

# MISCAST

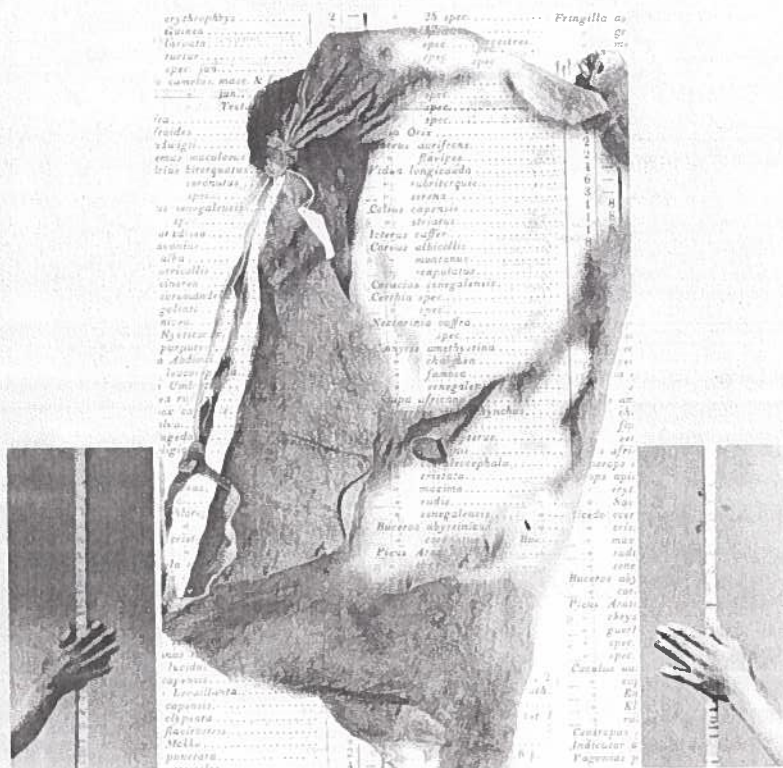
Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen



Edited by Pippa Skotnes

1996

Rondebosch:  
U of Cape Town  
Press



Acknowledgments  
pp 12-13  
Pippa Skotnes

forewards  
pp 9-10 - Marilyn Martin

pp 10-11 Patricia Davison



# MISCAST

at the South African National Gallery

Curator  
Pippa Skotnes  
Assistant Curator  
Jos Thorne

Curatorial Committee  
Marilyn Martin (SANG Director)  
Emma Bedford      Lindsay Hooper  
June Hosford      Carol Kauffman  
Fritha Langerman      Kim Siebert  
John Weinberg      Paul Weinberg

This exhibition has been supported by:  
Agfa  
Board of Executors  
Canon Copiers  
Cape of Good Hope Bank  
Fairheads Trust Company  
Jowells Charitable Trust  
Nedbank  
PG Glass  
Royal Netherlands Embassy  
South African Airways  
Sun International  
3M  
West Australian Campaign Against Racial Exploitation

Lenders  
University of Cape Town  
South African Museum, Cape Town  
Museum Africa, Johannesburg  
Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford  
Rijksmuseum voor Volkunde, Leiden  
South African National Museum of Military History, Johannesburg  
South African Cultural History Museum, Cape Town  
Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg

Photographic Sources  
University of Cape Town, Archives and Manuscripts, Jagger Library  
South African Museum, Cape Town  
South African Library, Cape Town  
State Archives, Cape Town  
Museum Africa, Johannesburg  
Killie Campbell Afrikaans Library, Durban  
Cape Times Archive, Cape Town  
State Archives of Namibia, Windhoek  
McGregor Museum, Kimberley  
Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford  
Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology  
Duckworth Collection, Cambridge

First published in 1996 by  
University of Cape Town Press  
Private Bag  
Rondebosch  
Cape Town  
South Africa

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without permission of the publisher and copyright owner.

ISBN 0-7992-1652-6

## Readers

Rob Gordon      Nigel Penn  
Ciraj Rassool      Edwin Wilmsen

Design, Layout, Typesetting, Scanning  
and Photo-editing  
Pippa Skotnes  
Jos Thorne

Photography of Museum objects  
Paul Weinberg

Support has been given to the publication of this book by  
Nedbank  
Anglo American and De Beers  
Chairman's Fund  
Federal Republic of Germany, Office of the Consul General



Every effort has been made by the editor and publishers to obtain permission to reproduce the documents in this volume, and to provide adequate referencing. Where it has not been possible to trace the copyright holders of documents, the publishers would be glad to hear from such copyright holders, so that omissions can be rectified in future editions.

## Previous Page (facing)

A price list for an auction of skins (1840) the first entry of which, under the heading "Saugethiere" (mammals), is the skin of a 'Bushman woman'. Courtesy Patricia Davison.

Dedicated to the memory  
of Lucy Lloyd

# Contents

## *Essays and Parallel Text*

<b>Forewords</b> <i>Marilyn Martin and Patricia Davison</i>	9	<b>A Tale of Two Families: Wilhelm Bleek, Lucy Lloyd and the /Xam San of the Northern Cape</b> <i>Janette Deacon</i>	93
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	12	<b>Images of /Kabbo</b> <i>Michael Godby</i>	115
<b>Introduction</b> <i>Pippa Skotnes</i>	15	<b>With Camera and Gun in Southern Africa: Inventing the Image of Bushmen c. 1880 to 1935</b> <i>Paul S. Landau</i>	129
<b>Mutilation and Meaning</b> <i>Stephen Greenblatt</i>	25	<b>The Proximity of Dr Bleek's Bushman</b> <i>Martin Hall</i>	143
<b>Mutilating Meaning: European Interpretations of Khoisan Languages of the Body</b> <i>David Chidester</i>	24	<b>!Khwa-Ka Hhouiten Hhouiten, "The Rush of the Storm": The Linguistic Death of /Xam</b> <i>Anthony Traill</i>	161
<b>Running Before That Wind: A Parallel Text</b> <i>Pippa Skotnes</i>	26	<b>Decolonising the Mind: Steps Toward Cleansing the Bushman Stain from Southern African History</b> <i>Edwin Wilmsen</i>	185
<b>The Bushman in Early South African Literature</b> <i>Ian Glenn</i>	41	<b>In Pursuit of San Pre-colonial History in the Natal Drakensberg: A Historical Overview</b> <i>Aron Mazel</i>	191
<b>Bushman Religion: Open, Closed, and New Frontiers</b> <i>David Chidester</i>	51	<b>Between the Lines: Some Remarks on 'Bushman' Ethnicity</b> <i>Pieter Jolly</i>	197
<b>The Self-Image of Jacob Adams</b> <i>Robert Ross</i>	61		
<b>Trophy Skulls, Museums and the San</b> <i>Alan G. Morris</i>	67		
<b>"Fated to Perish": The Destruction of the Cape San</b> <i>Nigel Penn</i>	81		



**Praise to the Bushman Ancestors of the Water:  
The Integration of San-related Concepts in the  
Beliefs and Ritual of a Diviners' Training School  
in Tsolo, Eastern Cape**

*Frans E. Prins* 211

**From 'Lords of the Desert' to 'Rubbish People':  
The Colonial and Contemporary State of the  
Nharo of Botswana**

*Mathias Guenther* 225

**Laurens van der Post and the Kalahari Debate**

*Alan Barnard* 239

**Khoi/San Relationships:  
Marginal Differences or Ethnicity?**

*Andrew B. Smith* 249

**Fashioning the Bushman in Van Riebeeck's  
Cape Town, 1952 and 1993**

*Rob Gordon, Ciraj Rassool and Leslie Witz* 257

**Bushman Images in South African Tourist  
Advertising:**

**The case of Kagga Kamma**  
*Barbara Buntman* 271

**What is an Eland?**

**N!ao and the Politics of Age and Sex in the  
Paintings of the Western Cape**

*John Parkinson* 281

**Some Questions about Style and Authorship  
in Later San Paintings**

*Anne Solomon* 291

**Bushman Music:  
Still an Unknown**

*Deirdre Hansen* 297

**"The Ideas Generally Entertained with Regard  
to the Bushmen and their Mental Condition"**

*J. David Lewis-Williams* 307

**Re-production and Consumption:  
The Use of Rock Art Imagery in Southern  
Africa Today**

*Thomas Dowson* 315

**Prisoners of their Reputation?  
The Veterans of the 'Bushman' Battalions in  
South Africa**

*John Sharp and Stuart Douglas* 323

**Footprints in the Sand**

*Paul Weinberg* 331

**Native Views of Western Eyes**

*Carmel Schrire* 343

**Notes on the Contributors** 355

**Notes** 356

**Abbreviations and References** 361

**Index** 370

# Contents of Parallel Text

## Running Before That Wind

Diätkwain's dream of his father's death (BCA 151 LV 5110-46)	14	Detail of engraved stick (NM)	234
<i>Running Before That Wind</i> , languages of the body, fragments of photographs taken of prisoners in Windhoek, models for Drury's casting project, 'Bushmen' on exhibit at the 1936 Empire Exhibition in Johannesburg, prisoners at Gaberone prison, /Xam informants in Cape Town. (SAW, SAM, UCT)	26	Detail of an engraving of a train, Calvinia presented 1915 (SAM 1780)	236
Photograph of Farini's "Earthmen" (PRM B11 4b)	40	Women from Malatswai, filling ostrich egg-shell flasks with water. (Photograph Duggan-Cronin) (MM 2185)	238
Exhibition poster, "The Bosjesmans" Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, 1847. (MA 572:00 51/574)	42	Divining disks, (SAM)	240
<i>The Bushmen Hottentots</i> , a poem by Pringle	42	Divining disks collected by Dorothea Bleek (SAM 1691) and by Isaac Shapera (UCT 35/11). Decorated sticks and ostrich egg-shell beads (MM)	242
Exhibition poster, "The Earthmen", Regent Gallery, 1852. (MA 572:00 4389)	44	Drawer of bone and metal knives (SAM); ostrich egg flask presented by R. Broom in 1906 (a) (SAM 692), flask (b) possibly from northern Cape (MM); engraved flask from Molepolole, Botswana (c) (UCT 38/46)	244
Opinions of the London Press	44	Hats (SAM) and sandals (WM)	246
Exhibition poster "The Earthmen", London, 1853. (MA 572:00 9806)	46	Detail from a rock painting in the Upper Brandberg, Namibia. (Photograph D. Brown)	248
Exhibition poster, "The Bosjesmans", Kennington, 1855. (MA 570:00 4384)	48	<i>The Pudendal Parts of the South African Bush Race</i> (Drury & Drennan 1926)	252
Detail of a painting from the Cedarberg, Western Cape. (Photograph R.Yates)	50	Note on the European fascination for Khoisan genitals	254
Edited fragments taken from the engravings of Hugo Burckner, drawn from photographs and published in Fritsch (1872).	52	Photograph of /Hanaku sending a radio message for the King's Coronation 1936. (SAL Khoisan Modern)	256
Portrait by Duggan-Cronin of a woman from Ghanzi. (MM 2160)	60	A selection from an official correspondence concerning the collection of animal bones by 'Bushmen' in the Etosha Pan Game Reserve, c.1947-53 (SAN NAO 59 9/15)	258
19th century leather dolls from South Africa; comment by Anita Nettleson	62	Letters with regard to requests to exhibit 'Bushmen' at the 1936 Empire exhibition (SAN 978 A 89/12)	266
Young boy photographed with measure. (SAL INIL 24222)	66	Photograph of a body cast made by Drury c.1910 as part of a project to cast 'Bush races' (CA E4626)	270
Comments on "The Noble Savage" by Charles Dickens (KCAL PAM 306 089683 NOB)	68	Official correspondence relating to the 1936 Empire exhibition (SAN 978 A 89/12)	272
Langeberg Bushmen and Mr Lankman. (Photograph D. Bleek). (UCT BC151 J)	80	Newspaper report on "Old Abraham's 400-Mile Trek Home".	274
Details of photographs taken of /Xam by Dorothea Bleek in the Prieska area c.1910. (UCT BC151)	82	Letters with regard to requests to exhibit 'Bushmen' (SAN A 659)	276
Family portrait, details unknown (CA E2353)	92	Land claim submission (1995) on behalf of #Khomani and N/amani in terms of the Restitution of Land Act (courtesy Roger Chennells)	278
Fragments from <i>Dawn's Heart</i> , told to Lucy Lloyd by //Kabbo in 1872 (UCT BC151 L II-15)	94	Detail from a frieze of painted eland in the Cedarberg (Photograph P. Skotnes)	280
Note on <i>Dawn's Heart</i>	104	Ostrich egg-shell ornaments and necklaces a & b (MM); with comments by Dorothea Bleek; c (MM); d (WM) e (SAM 4016) f (WM)	282
Portrait of Rosina	114	Detail of quiver and arrows (Photographs P. Weinberg) (SAM)	286
<i>The Lion Star</i> , told to Lucy Lloyd by //Kabbo in 1871 (UCT BC151 L II-1)	116	Wood necklace, collected by Isaac Shapera in Botswana h (UCT 41/31), tortoise carapace container (WM), stone pipes, stone arrow shaft straightener j (MM)	288
<i>Stars</i> , told to Lucy Lloyd by !Nanni in 1881 (UCT BC151 LXI&XII)	122	Bone, bead and root necklace collected in 1887, Carnarvon district. (SAM 2456)	290
Bushman executioner, Ovamboland 1915. (SAM 7001)	128	!Ku woman's bag, collected in Tsumkwe. (SAM 10666)	296
Masarwa man at Dorothea Bleek's wagon. (SAM 1559)	142	Instruments from the Kirby Collection, (Photographs P. Weinberg) (UCT)	298
Extracts from <i>The Record: or a Series of Official Papers Relative to the Conditions and Treatment of the Native Tribes of South Africa</i> (Moodie, Cape Town 1838)	144	Excavated bead and shell necklace from Oakhurst. (UCT Archaeology Department)	306
Dolorite boulders with engravings, Northern Cape. (Photograph P. Skotnes)	160	Watercoloured drawings by George Stow. (UCT BC 151)	308
Letters of Louis Anthing, Magistrate of Namaqualand, to the Cape Parliament, 21 April 1863 and 29 May 1863 (CA A39-63)	162	Drawings by Diätkwain (1875) and /Han≠kass'o (1878) (UCT BC 151)	312
Note on Louis Anthing	178	Selection of decorated and engraved sticks. (Photographs P. Weinberg)	314
Skin bags made by unknown individuals (SAM)	180	Drawings by /Han≠kass'o (1879) and !Nanni (1880) (UCT BC 151)	316
Hei/kum man with trade goods, (Photograph Duggan-Cronin) (MM 2244)	184	Drawings by Diätkwain (1875) and Tamme (1881) (UCT BC 151)	318
Note on skin bags	186	Drawings by Tamme (1881) and !Nanni (1879) (UCT BC 151)	320
Detail from a painted shelter in southern Lesotho. (Photograph J. Allers)	190	Hei/kum men and women. Oidimba, Ovamboland, Namibia. (Photograph Duggan-Cronin) (MM 2250)	322
Bag and two multi-media necklaces (UCT and SAM collections)	194	Details of the surfaces of various skin bags	324
Txobaku and /Hanaku (Photograph Duggan-Cronin) (MM2277)	196	Letter (1916) from Windhoek Goal commenting on how a prisoner had left teethmarks on his chains. (SAN M64/3/16)	330
"A Contribution from a Bushman" (1887) ( <i>Orange Free State Monthly Magazine</i> 1:83-5)	198	Letter about awaiting trial prisoners (1918) (SAN 3823/8)	332
Divining disks, decorated bone knives pipes (UCT and SAM collections)	206	Comments from individuals in Namibia and Botswana collected by Megan Biese (courtesy M. Biese). Quotes from John Marshall's <i>!Nai, The Story of a !Kung Woman</i> (courtesy Documentary Educational Resources)	336
Decorated skin aprons collected in Tsumkwe in 1975 (SAM 10653/6)	208	Detail of a painting in the Upper Brandberg, Namibia (Photograph D. Brown)	342
Detail from a painted shelter in southern Lesotho. (Photograph P. Skotnes)	210	Negotiating the presence of the Bushmen	344
Pouch and sticks used for divining; decorated sticks (SAM)	212	Notes	364
Bandolier (UCT 41/29) and body ornament (MM)	214		
Spoon (UCT) and whisk (SAM); and engraved sticks (SAM)	216		
Necklaces collected by Isaac Shapera	218		
Details of the surfaces of skin bags	220		
//Kau/en woman and her baby, Ghanzi, Duggan-Cronin (MM 2170)	224		
Details of decorated and engraved sticks in the SAM (Photographs P. Weinberg)			
Cape Khoi: Carved with a piece of iron by a herd-boy in the employ of the late Mr John Eaton and presented to Dean Barnett-Clarke in 1876. (SAM 5011)	226		
(right) Griqua, Griquatown (left) /Xam, Kenhardt	228		
Detail of engraved stick (SAM 5011)	230		
Detail of scorched decoration (SAM 5801)	232		

## Forewords

On 14 December 1995 Cecil le Fleur asked the South African parliament, on behalf of the Griqua people, to intervene in the return of the plaster cast and skeletal and other remains of Saartje Baartman, the young woman who was publicly displayed at salons, fairs and animal acts in London and Paris from 1810 to 1815, when she died. This plea followed a letter sent to the French government in which the authorities were requested to return Saartje Baartman to the Griquas, the "guardians and custodians of continuous, uninterrupted and unbroken Cape Aboriginal Khoikhoi heritage" (*Cape Times* 12 December 1995). The Griqua National Conference of South Africa is the latest group to join in the campaign demanding her return and burial. Why has the pitiful life, and fate after death, of Saartje Baartman become the focus of so much concern and action?

Saartje Baartman is a potent symbol of the humiliation suffered by indigenous people in general and indigenous South Africans in particular. I knew something of her history through Penny Siopis' research and her paintings; I knew that the Musée de l'Homme in Paris housed the plaster cast made upon her death, as well as her skeleton and sexual organs. None of it, however, prepared me for the encounter with Saartje Baartman's death cast at Musée d'Orsay, in May 1994, on an exhibition entitled *La sculpture ethnographique de la Venus hottentote à la Tehura de Gauguin*. The naked horror of her plight and suffering, the sense of untold pain and shame, and the knowledge that it was part of my own history, were overwhelming.

Saartje Baartman has become a focus of the way in which human beings were used by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theorists of race to prove the superiority of Europeans; she stands for all those who were reduced to specimens and scientific information. Her people were regarded as closer to the animal kingdom than to humankind, or at least among the most primitive of human types. As a result, they became the most brutalised people in the history of southern Africa—victims of genocide and slavery, stripped of their land and the fabric of their lives and their culture. Until recently, Khoisan<sup>1</sup> resistance to the colonial powers and settler developments has remained unrecorded in our history books, their interaction with and cultural influence on other groups has been ignored, and the astonishing art created on the surfaces of rocks excluded from art history books and art museums. The people were portrayed as wild, as murderers and robbers without intellect or history.

Saartje Baartman puts the descendants of the Khoisan populations at the centre of contemporary political and cultural debates—debates with national and international implications and ramifications. The retention, display and

repatriation of human remains and other sensitive material are matters of concern in many countries. So are natural-history museum displays of naked body casts and objects that are associated with nature rather than with culture, with primitivism rather than civilisation—and forever relegated to the past. Her odyssey of exploitation and public exhibition finds a poignant echo in the lives of people who are displayed for tourists.

Some see the situation of 'Bushmen' living on the Kaggga Kamma reserve as no more than "a modern version of the old freak shows of the past" (*The Sunday Times* 25 June 1995). Saartje Baartman is becoming an icon (hopefully not a pawn) in fractious post-apartheid coloured politics.<sup>2</sup> There is a growing pride in having indigenous roots, and people are choosing to identify with the original inhabitants of southern Africa. Many will claim her. For all of us she stands as a reminder of the agonies of the past, of our need to face and deal with history and memory, and of our collective responsibility to resist a desire for historical amnesia. The debates around her also impact on issues of redress and restitution of land, and land is inextricably linked to place and identity.<sup>3</sup> Facing history, and accepting the challenges to work through the past and find solutions for the present, reside in the exhibition *Miscast*.

A number of ground-breaking exhibitions have been curated at the South African National Gallery (SANG) over the past few years. These involved working hand-in-hand with the people whose histories and/or visual culture we were representing, or engaging individuals in the production of the exhibition and written documentation.<sup>4</sup> Guest curator Pippa Skotnes went to considerable effort to consult with San groups in the preparation for *Miscast*, but there are few voices around to articulate this particular past, and consultations with groups took place through the medium of attorneys and other agents. What we hope to achieve through the catalogue, the exhibition and associated education programmes, is to begin the process of dealing with the complex issues, to tell the story of genocide in southern Africa,<sup>5</sup> to reveal the extraordinary cultural and artistic achievement of the San, to focus on the need to acknowledge and preserve rock art as part of our heritage, and to raise and stimulate awareness of the conditions, aspirations and interests of Khoisan descendants in southern Africa.

Apart from the co-operative projects between museum curators and members of specific communities mentioned above, in the past six years we have explored ways of curating and presenting exhibitions which drew directly on the skills and talents of people living in our immediate environment, but with SANG staff functioning as

curators.<sup>6</sup> That changed with the exhibition *Face Value: Old Heads in Modern Masks*, which took place from November 1993 to February 1994. Artist Malcolm Payne produced a book which had as its stimulus seven terracotta hollow modelled heads found near the town of Lydenburg in the Transvaal in the 1950s, and estimated to be about 1300 years old. He conceived the installation which comprised the Lydenburg Heads, his own works of art in two and three dimensions, and a row of supermarket trolleys. Not only were the Lydenburg Heads—held in custodianship by the South African Museum on behalf of the University of Cape Town—removed from their archaeological context and exhibited with Payne's own work, the artist also usurped the curatorial authority of the host institution. With *IGugu lamaNdebele—The Pride of the Ndebele*, the dynamics were different. Peter Rich, architect and expert on Ndebele art and architecture, designed the exhibition and directed the construction and installation. Six Ndebele women—sa Kabini, Emma Mahlangu, Betty Masanabo, Lia Masilele, Sophie Masiza and Anna Matshiye—worked with him and SANG curators over a period of one month, thereby providing a pertinent voice and real intervention in a process which was open to the public.

Pippa Skotnes details the challenges facing her, and the ways in which she approached the project, in her *Introduction* to this volume. *Miscast* is informed by ten years of research which saw the publication of papers and books and the curation of two other exhibitions. Unlike the exhibition at the South African Museum in May 1991, which launched her book *Sound from the Thinking Strings*, this exhibition does not include her own art works. Curatorship itself becomes the creative act, and the sense of sight and interaction with the visual presentation and the material become the prime vehicles for reading and revealing, interpreting and celebrating. Spaces and objects are pierced by the imagination to release and raise the voices from the past. Skotnes confirms—in the most potent and poetic way—that knowledge resides in the visual exploration of things, and that culture is a site for human sharing and understanding. Shifting definitions of art, and their concomitant effects on the status and meaning of objects, as well as the relocation and movement of objects across boundaries, have been examined and explored in exhibitions and publications in South Africa and abroad. For the SANG this has meant an overlap with discourses and disciplines other than our own, and the creation of new and unexpected partnerships. We have drawn on the expertise of colleagues in museums and universities and we have borrowed objects from many diverse sources. But this exhibition marks the first formal association of the South African National Gallery with the University of Cape Town and the South African Museum. It is a major step in the process of pooling our resources, energies and expertise and in crossing the traditional divides. I am profoundly grateful for the initiative, support and collaboration which have made this project possible, and wish to thank every-

one concerned, but in particular the staff of the SANG who worked on the exhibition, and Pippa Skotnes, for their passion and commitment.

*Miscast* constitutes a significant contribution to the appreciation of the cultural and aesthetic expression of the people of southern Africa, as well as to a re-evaluation of the way in which this expression is viewed and assessed world-wide.

Marilyn Martin  
Director, South African National Gallery

## HELD IN TRUST

Museums are places of memory, entrusted with holding collections, and empowered with the authority to interpret and exhibit them for public viewing. Although often concerned with things past, museum practice is situated in a continually changing present. None of the essential museum processes—collecting, classifying, keeping, studying and exhibiting—is static or value-free. All are historically contingent and shaped selectively by theoretical, aesthetic and pragmatic concerns. By examining the politics and poetics of presentation at a particular time and place it is possible to gain insight into the less obvious, sometimes entangled, motives behind making exhibitions. A reflexive understanding of museum practice, however, does not reduce curatorial responsibility.

Given the power of museums to shape and disseminate knowledge, curators have a responsibility to adhere to certain ethical principles in relation to the way collections are made and used. This is specially pertinent in the case of human remains and sacred objects, where the principle of respecting the dignity and privacy of individuals and communities is of paramount importance. In the case of anthropology collections from communities that have no known living representatives, museum curators have the uneasy role of trying to be sensitive to their interests, albeit removed in time, space and cultural context. Curators of collections classified as southern San find themselves in this situation.

Discussions leading up to the South African Museum's contribution to this exhibition brought into sharp focus some of the contemporary dilemmas facing curators of anthropology collections and photographs dating back to the early years of the discipline. The proposed installation stimulated discussion that extended far beyond the usual boundaries of exhibition-making. This interdisciplinary engagement remains an important dimension of the project. Among other issues, it focused attention on complex historical relationships between coloniser and colonised, and the difficulty of representing these relationships without unintentionally reinforcing misconceptions or indulging in yet another form of cultural exploitation. However, the exhibition set out explicitly to challenge stereotypes and evoke respect for the /Xam and other southern African hunter-gatherers. From a curatorial perspective, the project was unconventional and provoked discussion on custodial



responsibility. It was recognised that, when re-presented by an artist, artefacts from research collections would evoke an unstable array of new meanings for viewers. In practice, curatorial responsibility was shared, and the interfection between museum professionals and Pippa Skotnes proved creative and rewarding, as did the collaboration between institutions. Through this process, museum objects were re-envisioned and thus revitalised.

Currently in South Africa there is an openness to redressing past injustices, but in rethinking colonial practices and relationships it is important to pay attention to the historical and intellectual contexts in which they were situated. In this regard, Saul Dubow's recent volume on scientific racism in modern South Africa is essential reading. He makes the point that in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, scientists concerned with questions of race were often prominent intellectuals, widely supported by their peers. The epithet 'racist' was not necessarily regarded as a term of contempt. Intellectual discourses on race were part of mainstream science, until World War II showed the dire consequences of politicised racism. Dubow also cautions against reducing scientific concepts of race to a uniform expression or ideology. For example, although both comparative philology and anatomy were concerned with relationships among races, they constituted different intellectual traditions.

German philologist Wilhelm Bleek, although by no means free of nineteenth-century assumptions about race, set out to demonstrate the romantic ideal of a common genealogy for all languages, and thereby illuminate affinities among human groups. The quest for a single root language did not succeed, but Bleek's pioneering work resulted in an extraordinarily rich ethnographic record of /Xam language and culture, the full importance of which only began to be recognised a century after his death. In recent decades, the work of Bleek and Lucy Lloyd has animated interpretations of rock art and /Xam cosmology. Their shades, together with those of //Kabbo, Diä!kwain, /Han=kass'o and many unnamed /Xam, must surely grace this exhibition.

Unlike philologists, comparative anatomists were more concerned with human variability and essential biological differences among races. Museums in South Africa and elsewhere amassed skeletal collections that formed the basis of morphological studies and the construction of racial typologies. In the early twentieth century, physical anthropology arose as a branch of the emerging profession of anthropology that was specifically concerned with human origins and the classification of physical types. Louis Péringuey, director of the South African Museum from 1906 to 1924, was responsible for assembling a large collection of crania, which he sent to London for morphological analysis, in the hope of characterising physical differences between 'Bush' and 'Khoikhoi' people. After detailed craniometric study, it was concluded that no morphological distinction could be made.

In 1907, Péringuey also initiated a project to make life-casts of 'pure-bred Bushmen and Hottentots'. The motivation for the project was a combination of science and

salvage. The influential anthropologist A.C. Haddon had described Bushmen and Hottentots as "very primitive varieties of mankind", who were "rapidly diminishing" in number. The former attribute gave the project scientific validity, the latter lent it urgency. Over 60 casts were produced in subsequent years. When placed on public display in the Museum, they immediately became a major visitor attraction. However, the prominence accorded the casts was out of proportion to any proven scientific significance, and the emphasis on racial primitiveness reinforced existing stereotypes. In 1960, some of the casts were rehoused in a diorama depicting an idealised hunter-gatherer camp. This remains the most popular exhibition in the South African Museum. It is hoped that the present exhibition will set up a dialogue, as it were, with the diorama.

While academic anthropology has undergone a number of significant paradigm shifts during the past century, early museum collections are tangible reminders of past scientific concerns and curatorial practices. Although, with hindsight, the ideas that gave rise to early physical anthropology collections may now seem misguided, they have historical and epistemological significance. How these collections from the past are used in the present constitutes an ethical challenge to museums. Curators have a responsibility to acknowledge the history of collections without necessarily justifying past practices, and to work towards increasing awareness of the ways in which cultural identities are shaped and reshaped. As Jonathan Benthall has said of the photographic collections of the Royal Anthropological Institute, museums hold "precious deposits of human understanding and misunderstanding".

A number of the objects shown in this exhibition were originally housed in the ethnological collection of the School of African Life and Language at the University of Cape Town. However, interest in material culture waned as evolutionism and diffusionism lost academic credibility in favour of functionalist social anthropology. The collections eventually fell into neglect and disrepair. By the 1960s, anthropologists at UCT were conscious that an emphasis on culture and ethnic identity was open to political abuse, and consequently there was little theoretical or practical interest in material culture. Most of the collection that remained was placed in the care of the South African Museum on permanent loan. A recent revival of interest in cultural studies has not only revealed the significance of the collections, from a number of different perspectives, but has underlined the immensely valuable curatorial role played by the South African Museum. Had the collections exhibited here not been cared for with dedication, despite changing intellectual tides, the historical narratives inscribed in these artefacts could not have been told with the poignancy and power of their material presence.

Patricia Davison  
Assistant Director, South African Museum

## Acknowledgements

During the preparation of this exhibition and the compiling of this volume I have relied, indeed depended, on the goodwill and co-operation of a large number of people. I have also encountered many, some of whom I have met only on the Internet through the beguiling world of e-mail, whose generosity, kindness, advice and help have immeasurably assisted the processes of planning both exhibition and book, and the negotiating of challenging issues. By some extraordinary stroke of good luck, I found Rob Gordon on the 'net' early on in the planning of this project and to him I offer my grateful appreciation for his humour, wit, sense, endless stream of suggestions and references, and his friendship. Others who hardly knew me were nevertheless equally generous, and I owe special thanks to Ed Wilmsen for his support, encouragement and editorial advice, and for giving me a unique view into life in the Kalahari as an anthropologist and poet.

Closer to home, Martin Hall, always busy, was never too busy to tease out various concerns with me, offer support and tackle difficult issues head-on. His intervention in a number of instances made things easier for me. Alan Morris provided wise counsel and I must thank him for his wonderful generosity, which was offered even in the face of disagreement about some of the issues we discussed. His insight immeasurably improved my understanding of some of the problems associated with the care and curatorship of human remains. Human rights lawyer Roger Chennells kindly facilitated my access to San opinion in the Cape and elsewhere.

I have also benefited from exposure to the ideas of many interesting scholars, whose work is both important and compelling. My contact with Stephen Greenblatt has been stimulating and rewarding and I thank him for both his warm generosity and his friendship. His work has made me think about things differently, as has that of Greg Denning, to which he introduced me. Nigel Penn's extraordinary doctoral thesis on the northern Cape frontier zone and his scholarship have been inspiring, and his support has been greatly valued; Malcolm Payne has frequently offered the shrewdness of his critical eye and shared with me his inimitable creativity; Carmel Schrire and Tony Traill have regularly punctuated hours of work on the computer with their witty brilliance and practical help in e-mail messages; and John Parkington, Royden Yates and Ciraj Rassool have frequently shared their opinions and insights with me. All offered me interesting discussion on a number of ideas and issues. Joe Alferts, Megan Biesele, Phil Bonner, Maude Brown, David Chidester,

Patricia Davison, Janette Deacon, Thomas Dowson, Saul Dubow, Michael Godby, Stephen J. Gould, Paul Landau, Braam and Willemien le Roux, David Lewis-Williams, Peter Limb, Robert Ross, Andy Smith, Anne Solomon, Helmut Starcke, Bill Steiger, Axel Thoma, Nick van der Merwe, Stephen Watson and Sylvia Williams all helped, encouraged or advised in important ways.

My special thanks go to those friends, family and colleagues who were forced to make this project part of their lives too: my colleague Stephen Inngs for his consideration and support; Cecil and Thelma Skotnes, the two most generous people I know; Terry Kurgan, who also took over my teaching responsibilities at a crucial time and has been wonderfully encouraging; Sandra Prosalendis, friend and confidant *extraordinaire*; and, most importantly, Dave Brown, who has been supportive in countless other practical and creative ways too. My little boy Jules has been nothing other than a pleasure.

The practical planning of the exhibition and production of this book has involved the co-operation of a number of people. I was extremely fortunate to have met architect and designer Jos Thorne, who has worked with me on every aspect of this project for over a year. In addition to discussing, indeed, arguing over many issues with me, from design to ethics, she provided invaluable practical and curatorial support and her extraordinary competence in many areas was positively enabling. Fritha Langerman's engagement with many research, practical and creative problems was similarly indispensable. Thanks, too, to Lindy Sales for her help.

I had no idea what our decision to scan the images and lay out this book would actually entail. Jos and I spent hundreds of hours scanning and retouching photographs, particularly where the originals we had to work with were in bad condition or were third or fourth generation copies. Some of the texts and the images in the parallel text have been photo-edited; that is, texts have been reorganised to fit into the columns, and some images have been cropped or extended. My thanks to the photographers from the many archives on which I drew who took care to produce the best possible prints for us, and to Neville Gray of Hirt and Carter for his consideration and assistance. My thanks too, to Shauna Westcott, Glenda Younge, Leonie Twentymann-Jones and particularly Rose Meny-Gibert of UCT Press for being so good to work with.

I was particularly fortunate to have met Paul Weinberg early on in the planning stages of the exhibition. Apart from his wonderful skills as a photographer, his experience and insight into many aspects of this subject were refreshing and immeasurably useful. He

shared all this with me on numerous trips we undertook to scavenge and photograph in museums around the country. I am grateful, too, for his witty tolerance of my obsession with certain objects of material culture, such as skin bags, which he photographed for me by the dozen.

Museum professionals, the curators of collections and library staff in the various institutions that I drew on were helpful beyond all expectation. First and most importantly I must thank Marilyn Martin, Director of the South African National Gallery, who saw the possibilities of this exhibition and enthusiastically agreed to commit the gallery to it. I am also grateful for the curatorial freedom she allowed me. At the gallery I had the pleasure of working with John Weinberg, Kim Siebert, Carol Kauffman, Len Armstrong and members of the education department. To all of them I am extremely grateful.

Crucial to this exhibition were the collections of the University of Cape Town and the South African Museum. From the latter institution, Patricia Davison, Lindsay Hooper, June Hosford, and Graham Avery deserve special thanks. Their co-operation was greatly valued. Indeed, the University of Cape Town owes the excellent condition of its collection to the curatorship of the South African Museum. I must also thank the following for their generous assistance and co-operation: Leonie Twentyman-Jones and the staff of the Manuscripts and Archives department of the Jagger Library, and Solvej Vorster and Joanne Cruywagen of the Hiddinghall Library, both of the University of Cape Town; Karel Schoeman and Jackie Loos who were particularly helpful at the South African Library; Cathy Brookes of Museum Africa; John Keene of the Military Museum in Johannesburg; Aron Mazel and Frans Prins of the Natal Museum; Dr Boedac of the Institute of Scientific Research in Windhoek; Hein Hubert of the Montegu Museum; Anlien Boshoff from the Cultural History Museum; Sven Ouzman of the Bloemfontein Museum; Fiona Barbour of the McGregor Museum; Chris Stringer and Robert Kruszynski of the British Museum (Natural History); John Mack of the Museum of Mankind, London; Chris Gosden, Jeremy Cootes and Elizabeth Edwards from the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford; Chris Chippendale from the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; Robert Foley and Maggie Bellatti of the Duckworth Collection, Cambridge and Rogier Bedaux of the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden. Particular thanks must also go to the staff of: the Albany Museum in Grahamstown; the *Cape Times* Archive; the Cape Archives, Cape Town; the State Archives, Windhoek; the Killie Campbell Africana Library, Durban; and the

Wellington Museum in the Western Cape. Documentary Educational Resources, Massachusetts, gave us permission to quote from the film script of John Marshall's *N!ai, The Story of a !Kung Woman*. All the institutions from which we gleaned the photographs reproduced in this book and on the exhibition generously waived their reproduction fees, and I thank them for this vital assistance to the project.

I must also thank Sandra Prosalendis, Bill Batson and Sarah Winter of the District Six Museum for their help and the students of the Museum Post-Graduate Diploma at UCT for their enthusiasm and assistance.

Finally, I must acknowledge the benevolent support of the sponsors who have made both this publication and exhibition possible. Most importantly, the University of Cape Town has generously funded my research, and provided me with a sympathetic and stimulating environment in which to work. In particular, I must thank David Woods for his support over many years.

The publication of this book was made possible by generous donations from the Federal Republic of Germany, through Consul-General Frederick Bruns; from Nedbank, through their policy of supporting South African art and culture and the promotion of previously neglected traditions, and from the Anglo American and De Beers Chairman's Fund.

My special thanks must also go to Peter and Barbara Fairhead and the Fairheads Trust Company who have supported my work and the work of the Michaelis School of Fine Art over a number of years. My thanks also to Paul Bekker of the Royal Netherlands Embassy, the West Australian Campaign Against Racial Exploitation, Jowells Charitable Trust, Michael Fridjhon (who has been a true friend), Michael Kovensky, Ian Bromley of South African Airways, Dierdre Jansen and 3M Company; Sun International; Jane Blain of PG Glass, Sue Kleinsmidt and Bill Macadam of the Board of Executors and Nedbank who all funded some important aspect of the exhibition. South African Airways sponsored flights in South Africa and to London, Canon sponsored electrostatic printing and Agfa supplied film and photographic paper. To all these individuals and institutions I am extremely grateful.

It is in the nature of such a project that many people will contribute to it in one way or another after this book has gone to press, but before the opening of the exhibition. To those, and to any others whom I may, through oversight, have neglected to mention, I give my heartfelt thanks.

Pippa Skotnes  
January 1996

## Diä!kwain's dream of his father's death

*Told to Lucy Lloyd by Diä!kwain in 1875*

When I was with a Boer I dreamt that we were cutting up a sheep. The Boer came up to us, as we were cutting it up and said that he would beat us to death. The dream spoke to me thus, that I told the Boer, not to kill us ... For I did not want him to kill my father ... I would work out both what I owed and what my father owed. And the dream said to me that I saw my father lying dead in the sun's heat.

**And I wept ...**

And I asked the Boer, Did he think it was such a big thing that we had killed, that he acted like this? I dreamt that the Boer drove us before him ...

And when day broke, I arose and told my wife that a dream had told me we were cutting up a Boer's sheep. I saw father standing there dead. And the wind was in the north and I asked her, did she not see that the sky looked as if it were going to rain, just as the dream had told me, that dust was covering the sky. Therefore I should go and talk with the Boer about the ox, I should see what was happening that had made me dream of father, that the Boer had killed us. The dream had told it to me, just as if a person had spoken. Therefore we will go home, we will go and listen at the huts, and see whether we do not hear news ...

And father's eye was blinking before I had gone ... Rain water which was not little was falling. I said to my wife ... you seem to think my dream was not clear. I shall see things which my dream told me about.

**I shall see it. Then you will see ...**

We returned home to where we lived with the Boer and we stayed there two nights ... The wind blew, as if it were begging from me just as the wind had done (in my dream) when I dreamt about father that ... the Boer killed us when the sheep bleated. The dream had told me this.

And mother said to me I seemed to have disbelieved the dream and to have thought I should see father again, though the dream had told me I should not see him again. Yet now I saw her, and she had come to tell us that father had died leaving us ... And mother asked me, did I not see that the dream I had dreamt had spoken the truth? ... So the dream I had told her about had not deceived me ...

The springbok (many) had afterwards passed the hut, as if they were not afraid. Mother did not know where the springbok came from. "They were not a few and they came and played as they approached the hut where father lay dead. The springbok appeared to be moving away, and the wind really blew following them.

**They were running before that wind.**

It was really father's wind and you yourself feel how it is blowing.

You know it used always to blow like that whenever father was shooting game."

I spoke to my wife and told her about it. I asked her whether she did not realise that I was feeling my inside which was biting (aching).

As the wind blew past I felt my inside biting ...

I felt like that when one of my people was dying,

**my inside always ached  
when it was one of my people.**



## Notes

### Foreword Marilyn Martin Notes

1. Personally I prefer to use the collective term Khoisan where appropriate; as an Afrikaans-speaker I have heard the derogation in 'Boesman' too often to be able to use it.
2. The divisions and contestations reside in the very use of the terms 'coloured', 'so-called coloured' and 'black'. For insight into the current debates I refer readers to two articles in *Die Suid-Afrikaan* (55, December 1995/January 1996): Kadalie, B. *Coloured Consciousness: Building or Dividing the Nation?* and Van der Merwe, A. *Tweede Swart Afrikaanse Skrywersimposium*.
3. Recent legislation to restore land excludes San groups; the government of national unity has opened a desk for indigenous affairs to address the situation of the approximately 200 people who remain in the Karoo and Kalahari Desert (*The Sunday Times*, 25 June 1995).
4. These exhibitions were: *Ezakwantu: Beadwork from the Eastern Cape* (1993); *Muslim Art from the Western Cape* (1994); *Anne Frank in the World* (1994); *IGugu lamaNdebele-Pride of the Ndebele* (1994-5).
5. The photo-documentary exhibition, *Anne Frank in the World*, which came from the Anne Frank Centre in Amsterdam, traced the story of Anne Frank and her family; a complementary photographic exhibition, curated by the Mayibuyee Centre, University of the Western Cape, described apartheid and resistance. But we missed the opportunity of telling our own story of genocide.
6. These exhibitions were: *Where We Live—Panels by the People of Cape Town* (1992); *Made in Wood—Work from the Western Cape* (1992-3); *Picturing our World—Contemporary Images of the Western Cape* (1993); *District Six—Image and Representation* (1995-6), organised in collaboration with the District Six Museum, Cape Town.

### Mutilation and Meaning Stephen Greenblatt Notes

1. On the problem of the term as used in ordinary speech, there is a remarkable footnote in J.L. Austin's "A Plea for Excuses": "You have a donkey, so have I, and they graze in the same field. The day comes when I conceive a dislike for mine. I go to shoot it, draw a bead on it, fire: the brute falls in its tracks. I inspect the victim, and find to my horror that it is your donkey. I appear on your doorstep with the remains and say—what? 'I say, old sport, I'm awfully sorry, etc., I've shot your donkey by accident? Or 'by mistake'? Then again, I go to shoot my donkey as before, draw a bead on it, fire—but as I do so the beasts move, and to my horror yours falls. Again the scene on the doorstep—what do I say? 'By mistake'? Or 'by accident'?" (Austin 1979:185 n.1). In the light of this analysis, it would not

- be legitimate to call the circumcision of the anthropologist's sons either an accident or a mistake.
2. See Jacques Derrida (1982: 307-30). As will become clear, my interest is not in the indeterminacy that Derrida argues to be the condition of iterability but rather in the historical contests over meaning.
3. It is striking that *Deuteronomy* also explicitly forbids other ritual mutilations: "Ye are the children of the Lord your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead" (14:1).
4. This moralisation seems based upon the passage in *Deuteronomy* 10 from which I have quoted: "Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked. For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward" (10:15-17). See also *Deuteronomy* 30:6 and *Jeremiah* 4:4 and 9:26.
5. I owe this reference to Lowell Gallagher.
6. The *Oxford English Dictionary* attributes the first printed use of the term Juggernaut to W. Bruton (1638) in *Hakluyt's Voyages*.
7. See the brief critique of Catz's thesis by Robert Viale in his French translation of Mendes Pinto (Viale 1991:22).
8. Subtitle: *Being an essay to a new method of observing the most important movings of the muscles of the head, as they are the neerest and immediate organs of the voluntarie and impetuous motions of the mind. With the proposall of a new nomenclature of the muscles*.
9. He provides a sample of this language which English was capable of rendering in utterances like the following: "obedient alma honasa hul; generati alvah ableuvisse insi locat amorvissem humanet rokoas salah axoret eltah alvah hon ono olephad in se mori melet eri neri meleare; okoriko olo ophaus narratus asa sadoas loboim olet amni Phikepeaa ebeller elme bosai in re meal olike" (Tany 1655:54-5). I owe this passage to Thomas Luxon.
10. If we think that the hands are too limited a means of human communication compared with the tongue, Bulwer proposes to show us that their range of expressiveness is actually greater than that of words. In a flight of rhetorical enthusiasm that leads him to forget that he is himself, after all, using words, Bulwer offers his proof by launching into a list of what we do with our hands:  
Sue, entreat, beseech, solicit, call, allure, entice, dismiss, grant, deny, reprove, are suppliant, fear, threaten, abhor, repent, pray, instruct, witness, accuse, declare our silence, condemn, absolve, show our astonishment, proffer, refuse, respect, give honour, adore, worship, despise, prohibit,

reject, challenge, bargain, vow, swear, imprecate, humor, allow, give warning, command, reconcile, submit, defy, affirm, offer injury, complement, argue, dispute, explode, confute, exhort, admonish, affirm, distinguish, urge, doubt, reproach, mock, approve, dislike, encourage, recommend, flatter, applaud, exhalt, humble, insult, adjure, yield, confess, cherish, demand, crave, covet, bless, number, prove, confirm, congee, salute, congratulate, entertain, give thanks, welcome, bid farewell, chide, brawl, consent, upbraid, envy, reward, offer force, pacify, invite, justify, condemn, disdain, disallow, forgive, offer peace, promise, perform, reply, invoke, request, repel, charge, satisfy, deprecate, lament, condole, bemoan, put in mind, hinder, praise, commend, brag, boast, warrant, assure, inquire, direct, adopt, rejoice, show gladness, complain, despair, grieve, are sad and sorrowful, cry out, bewail, forbid, discomfort, ask, are angry, wonder, admire, pity, assent, rebuke, savor, slight, dispraise, disparage, are earnest, importunate, refer, put to compromise, plight our faith, make a league of friendship, strike one good lud, give handsel, take earnest, buy, barter, exchange, show our agreement, express our liberality, show our benevolence, are illiberal, ask mercy, exhibit grace, show our displeasure, fret, chafe, fume, rage, revenge, crave audience, call for silence, prepare for an apology, give liberty of speech, bid one take notice, warn one to forbear, keep off and be gone; take acquaintance, confess ourselves deceived by a mistake, make remonstrance of another's error, weep, give a pledge of aid, comfort, relieve, demonstrate, redress, persuade, resolve, speak to, appeal, profess a willingness to strike, show ourselves convinced, say we know some what which yet we will not tell, present a check for silence, promise secrecy, protect our innocence, manifest our love, enmity, hate, and despise; provoke, hyperbolically extoll, enlarge our mirth with jollity and triumphant acclamations of delight, note, and signify another's actions, the manner, place, and time, as how, where, when, etc. (Bulwer 1644:20).

This reminder that the Renaissance was the great age of lists is not likely to persuade many readers that "postures of the hand" exceed "the numerical store of words," but it is enough to license Bulwer's lengthy and painstaking analysis of gestures, from scratching the head with one finger (an "effeminate gesture bewraying a close inclination to vice" [130]) to putting forth the middle finger, the rest drawn into a fist ("a natural expression of scorn and contempt" [132]).

11. After giving an account of circumcision as

