all studied or taught at this institution (see Korf, 2010; Gilliomee, 2003). The University has subsequently been described as “the birthplace of Apartheid” (Malan, 2006:6). This legacy has sometimes been an obstacle for DOMUS: for example, in acquiring the (‘Coloured’) EOAN Opera Group collection for DOMUS, long negotiations were needed with the community. Eventually both parties agreed on a permanent loan agreement of 99 years. Similarly, when the film maker Aryan Kaganof publicly donated his interview tapes with former Blue Notes double bassist Johnny Dyani to DOMUS, he asked the audience to reflect on “what this donation to the historical intellectual home of Apartheid revealed about the institutionally precarious state of South Africa’s musical heritage” (Kaganof, 2010).

Pringle has included punk music in his lectures before, he has indicated that because the collection is held in DOMUS, it provided the impetus to include punk music in more detail and “and gave his coursework more depth” (Pringle, 2012).

Muller envisions DOMUS as a Trojan horse within the Music Department, a nexus for people outside of the institution to connect to the archive and a way for the university to provide institutional support to projects and individuals who would not be able to find support within the dominant paradigms of the discipline of music as taught at the University of Stellenbosch (Muller, 2011a).²⁹ In this way DOMUS has become “a space of experimentation and renewal” because “adequate provision for such engagements was not made in formal teaching or performance spaces – an abrogation of disciplinary responsibility” (Muller, 2011:3). In this capacity, DOMUS provided the institutional space to investigate the curatorship of Latozi Mpahleni Madosini’s art after the composer Hans Huyssen requested institutional space to work with her. In her informal workshops, Madosini brought a new way of teaching, enthusiasm and energy to music students. In one particularly animated workshop I saw impassive students come to life with her music, enthusiastically teaching the words and dance steps of Madosini’s songs to each other (October, 2009). Through projects such as these and those described above DOMUS aims to function as an enabling space for students, researchers, musicians and artists to connect with people both inside and outside the university structure and to engage in stimulating and challenging ways with the discipline.

However, within such an archival system geared towards affecting change and renewal, the fact that it is steered by the decisions of only one individual becomes problematic. The redefinition of an education system or an institution as it is proposed by Muller constitutes

²⁹It is interesting to note that the Centre of Andean Ethnomusicology (founded in 1985) at the Riva-Agüero Institute of Peru’s Catholic University also refers to their archive as a Trojan horse. The main aim of this centre is to “record, preserve and make Andean musical traditions known in Peru and Abroad” (Tenorio, 2004:161). Tenorio notes that due to the “modern sense of identity in Peru which is constructed on the basis of denying its past history and traditions in favour of the modern and the foreign” the traditional music archive has been set up so that public “would discover, as if anew, the traditional roots of their own music” (Ibid.). He therefore notes, “giving the descendants of the performers access to this music would act as a Trojan horse for the discovery of their traditions” (Ibid., 168).

new agents of power. Such an intervention strategy (as the one proposed by DOMUS) might run the risk of replacing one regime with a “new regime of truth” (Foucault, 1991).³⁰ Read within this context, Muller’s position could in effect be read as a claim to all power under the semblance of good intentions. It is perhaps here that the discrepancy between the vision of DOMUS and its actual reality becomes clear. Muller’s democratic vision for this archive of providing a space for a broad notion of music spanning all communities in South Africa is contradicted by the structure of an archive where a form of un-democratic decision making takes place without an advisory board.

However, as an archive located at a university DOMUS is pivotally positioned within the discipline of music studies and the institution legitimizing such studies. Muller’s extended group of post-graduate students are challenging the discipline methodologically and theoretically in ways that will inform the archive in the form of field notes, interviews, recordings, photographs and the collections of individuals and subjects determined by scholarly interest and not departmental or university policies, or necessarily by Muller’s own intentions. The discipline is thus first and foremost placed under pressure by the archive, but is mediated through the scholars who work within the discipline. Their work is supported by the archive (the collections), and ultimately feeds back into it. Therefore, DOMUS “serves to maintain the discipline almost by default, because it develops from a continually expanding centre of disciplinary consensus or material” (Muller, 2011:7). Interesting and challenging collections and engagements thereof can in turn challenge the discipline and adapt the curriculum in a continually changing and expanding mode of teaching. Therefore, Muller (SM 04/04/2012) postulates that a curriculum grounded in the archive will continually be renewed, because the archive is continuously opened up further by individuals. A porous institute without a restrictive acquisitions policy, one that involves outstanding academics and scholars can develop in unforeseen ways.

DOMUS thus functions both on a conservative and traditional level (in maintaining the discipline through preservation) as well as on a radical and experimental plane (through pushing and challenging the boundaries of the discipline). With regard to the former, Muller

³⁰ I would like to thank Ralf Kohler for bringing this to my attention.

(SM 04/04/2012) notes that archives should function like banks that follow safe investment models and don't work experimentally with assets or money. He believes it is exactly this conservative function of the archive that allows for radical and disciplinary challenging scholarship and projects to take place because (Muller, SM 04/04/2012):

the archive provides concrete material anchors to the past. You can almost say that it creates a sort-of non-relativising historical remnant that can be used creatively, make use of different structures and registers and empower various paradigms but which nonetheless keeps a concrete link with the past. In this setup the archive becomes a thing that gives wings to original, brave and creative academic work because it is so conservative and grounded.

Because of the variety of projects launched by DOMUS, Muller believes that the archive does not have a political agenda since it is based on "disciplinary rather than political values" (Muller, 2011:8). I would argue however, that DOMUS's mandate, open acquisitions policy and functions point above all to a political agenda: one aligned to transformation, recognition, restoration and change of music studies into a recognisably South African discipline.³¹

6.7.2. A project of recognition

In his essay, *The Politics of Recognition* (1994), the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor notes how "a number of strands in contemporary politics turn on the need, sometimes the demand, for recognition" (Taylor, 1994:25). This demand is given urgency by the understanding that "non-recognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being" (Ibid.). This non-recognition was exactly the violence of the Apartheid archive, the misrecognition of cultures and peoples in South Africa, the silencing of their histories. After the transition to a democratic South Africa, archives looked to transform their practices by including previously marginalised cultures in the archival record through actively collecting,

³¹ I use the term 'political' here to denote the relations between the collective and the individual, the human community and being in the world not necessarily aligned to governmental politics.

preserving and making available these histories. Archives were thus re-situated not only as institutions receiving material from the institutions they serve, but as active collecting agencies with a mandate to preserve and recover the “memory” of the obscured and ignored, giving it a place in the South African archive (see for instance Morrow & Wotshela, 2005:313).³²

Various archives initiated projects specifically geared towards collecting oral histories of previously neglected and marginalised communities. Examples include the ANC Oral History Project, the Oral History Programme of the National Archives of South Africa (NASA), the South African History Archive (SAHA) and the South African Democracy Education Trust (SADET) (See Morrow & Wotshela, 2005:325).³³ However, Morrow and Wotshela (2005:325) note that

there is a tendency for such projects to place politics in the foreground, albeit resistance politics. Ironically, in the best funded and most officially favoured spheres of historical and social research, the democratic revolution has been accompanied by a privileging of politics above agrarian, labour, cultural, gender and other areas of social life.

Although there are archives and programmes that strive towards the local and marginal such as the Gay and Lesbian Archives, the District Six Museum and the Employment Bureau of Africa facilitating the exploration of alternative sexualities, local communities and the life of migrant labourers in South Africa (Morrow & Wotshela, 2005:325), an overwhelming majority of such projects remain aligned to resistance politics (McEwan, 2003:739). As

³² Refer to chapter 1, p.30.

³³ The ANC Oral History Project conducted and transcribed 133 oral histories of ANC leaders in South Africa between 2000 and 2006 and it “was designed to preserve accounts of the lives and struggles of those who fought Apartheid in South Africa” (Love, 2007). The National Archives and Records Service’s National Oral History Programme is geared towards “actively collecting non-public records which would fill the gaps in our social memory and in documenting of our nation’s experiences.” (*National Archives and Records Service of South Africa*). The South African History Archive (SAHA) holds collections of interviews donated to their archive, including over 260 South African anti-Apartheid activists and leaders. These interviews were conducted by Julie Frederikse between 1979 and 1990. SAHA also holds oral histories conducted on behalf of SAHA such as the 1981 Detainees Oral History Project and the “‘Forgotten’ Voices in the Present” Oral History Project. (*Oral Histories*). SADET focuses on collecting the stories and experiences of South Africans under the Apartheid government (*The Road to Democracy Project*).

remarked in the previous chapter, this paints a troubling picture of the violence of the Apartheid archive being replaced by a robust, if not violent, Anti-Apartheid archive.

There are ongoing debates in South Africa concerning the transformation of archives, the need for a critical approach, and that archives are in themselves conduits and constructions of power (see for instance Hamilton *et al.*, 2002; Morrow & Wotshela, 2004; Harris, 2011). While these debates have also informed this study, the power of the archive could also be harnessed towards a project of recognition and transformation. The archival functions of collecting, preserving, and dissemination could serve a strong restorative purpose in South Africa. It could be harnessed into an act of recognition. Although this is by no means a new argument, and the interplay between the archive, memory, history and justice has been dealt with by many scholars and politicians, it seems that in practice this rhetoric has become necessary to secure funding. History has become a means to an end, leaving local and peripheral communities sidelined.

This carelessness towards individuals and communities and their contributions culminates for Muller in a complete feeling of loss and humiliation: “the humiliation that an international scholar such as Denis-Constant Martin should come to Stellenbosch and give seminars about Cape Coon music that happens right outside our doors, while no-one here has yet studied it”, that “those communities do not feel welcome here, that we don’t have courses in that music” (Muller, SM 04/04/2012). Muller (*Ibid.*) continues to say that

There is nothing dignified about that, we cannot be proud about that, and it is here that the archive becomes the point where we start correcting this. It’s a deeply restorative thing.

These acts of recognition lie for Muller (SM 04/04/2012) with the restoration of dignity and inter-personal relationships facilitated through the archive.³⁴ Muller (*Ibid.*) notes that a certain dignity is linked to “knowing what we have in our own”:

³⁴ Another community archive in South Africa, the District Six Museum Sound Archive, similarly views their practice in relation to activism and community upliftment. A founding vision of the sound archive is “an activist role, helping to stimulate the production of new knowledge. In this scheme, the archives may become the engine of a documentation project from which new constructions of public history may emerge” (Layne, 2004:188). Seeger and Chaudhuri point out that archives can

This was my experience with EOAN, it was my experience with all the archives that came to us, material that would not normally have come into an archive. Primarily it restores relationships between the university and us, the individuals in the university and the individuals out there, and this is a wonderful thing.

A lack of funding and sufficient infrastructure such as storage space is currently prohibiting DOMUS from taking its mandate and collection policies further, and Muller has noted that if the funding were available they would have taken in collections ten-fold and launched many more interesting projects (Muller, SM 04/04/2012).

6.8. Conclusion

One of the main loci for the debate about multiculturalism and “recognition” takes place within education and the curriculum. Taylor notes that recognition within a debate over the curriculum is not only about “giv[ing] recognition to the hitherto excluded” but is also an action that “stretches beyond mere recognition [...] to an acknowledgement of worth” (Taylor, 1994: 64; 65-66). The mission of DOMUS, linked to the expansion of the discipline through an open acquisitions policy and stimulating projects, allows for a creative and critical engagement with a broad, inclusive South African music landscape. The vision for DOMUS is an open, porous institution where materials taken up in the archive and used by scholars will necessarily put pressure on the discipline and eventually feed into the curriculum taught at undergraduate level. However, the power struggles between the Department of Music and DOMUS are constraining in terms of actually creating new research on a much broader scale than just through Muller’s post-graduate group and researchers.

DOMUS’s collection policy and focus on building ties to the scholarly and local communities outside the music department, is deeply involved in “politics of recognition”. Although there

function as a community service of the university. They note: “Universities often have as part of their missions some form of outreach service to the general population. Archives are one way for administrators to demonstrate that they are serving the general public by helping people preserve their culture and retrieve it” (Seeger & Chaudhuri, 2004b:265).

is a strong transformational discourse at large archival repositories, these institutions work, for the most part, on national scale with big projects where the individual, the marginal, and the small communities are still to a large extent under-represented. It is within this context that smaller, focused archives have a vital role to play within the communities they form a part of.

Conclusion to Part II

An exploration of the historical narrative and archival systems at the five music archives demonstrated the power relations archives function in as well as the power mechanisms archives employ to fulfil their function of collection and preservation. Each archive serves a different purpose, from ILAM established to preserve what was considered as a disappearing African tradition for African scholars as well as to serve the academic community; DOMUS was established to serve the academic and larger community through functioning as an interventionist strategy into the discipline of music. The SABC and Gallo archives are both serving the information and preservation needs of the companies who established them, with the SABC serving as a national archive connected to notions of nation and nationhood and Gallo as a commercial archive. In contrast, HYMAP, a privately owned collection, is serving as a placeholder for a past that remains inaccessible and lost, a past that was characterised by great loss and destruction.

An interrogation of some archival methodologies such as recording, classification and repatriation projects, using ILAM as a case study, has revealed some of the challenges these mainly Western concepts hold for an archive of African music. ILAM has demonstrated that the way the archival record is created and the process of archive making is highly contentious and should be considered as part of the documents to be analysed when doing research. The SABC has demonstrated how archival classification and description can carry the ideological markers of a previous government through classification. In contrast, the Gallo Record Archive has demonstrated that an archive without some sort of generic classification system become closed to potential users. Therefore it is not only company policies and politics that play a role in closing the archive, but the archival systems can also be part of that process. Similarly the HYMAP collection has illustrated how archival methodologies, such as listing and digitisation can lead to an archive falling into even more chaos than before it was employed. This chapter shows how important it is that certain basic archival practices such as sorting and arranging are applied strategically since it serves a vital purpose in effective archiving. Lastly DOMUS has illustrated how archival procedures and techniques as well as certain power relations between ideological and disciplinary perspectives can be restrictive in terms of the archive reaching its envisioned goal of

producing research. However, this archive has also demonstrated how these frictions and difference can be utilised to effect change and function, through its projects and collection policy, as a project of recognition.

Part III

Conceptualising apparatus of capture

Imagine two scenarios: In the first it suddenly becomes possible to keep a copy of every single document created, and, for these documents, a perfect, instantaneous retrieval system. In the second, and less blissful, vision the upper atmosphere fills with reverse neutron bombs, heading toward every records repository. These are bombs that destroy records only, not people. They come down and obliterate every record of any sort. Keeping these two events in separate parts of your mind, project forward a century. How different would the two resultant worlds be? In the first would our descendants, having all the information that it is possible to derive from documents, have, therefore, all knowledge? And if they have all knowledge would they have, therefore, all wisdom? In the second, lacking the records we have as of this moment, would our descendants wander in a world of anarchy, in a world in which they would be doomed to repeat the errors of the past? I leave it to you to conjecture as you please. My own guess is that between these two worlds there wouldn't be all that much difference.

- Rapport, 1981:150

Chapter 7

The archive's apparatus of capture

7.1. Introduction

Archival institutions are established for a variety of reasons which are determined by specific cultural and socio-economic realities and pressures (Burton, 2005:6). These pressures are never stable and their influence on archives, both as spaces and as records, are evident in the ever shifting value attached to archival holdings and institutions. The changing socio-political context in South Africa and its impact on the establishment of the five music archives discussed in this dissertation is a case in point. The SABC Sound and Radio archive was established in 1960 during a time when Apartheid regulations and policies were implemented with more rigour than ever before, and the archive served as a tool to uphold and support the power of the state through its Broadcasting Corporation. In contrast, the transition to democracy in 1990 gave impetus to both the Gallo Record Company and David Marks (spurred on by academic scholars and supporters) to create official archives. The change in political power and societal dynamics gave their archival material added nostalgic, informational and commercial value. Conversely, this change in political power effectively meant that what was regarded with the highest esteem by the previous ruling minority lost prestige in the new dispensation. What was deemed valuable enough to preserve and to make accessible changed, and growing political uncertainty created the fear that what was previously deemed valuable would now be discarded. It was in this context that DOMUS was created in 2005 to safeguard the musical heritage of that past.

Because of the demonstrable influence of socio-political circumstances on archives and their holdings, archives have been increasingly scrutinised by scholars not as institutions containing sources, but as institutions influenced by various forms of power structures. From the earliest records of archives, scholars have shown how archives were established to serve those in power and maintain that power in society (see for example Posner, 1972;

Cook, 1997).¹ This dissertation explored and interrogated the various processes involved in 'archive making' within a larger critical discourse on archives. Specifically focussing on music and sound archives connected to various institutions enabled the interrogation of these power structures from multiple perspectives. Taking to heart the call of Nicholas Dirks (2002), Ann Stoler (2002) and Antoinette Burton (2005) that an ethnography of the archive should examine not only the logic of the archive, its forms of classification, ordering and exclusions, but also the researcher's archival stories and physical encounters with the archive, the broad argument of this dissertation moved from an in-depth investigation of archival theory and methodology to an ethnography of the archive that made the researcher's archival stories part of the text. This chapter will serve as a concluding section for the dissertation, providing space for a reflection on the five case studies, and a consideration of what archival theory, as presented in the first chapter of this dissertation, could contribute to discussions about the power of the archive.

7.2. Archival stories

Exploring music archives in South Africa through self-reflexive ethnographic methods and historical analyses revealed archives and the collections they contained as constructed by various processes of compiling and ordering knowledge. As Da Cunha (2004) has noted, such a line of enquiry allows one to examine how particular sources or archives are "constituted, sedimented and utilized". Archives are shown in this dissertation not only as places containing information, but also as valuable sites for investigation that could reveal hidden assumptions underlying some of its most basic practices, and potentially add to an understanding of the various perspectives and approaches adopted in music histories. An ethnographic approach further allowed first-hand experience of systems, institutions and individuals, the experience of the archive as a place with a certain character and atmosphere. These experiences form an important part of archival work, as Ballantyne (2005:100) has noted: "archivists can play an important role in shaping the research

¹ Some of the earliest examples of revolt against those in power included the destruction of archival repositories and records. Eric Posner (1972:85, 183), for example, demonstrates that examples exist in ancient Egypt from around 2200 B.C. and Republican Rome of revolutionary upheaval which was not only directed against "power structures," but also against the records on which its rule was based, (where records repositories were destroyed or tampered with).

trajectory of historians, the buildings that house archives can suggest certain types of historical visions and legitimate particular historical narratives". Indeed my own archival encounters were mediated by archivists who determined to a large extent upon which material my view was focussed and what material I found. Since no prior arrangements were made regarding consulting specific documents and my time at each archive was limited, the material the archivists deemed important played a significant role in shaping my research. By way of illustration: I was immediately given Hugh Tracey's catalogue to the *Sound of Africa* series when I arrived at ILAM, and David Marks introduced his archive by showing me his lists. Although the level at which I engaged with the material differed from archive to archive, even where I did not use it directly it provided valuable entry points into collections, for example at the SABC. Similarly my entry into DOMUS and the more general world of archival systems in practice, was partly mediated by DOMUS's archivist.

My time in the field created the opportunity for reflection on the archive as both a physical institution functioning in practical realms with supposedly logical systems, and the possible influence of these systems and spaces on the interpretation of the material contained by it. Just as the historical context and the archival methodologies and theories practiced in archives provide the scaffolding for the 'stories' the archivist will tell, the researcher's personal encounter with place, archivists, systems and materials will become the scaffolding in constructing her story. Being 'in the field' thus played a major role in shaping my writing. Although the application and use of the ethnographic material gathered during my fieldtrips vary, this material continuously informs the arguments presented in chapters 2 to 6. It was the physical archive building, with the wall dedicated to Hugh Tracey (a wall covered in photographs and containing a bust of him) and the enthusiasm and dedication of those who work at ILAM to honour his legacy, which provided the impetus for turning my attention specifically to Hugh Tracey and not to Andrew Tracey or Diane Thram. At Gallo, 'being in the field' consisted out of interviews, driving around trying to find the archive and eventually spending a day in the archive. This led to a consideration of the archive as a passive storage place versus an active space. My understanding of the state of the HYMAP archive and its presence in the Marks family home would have been significantly different had I not spent time observing Marks's activities. Similarly, 'being in the field' made it possible to pick up on the hidden tension and friction involved in the running of the DOMUS archive.

Reflecting on extracts from field journals provided an important tool for me to stay aware of how I situated myself within both the ethnographic fieldwork and the interpretation thereof in writing. As Barz (2008:208-209) has noted, fieldnotes reveal the process whereby the researcher “attempts to understand personal and social experience,” and as such, it “challenges how we represent interpretation.” By including my archival stories in this dissertation, I would like to acknowledge my own processes of story-telling. As Burton (2005:20) notes, “stories – in whatever narrative form – embed as many secrets and distortions as archives themselves; their telling encodes selective disclosures, half truths, and partial pasts no more or less than do histories ‘proper’.” The selection and inclusion of entries from my field journals, serve to illustrate five main concerns that have profoundly shaped my archival encounters: finding balance, suspicion, being lost, hero worship and personal bias.

Throughout chapters 2 to 6 the difficulty of representation inherent in ethnographic writing is present in the struggle to find balance between the voices of informants, history and critical interpretation. It is by now accepted practice in ethnographic writing that the participant observation and interpretation of material involves the researcher as a subjective being, whose actions will be shaped by her background, academic training and personality (see for example Barz & Cooley (eds.), (2008); Perks & Thomson (eds.), (2006)). The degree to which personal relationships, loyalty and responsibility take shape during fieldwork through spending time in people’s homes, work environments and listening to their life stories, makes the finding of balance also contingent on the relationships with informants. Some of my informants had led extraordinary lives, and their stories of steam trains, music festivals and overcoming adversity inspired moments of real awe. Similarly, respect for my supervisor and a high regard for the ideas he shared with me over the course of my PhD, made it very hard to disentangle myself from the discussions we had and to treat these ideas critically. However, as Amit (2000:3) has noted, no matter how “sincere and nuanced the attachment they express, ethnographic fieldworkers are still also exploiting this intimacy as an investigative tool”. This realisation made me intensely aware of how I represented some of the oral sources with whom I had a closer relationship. I hesitated to include certain statements or particular extracts from their interviews, for example, even

though it might have bolstered the eventual arguments. Muller was unguarded and frank in our interview, and I purposefully left out certain broad or unqualified statements to protect him. In the case of David Marks, I felt responsible for writing about his archive in detail, in part due to the reliance he seemed to have placed in my work and my person to ‘make something happen’ for his archive. The constant awareness of the “implied audience” for my work (Wong, 2008:83), which included both the academic community and the informants who move in varied environments or social contexts, most of them not academic, meant that I had to constantly make decisions between academic integrity and loyalty to my informants. This sense of ‘ethnographic responsibility’ became a central concern in my writing, especially when informants’ accounts or ideological positions went against my own.

Generally, my informants either reacted to my questions and interaction with some distrust – guarding their stories, refusing to speak on the record or closely monitoring the material I had access to – or they shared their stories and knowledge freely. Ironically, it was in the latter instances where I found myself treating some of my informants, in turn, with suspicion. This suspicion, which has its roots in my former training in Habermasian ideology critique, made me wary of the ways individuals could re-invent themselves and their complicities during our interviews, or even be unaware of the ideological implications of their actions. The historical past of archival institutions in South Africa, my academic focus on the power structures in which archives function and that they serve to maintain, further added caution to my methods and suspicion played a role in my situatedness within the field. My suspicion was aggravated in situations where I could not gain access to the field during crucial times of my research. Having to wait for bureaucratic systems to grant access to archives or material I required, cost me many frustrating hours.

These experiences introduced the concept of ‘being lost’ in a very palpable way when I researched the Gallo Record Archive. Once I had started writing about this experience, I could recognise that ‘being physically lost’ was a highly relevant metaphor for a more metaphysical awareness of archival confusion. I often felt ‘lost in the archive’ during my research, not knowing where to start searching or how to find what I was looking for, or even if I was asking the right questions. After conducting my first case study at ILAM I

realised that for the most part the material I collected without knowing how it could be of use, supported the argument that had taken shape through my observations and interviews. In reflecting on being lost on both physical and metaphysical levels, I recognised both states as inevitably belonging to ethnographic fieldwork. As Walter Benjamin (1997:298) noted, in another context:

Not to find one's way in a city may well be uninteresting and banal. It requires ignorance – nothing more. But to lose oneself in a city – as one loses oneself in a forest – that calls for quite different schooling. Then, signboard and street names, passers-by, roofs, kiosks, or bars must speak to the wanderer like a cracking twig under his feet in the forest.

This passage suggests the active participation in the process of 'getting lost' – a deliberate effort to reject pre-conceived notions of direction or making the 'right' decisions. Although, as mentioned before, one can never fully escape training or theoretical conceptions, my 'getting lost' in the archive meant that I stumbled upon material I would not have found or considered had I fully worked out a path and plan of action before I went to the archives. Such a methodological approach meant that interviews took interesting turns, and allowed chance encounters with material as well as people. As Rebecca Solnit (2005:22) has noted, "getting lost is about the unfamiliar appearing". The stumbled upon, intuitive paths I ended up following and the "unfamiliar appearing", provided in each case study the key towards building a critical argument. I spent a large amount of time looking at the lists Marks set out before me, without really knowing what do with them. In the end they became less of a tool or a function than the essence of that particular archive. In spite of the fact that it is an archive I am intimately acquainted with (or perhaps because of this), I felt more lost in DOMUS than in any of the archives investigated in my other case studies. Yet, finding my own voice amongst those of my informants led to my thoughts on the power of the archive as a restorative tool of recognition. Getting lost in the SABC's computer systems while browsing through their catalogue, forgetting where I was in relation to my search, or how to get back to where I started, sparked my thinking about their classification and description systems. Perhaps most fieldwork relies partly on getting lost, a journey of which not all paths can be known or predicted before entering an ethnographic field.

Traditionally in ethnography, the concepts ‘field’ and ‘home’ have been understood through the metaphor of travel that “incorporated a presumption that ‘home’ is stationary while the field is a journey away” (Amit, 2008:8). However, Amit remarks that “it is a presumption which is undone as much by the cognitive and emotional journeys which fieldworkers make in looking at familiar practices and sites with new ethnographic lenses” (Ibid.). I experienced this time and again, where a situation or environment I knew, grew strange and unfamiliar the moment I entered the ‘field’ as an ethnographer. Embarking on my first fieldtrip to ILAM, I noticed how what had seemed familiar in the past, suddenly seemed strange.² Similarly, approaching DOMUS as an ethnographer made a significant difference in the way I viewed the archive and its systems than when I assisted the archivist with cataloguing. As such, ‘home’ and the ‘field’ took on the function, in the words of Caroline Knowles (2000:55), of concepts “used to distinguish the everyday life of the social investigator from the task of investigation, and from the lives of the objects of their narratives”.

Due to personal bias, undeclared motivations and disciplinary background it was important to be aware of my own position during the process of writing – a process of contemplation greatly aided by my fieldnotes as primary material. Although I felt uncomfortable about including some of the reflections presented in this dissertation from my field journals, I found it important as a measure to stay (as far as it is possible) aware of my own processes of ‘story’ making, and to allow the reader insight into the “apparatus of capture” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004) of the ethnographer in terms of fieldwork and ethnographic writing.

7.3. A reflection on the archive’s apparatus of capture

Deleuze and Guattari (2004) conceptualised “apparatus of capture” in relation to the functioning of the State, but their notion can also apply to broader structures. Agamben (2009:14) notes that apparatus can refer to “literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions, or discourses of living beings”. What an interrogation of archival systems at the five music archives demonstrated, is that regardless of their institutional

² Refer to chapter 2, p.68.

affiliations, the reasons the archives were set up, the purposes it served or the vision supporting the archival systems, these systems inevitably set boundaries and limits on archival material through restricting the multiple contexts in which records could potentially be read. It seems that in order for archives to preserve material efficiently and make it available for subsequent use, categories, descriptions and limitations are necessary. It is therefore possible to view archival systems as apparatus of capture that function in their capacity to capture, determine and control. Fritzsche (2005:186) aptly states that the archive “functions as a machine that manufactures the pertinence of particular kinds of evidence and particular casts of historical actors”. By analysing and interpreting these apparatus, it became possible to explore the mechanisms of the archive that serve to institute and maintain power.

The five ethnographic case studies in this dissertation interrogated archival methodologies such as recording, classification, description, listing and appraisal practices. The numerous processes involved in the act of ‘archive making’ were shown to act as conduits of various forms of power. In terms of the colonial archive, explored through the practices employed by Hugh Tracey, the “thematic limits” (Da Cunha, 2004) imposed by archivists, in this case of ‘authentic’ and ‘genuinely traditional’ African music, as well as constructed categories of value judgement are shown to act as conduits of Tracey’s own ideological pre-conceptions of what African music should be. He emphasised the legitimacy of written and recorded modes of knowledge over and above oral/aural conceptions thereof and subsequently built an archive geared towards salvaging or ‘capturing’ the music and instruments of disappearing cultures. This resulted in a highly constructed and uncontested archival record. As Waterman (in Agawu, 2003a:xix) has noted, “our understanding of sub-Saharan music has been conditioned by factors infrequently discussed in the literature,” such as

the varied training and practical goals of investigators; the portrayal of similarity and difference between peoples of African and European descent; the ‘invention’ of ‘tribal’ musics under colonialism and since independence, and the variable, though always unequal, relationships of the scholarly subject to the human object of his or her study (Ibid.).

ILAM revealed some of these processes of objectification Waterman refers to above and such explorations could prove vital in understanding the confluence of the personal and the ideological in the construction of archives. Scholars such as Stoler (2002) and Dirks (2002) have pointed out how the colonial archive was not only a source, but also the representation of power and knowledge. Through its apparatus of capture, the archive sought to classify, order, describe and preserve, thereby instigating and maintaining the power relations necessary for its control over presentation of the 'other'.

The classification and description practices of the SABC Radio and Sound Archive are similarly shown to be historically situated. These archival methodologies are based on making a distinction between 'serious' and 'light' music and includes using a limited range of generic genre classifications. Genre classifications have been shown to be constructed and subjective and to carry value judgements that do not necessarily stand free from class and race prejudice. Although genre classification and distinctions between serious and light music is common practice in music archives, a consideration of such a practice within the historical context of South Africa's past shows it to be burdened with ideological baggage. Not only did this distinction feed seamlessly into the Apartheid government's separate development policies, but through historical contingency it has continued into the present. The perpetuation of this system into the present supports Beverley Parker's (2008:68) statement that such classification systems reveals the "unreflective categorizing and valorising that results from our ingrained habits of thought".

However, a similar consideration of classification and descriptive systems employed at the GALLO Record Archive has shown that a system of generic classification might be necessary within an archive hoping to open its material to users. As an archive without generic genre classification, the archival system perpetuates the power of the corporation in maintaining a closed archive, inaccessible to all but experts in the field of popular music. These classifications are therefore shown to be a vital part of the process of archiving, supporting Derrida's statement mentioned in chapter 3 that "there could be no archiving without titles [...] without names and without the archontic principle of legitimization, without laws, without criteria of classification and of hierarchization, without order" (Derrida, 1996:40). This is also illustrated by the HYMAP archive. Because there is no systematic archival system

in place, the archive cannot function as an accessible archive, material is not adequately stored, nor can it be found or used. Nevertheless, even when these systems are effectively employed and practiced, it could serve to hold an archive back from reaching its full vision, as is the case at DOMUS. The particular archival system of DOMUS allows for sufficient ordering, describing and preservation but by not facilitating the making of connections between various collections and material it is hampering the archive from exploring its more open policies of encouraging dialogue and making connections across ideological divides.

These reflections demonstrate overlapping and contradictory conclusions emerging from a consideration of archival systems at various archives. While necessary, the systems adopted by archivists are demonstrated to “fundamentally influence the composition and character of archival holdings” (Schwartz & Cook, 2002:3). These systems are shown to be cultural constructs, influenced by socio-political contexts, economic factors, personal and institutional motivations and institutional cultures. Regardless of the degree of application or lack thereof, these systems emerge as apparatus of capture that influence the archival record.

Another factor that informs the creation of archival systems is the broader discourse on archival theory upon which archival systems are based. However, the engagement of music archivists and archival institutions in South Africa with archival theory seems to be limited. Although basic archival principals such as provenance and appraisal are applied, I hold that a more in-depth engagement with archival theory could contribute significantly to more informed archival practices and recognition of the discourse on power in South African (music) archives.

7.4. Archival theory and the discourse on power and the archive

Archival institutions in South Africa that focus only on the collection and preservation of music material, sound recordings and related documents are for the most part highly

specialised archives, serving a specific function.³ Whereas the SABC and GALLO archives are concerned with company and corporate material and do not collect outside of that purview, ILAM and DOMUS, both situated at universities, are steered by the visions of their directors and their close proximity to music as a constantly changing institutionalised discipline. On the other hand a private archive such as HYMAP is determined by the whim and wishes of an individual, unperturbed by either disciplinary or institutional considerations. As outlined in chapter 1, this dissertation accepts the two core aspects of archival theory to be appraisal and provenance. The next section will therefore first look at the concept of appraisal as it is practiced in the five music archives under discussion before moving on to the principle of provenance. These concepts will be discussed both in terms of how it is practiced and in relation to the relevant archival theory. Suggestions made below are not presented as ‘solutions’ to the apparatuses of capture as outlined above, but presented as alternative readings within the discourse on power and the archive.

As a relatively small music archive with a specific prerogative of collecting, DOMUS accepts all donations, mostly acquired through post-graduate research projects or personal connections of the Director, and keeps everything it receives. Although DOMUS accepts all donations, collections are sought out as well. These are for the most part small, closed collections and therefore DOMUS does not deal with issues of physical appraisal and selection. Instead, appraisal takes on a more conceptual role within this archive in relation to acquiring collections. Appraisal as a concept, i.e. “the process determining the value and thus the disposition of records, based upon their evidential and informational or research value” (Harrison, 1987:4), is used to value the ideological impact the presence of these collections will have on increasing the opportunities of the archive to stimulate research

³ In terms of audiovisual archival practice it is accepted that these institutions use archival concepts such as appraisal, selection and provenance in ways particular to that institution (see Harrison, 2010, 1997a; Edmondson, 1998, 2004). My case studies clearly show that there exist significant differences in practices between these institutions, each of which employs different systems and protocols. Although general standards in terms of selection in audiovisual archives have been established (including considering “the artefact or carrier, the information content and the aesthetic content” (Harrison, 1997:185)), the case studies show that selection practices are contingent on the material collected and usually determined by the organizations themselves within their own purview and focus areas. Harrison similarly notes that “selection of material is dependent upon the function of the archive, the quality of the material and the uniqueness or rarity of the content” (Harrison, 1997:185).

projects and expand the image of the archive. In similar archives with a very specific focus such as ILAM, where the major component of the collection is a closed and ordered collection, systems of appraisal are not of great concern. For the most part, the collections of these two archives are donated by individual scholars, musicians and composers who (in most cases) have already sorted and to varying degrees ordered the donations. However, corporate archives such as the SABC and the Gallo Record Archive deal with larger amounts of material and appraisal and selection processes are in place, albeit for different reasons.

At the Gallo archive, a digitisation project has been initiated in order to clear out their archival vault and save on storage fees. This project, which has not yet come into fruition, will firstly involve an appraisal and selection of the master tapes, leading to a removal of foreign copy-masters. The motivation behind this project is that it will be possible to digitise all the local masters and the vault contents can be moved to the National Film and Audio Archive. Material is thus appraised according to their local importance and the appraisal process is motivated by the value and cost that is incurred through the storage of the information. The high cost of preserving and restoring recorded material as well as available human resources are common challenges and motivators in appraisal and selection practices at audiovisual archives (see Harrison, 1987:6, 22; Edmondson, 2004:20-21).

Approaches such as the “Black Box” method developed by Frank Boles and Julia Marks Young, respond to this challenge (Boles & Young, 1985). Boles and Young developed a three-tiered method whereby appraisal decisions should include a consideration of the value of information, the cost of retention and the political and procedural implications of appraisal (Boles & Young, 1985:124). One of the first steps in the appraisal process suggested by this model is determining whether it is worth preserving the particular items in relation to what it will cost to preserve it. However, cost is not to be the only determining factor in this appraisal process, and the implications of appraisal decisions for “the repository’s relationships with the source of the records and other persons, such as researchers, other donors, or persons mentioned in the records” should also be considered (Boles & Young, 1985:135). Accordingly, archivists should decide whether the material, “regardless of the value-of-information or the cost-of-retention” should be kept (Ibid.). As was postulated in chapter 4, the Gallo Record Company is only interested in the cost of information ratio and

by not considering the other components suggested by a model like the Black Box method, the commercial potential and research possibilities of its vault are severely limited. Although the Black Box method was criticised for being too complicated,⁴ the basic principle of this method (the three-tiered process), remains valuable as a conceptual framework for considering appraisal within commercial archives.

An interrogation of the appraisal and selection systems employed at the SABC Radio and Sound Archive clearly demonstrates the challenges inherent in appraisal practices. In their *Training manual* (1998), it is noted that appraisal practices will always involve “crystal ball gazing” and yet, they also claim it to be “scientifically” astute (*TM*, 1995:17,69). After the necessity of appraisal and selection was for the first time addressed by Theodore Schellenberg (1965) through suggesting an active selection process for archives, archivists could never again assume the position of impartiality or escape the value judgements inherent to their practice.⁵ Value judgements are *a priori* part of appraisal and involve judging material from the standards and viewpoints of contemporary society.⁶ Whereas Jenkinson saw no solution to the multiple challenges and problems that the concept of appraisal and selection in the archive gave rise to (Jenkinson, 1937:149), various theories and methods were suggested by subsequent archivists and scholars.

One such a method is the macro-appraisal system as developed by Terry Cook (1991, 1995) and his colleagues. This system implies appraising records according to their function (why the records were created rather than which records have the most importance), the company structure, or where the records were created, and how they were created (Pearce-Moses, 2005).⁷ Although the SABC Radio and Sound Archive apply macro-appraisal in a limited context (appraising records first on where and why they were created), the main

⁴ For criticism of this method see footnote 36, p. 33.

⁵ See chapter 1, pp.25-30.

⁶ Efforts were made to develop methods that would appraise records based on the viewpoints and values of the times in which the records were created. An example is the “Documentation Plan” (1987) developed by Hans Boom. However, he later conceded that this system, based on “analysing the opinions published at the time” (Booms, 1991/1992:28) was too complicated, unpractical and time consuming, and he suggested a method akin to macro-appraisal whereby the administrative structures of the records creator would be analysed. See chapter 1, pp.32-33.

⁷ See chapter 1, pp.37-39.

prerogatives determining appraisal remain the Schellenbergian concepts of informational and evidential value whereby material is selected based on predicting its future value. However, the current restructuring of the SABC's management structures in order to make the system more cost effective has necessitated the conceptualisation of a new archival system. Accordingly the SABC Radio and Sound Archive is busy developing a system based more fully on macro-appraisal within a Record-Continuum model.⁸ This records management system will look after the Broadcaster's electronic records from the moment of their creation to their final preservation, and the creator of the record will become involved in the preservation process by having to provide the primary metadata for the items created. Ward (1990:16) has noted that records management techniques allow archivists to become more involved in the organisation they serve, while creators play a part in describing the documents they create as well as deciding which material is to be kept. This process, through which the creator and user of the archival material become part of the process, could encourage what has been referred to in chapter 3 as "the leaking of power" (Duff & Harris, 2008:141).

Another method developed to deal with the challenges of collection and appraisal is the "Documentation Strategy" model developed by Helen Samuels in the 1980s. This method involves four steps: 1) identifying a subject that needs to be documented and defining it clearly; 2) selecting a group of advisors for such a project and establishing the location for this project; 3) examining the already existing information or material on this subject and structuring the inquiry accordingly; 4) selecting and preserving the appropriate documentation (Samuels, 1986:116).⁹ The Documentation Strategy was developed at a university archive and its four steps show uncanny similarities with the academic processes already in place at most universities (for example the process a research proposal has to go through before being accepted). Considering this approach to collecting and appraisal in relation to a smaller archive such as DOMUS could provide an interesting reading of the power structures currently involved in the running of this archive. One of the pivotal points of tension within the archive is that it functions without an advisory board, since the director does not want certain expectations to flatten the archive's so-called radical ideas.

⁸ See chapter 1, pp.40-41.

⁹ See chapter 1, pp.34-36.

However, only being steered by one individual has the implication that the archive will remain to some extent one-dimensional. Following the Documentation Strategy, after a topic or research proposal has been identified based on certain gaps in the archive's record – a group of advisors would have to be selected for each project. This could in effect create an advisory board for the archive that functions within multiple contexts, focus areas and with different needs – negating the influence of a few like-minded individuals or only one director. In addition, using this model to re-conceptualise the process whereby post-graduate students collect material during their studies and eventually donate it to the archive, could instill an archival awareness of collection and record creation from the start. As such the archive could become the primary motivator behind instigating certain research projects to expand the existing record, or address urgent issues in terms of the archival record that has been identified. The Documentation Strategy also requires the creation of a network between similar institutions so that work is not duplicated, or so that larger ground may be covered and interesting multi-sited archival projects could be conceived.

However, the systems employed at DOMUS (and for that matter, ILAM) are still largely built in terms of the principles expounded by the *Dutch Manual* (1940, [1898]) whereby appraisal and selection of physical material is not deemed necessary and the principle of provenance still serves a physical function in terms of the ordering and description of material.¹⁰ Although we have moved a long way from Muller, Freith and Fruin's conceptualisation of archives according to which private and personal archives are not considered as anything more than a "conglomeration of papers and documents" (Muller, Freith & Fruin, 1940:20), it seems as if these music archives have not conceptually moved beyond the archival methods outlined in this *Manual*. Music archives such as ILAM and DOMUS work mostly with closed collections wherein provenance is used as a tool for physical arrangement and description. The physical application of provenance is still possible in archives where the collections remain relatively small; however, even within a comparatively small archive such as DOMUS, the description of every single document based on this application of provenance takes up a lot of time, and is impractical.¹¹ David Bearman has similarly noted that to

¹⁰ See chapter 1, pp.18-20.

¹¹ Ward (1990:68) has for example noted that the documenting and description of sound recordings and documents are time-consuming and expensive: "it is the rule rather than the exception that

describe records in the traditional sense “by means of arranging them and recording that arrangement to some desired depth or detail is too labour intensive” (Bearman, 1995:384, see also Ward, 1990:68).¹² Instead, he suggested that the “object of archival documentation should be to document the context or record’s creation and use, not to describe records in their particularities” (Bearman, 1995:384). Meaning is thus not found in the records themselves, “but [in] the transactions and customs to which they bore witness as ‘evidences’” (Taylor, 1987/88:24). Although one might argue that this is not necessary in archives such as DOMUS or ILAM, considering provenance to operate more on a conceptual than a physical level and serving more a functional than a structural process (see Cook, 1995:41) might suggest different and perhaps more experimental description practices.

As Brothman (1999:78) has noted, “under conventional description, our descriptive principles form the reinforcing steel and concrete that presumably compress and contain public meaning and being together to form enduring structures of authentic creativity and complete integrity”. Yet, archival description has been exposed as highly subjective and ideologically marked. Duff and Harris (2008:144) have therefore suggested a permeable descriptive system that does not acknowledge or dictate one method of describing, one type of provenance or one act of creation, but allows users to actively take part in the process of description. The new system to be implemented at the SABC is already moving in this direction. At archives such as DOMUS and ILAM, where materials are brought into the archive through scholars, archival description could similarly take on a new dimension if scholars (and donors) become part of the descriptive process. It might suggest a description practice not of surface qualities, pre-determined by the archival system, but a descriptive practice mediated through scholarly work and research. Within such a system the locus of power would shift from the archives to a system mediated through scholars. A space where users become part of the system may in effect destroy the archive’s traditional praxis – a move away from truth and one-dimensional valuation and classification. As noted in chapter 1, democratic archives should be “constantly reshaped by the archivists of all sorts”

documentation systems adopted by sound archive repositories in their early days are found to be too time-consuming when the volume of acquisitions increases”.

¹² For similar criticism raised against the principle of provenance, see chapter 1, pp.29, 37-38, 42-43.

(Derrida, 2002:46). The archive can never be complete, final or closed, because reinterpretation will always be possible (Derrida, 2002:46).

7.5. Towards preserving marginality

As discussed throughout this dissertation, appraisal and selection practices demonstrate the power of the archive and archivist to determine the record most clearly. As apparatus of capture used to control and establish the archival record, these practices have been central to the scholarly critique on archives. Scholarly work on the Colonial and Apartheid Archive, mostly focused on state archives, has shown how those in power determine and filter the selection of memory, marginalizing, censoring and destroying traces they do not approve of (see Stoler, 2002; Dirks, 2002; McCormick, 2005; Harris, 2009a; Hamilton *et al.* (eds.), (2002). It is through this non-recognition or misrecognition of the majority of South Africans whose stories were silenced and not deemed valuable to preserve, that the destruction and violence of the Apartheid Archive was practiced – a practice, as Charles Taylor (1994:25) noted, that can “inflict harm” and be “a form of oppression”. However, as argued in chapter 6 in relation to DOMUS, this power to establish the archive can also be harnessed in order to construct archival repositories not as stable places, but as contested spaces where the interpretation of the records are always open to new readings. It is within this context that an archive such as DOMUS functions, both serving to maintain the Apartheid Archive and to challenge that same institution through juxtaposing contesting ideological collections within its vault.

Within the discourse on transformation, after South Africa’s transition to democracy, the social responsibility of the archivist and archives was strongly advocated in public discourse. Archives were repositioned as active collecting agencies with a mandate to collect, preserve and make available the histories of previously marginalised cultures (Harris, 2000). Archives were referred to as institutions “preserving the nation’s memory” or establishing “national identity” (see Hamilton, *et al.*, 2002:12; Peterson, 2002:35; Kirkwood, 1998:41, *Archives Act* No. 43 of 1996). However, such an understanding of archives tends to benefit the macro and national at the cost of the marginal and individual. Scholars have increasingly observed

that the archival projects launched after 1994 tended to place “resistance politics” in the foreground at the cost of other areas of social life (Duggan, 2011; Morrow & Wotshela, 2005; McEwan, 2003; Davidson, 1998; Nuttall & Coetzee, 1998). Although there are exceptions to this statement, the Anti-Apartheid archive has constructed a new meta-narrative motivated either by alignment to struggle politics or strategies to obtain funding.¹³ Furthermore, I hold that current archival practices in South Africa that rely on macro-appraisal (such as the National Archive) run the risk of reflecting an ‘official view of the world’ whereby the small and peripheral communities and their documentary heritage are negated for a dominant one-dimensional narrative of the ruling party.¹⁴ Jo-Ann Duggan (2011) points out that state archives (as any other state department), will inevitably “reflect the interests of those who hold power and they are susceptible to political pressure from those who seek to safeguard a particular set of interests, promote a specific agenda or entrench a circumscribed version of the past”. It is exactly here that community archives and smaller focused archives such as DOMUS and ILAM could play an important role, and the opening up of an archive such as HYMAP becomes an imperative. As Duggan (2011) says, these archives “have an important role to play in shifting the perception of archives from that of an inert repository to a place of robust engagement” (see also Layne, 2004; Muller, 2011). She further points out that “unlike state archives, civil society organisations can take custody of dissident voices, elements of our history that are politically unpalatable and aspects that are otherwise denied, disavowed, kept secret, suppressed, demonised, or simply considered to be inconsequential” (Duggan, 2011). As such, community archives can play an active role in utilising the power of the archive to construct archives that move away from the silo effect of secrecy, non-recognition and silence that accompanied the Apartheid Archive, and work against the meta-narrative created by the Anti-Apartheid Archive.

¹³ Duggan (2011) has for example noted how the strive to obtain funding for archival projects keeps archives in a gridlock – either archives need to align their image to government and state agendas, or become subject to the various requirements of public or private funding institutions whereby they “might find their critical voices compromised” (Duggan, 2011). Exploring these funding regimes in more detail could prove interesting in terms of how power dictates economic exchange and in what position the archive is placed in relation to the funding institution. Are archives, for instance, placed under certain obligations such as hosting specific exhibitions? The time and resource restrictions of this dissertation did not allow for such an exploration. For an example of a study that does explore these concepts in relation to ILAM and the funding they obtained from the Smithsonian Institute see McConnachie (2008).

¹⁴ See chapter 1, p.39.

However, even with such efforts it becomes apparent that what has been lost due to Apartheid cannot simply be replaced in the archival record. The damage caused by Apartheid to the South African landscape has left a fractured record reflecting a minority culture that sought to control what was known or knowable about its other. As Peter Fritzsche (2005:187) subsequently noted, “the history of the archive is the recognition of loss”. What is referenced by Fritzsche in a different context, in South Africa denotes the irrevocable loss of a past through the systematic forgetting of the Apartheid system, compounded by the more universal loss inherent to the archival record and its selective relationship to the past. This double-loss also references the Not-Apartheid archive with which I have grappled in chapter 5. HYMAP, as a physical reality, acts as a placeholder for an always present yet un-restorable lost past. This loss is characterised by excess, by incompleteness and by chaos

The Apartheid and Anti-Apartheid Archive can be challenged through projects such as HYMAP, but also through facilitating projects that challenge the supposed stability of the archive. These projects can involve the acquisition or creation of collections, the selection of material, archival systems or other forms of interventionist strategies (for example curating the performance archive), without the one necessarily excluding the other. Such projects could offer the possibility of multiple interpretations of the archival record, endeavours through which “configuration” will always be “giving way to reconfiguration” (Allen in Maart, 2011). As acts of curation, archival projects such as setting up permeable systems of selection, description and classification suggest an active and reflexive approach to archival practices and a constant consideration of the effects of these systems on users and the shaping of material. A thinking that embraces both “place” and “space” (De Certeau, 1988) – archival systems that are stable and yet, infinitely open to reinterpretation and movement. As such, perhaps the railway line introduced in chapter 4, might be an apt metaphor for conceptualising an archival system. Railway lines are stable, and yet, the movement made possible along the line allows for a wide variety of vistas to pass by – contingent on the passengers for interpretation. The railway line also enables the possibilities of changing direction, motivation and destination.

The music archive has a unique potential to embrace this strategy through becoming involved in the curation of the performance archive, or the “repertoire” as Diana Taylor (2003) calls it. Accepting Taylor’s argument as outlined in chapter 2, namely that ephemeral performance and records or documents act as sites for the preservation of knowledge and information, the music archive has the capacity to expand the traditional boundaries of the archive to include the repertoire performed through song, dance, theatre and ritual. In relation to the performance archive, Jones *et al.*, (2009) has emphasised the importance of process in relation to performances. They note: “archives tend to focus on a single end product, yet performances are constantly in a state of becoming and have no definable end”. They therefore suggest an exploration of “models that encourage records to evolve and be contested as performance itself constantly develops and is reinterpreted” (Jones *et al.*, 2009:169).

Here the initial attempts of Andrew Tracey during his time as director of ILAM could serve as a valuable example. Andrew Tracey made attempts to align the curation of the repertoire with ILAM’s function. He had a Xhosa cultural village built behind ILAM, which was regularly populated with musicians and storytellers. Similarly during the annual Symposium on Ethnomusicology held from 1980 till 2005, ILAM actively curated performances of various musicians and dancers from all over Africa as part of the programme (Ballantine, 2010:97). Through active strategies such as these, the practices and projects initiated by music archives based on exploring possibilities of including the repertoire and oral traditions within the practices of archiving, could lead to a radical shift in archival practice. As discussed in chapter 2, this would allow for dynamic institutions involved in the active curation of performance; institutions concerned with both the material evidence and the repertoire.

7.6. Conclusion

Instead of considering archives as final products of a series of methodologies (recording, collecting, classification, ordering and preservation), this dissertation focused on them as objects of study. Five music archives were explored through their respective histories of institutionalisation, official connections to a variety of institutional structures, the

individuals involved in setting up and maintaining the archives as well as each archive's particular archival practices and systems in relation to the broader discourse on archival theory. This approach attempted to show music archives as sites of cultural production formed and shaped by a variety of processes that can therefore not be regarded as neutral. Furthermore, the dissertation aimed to situate music archives within the much larger debate on archives and power, and to demonstrate what an investigation of their practices and material realities might add to the discourse.

Each of the five music archives discussed are shown to present a different facet of South African music culture. In a sense the SABC represents the official view of culture (as a State organisation) concerned with issues of nation and nationhood. The other four archives discussed are each positioned in counterpoint to this institution in a variety of different ways. ILAM is concerned with trying to define a field of African music as a scholarly pursuit, whereas DOMUS is consciously positioned against the Apartheid and Anti-Apartheid Archive. DOMUS shows an archive strongly involved in the cultural politics of the University of Stellenbosch's historical legacy and the Department of Music specifically. The Gallo archive is strongly embroiled in a culture of commerce whereas HYMAP as an archive of events and music is a good example of the Not-Apartheid Archive, an archive specifically striving to create a space for the material that was censored by the SABC and the commercial companies such as Gallo.

This multi-sited field constituted by the case studies allowed for a consideration of the complicated structures within which music archives function, the various nodes of culture they are situated in and serve as well as the archives' thematic limits, horizons of expectation, truth claims and apparatus of capture. It has been shown that music archives in South Africa are limited in their application of archival theory and yet, they could have the potential to challenge the perceived stability of the archive and open up new avenues for thinking about the archive in general in contemporary South Africa. But perhaps most of all, what this study of the music archive showed, was the various possibilities for interpretation that open up once one takes cognisance of the polyphonic and constructed nature of archival material and how personal encounters with the archive shape that interpretation.

This polyphonic and liberated meaning of the archive will have a significant impact on South African music scholarship.

South African works such as *The World of South African Music: A Reader* (Lucia, 2005), *In Township Tonight!* (Coplan, 1985), *African Stars* (Erlmann, 1991) and *Marabi Nights* (Ballantine, 1993) all attempted to move beyond the sanitised Apartheid archive to include material excluded by works that used this fractured record unreflexively, works such as *The South African Music Encyclopedia* (Malan, 1974-1986) and *Composers in South Africa Today* (Klatzow, 1987). A South African music scholarship wanting to move beyond a critique of suspicion based in the political complicity of South African academe has much to gain from an archive that is open to reading and re-readings that facilitate a polyphony of voices. This vision of the archive will mean that work produced from within its walls will be conscious of the archive's mechanisms and the archive's participation in interpretation.

Part III of this dissertation started with a lengthy quote by Leonard Rapport. In it, he wondered about the difference archives make to the lives we live today. Rapport, erroneously in my opinion, allows the argument about the importance of archives to become one that contrasts a world with archives as possessing wisdom and knowledge as opposed to one without, that exists in anarchy and constant repetition of human error. Unlike Rapport, I don't locate the importance of the archive in such stark terms in this dissertation. But I maintain that a world without archives will be much the poorer because the space of the archive is one that enables choices that speak to the fundamental freedoms of creativity, dignity, recognition, difference and loss.

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