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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Place of Remembrance in South Africa's Post-Memory Boom: Depicting the Hector Pieterson Memorial and Museum from Everyday Life in Soweto

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ABSTRACT

After 1994, many memorials and museums were built in South Africa to commemorate/memorialize the history of the struggle against apartheid, the so-called 'Memory Boom'. The Hector Pieterson Memorial and Museum (HPMM) in Soweto is no exception. Opened in 2002, it is now a world-renowned site. This article discusses 'who actually comes to this memorial site and what is experienced there' and describes the characteristics of this place from the perspective of everyday life in Soweto, which is a perspective that has rarely been addressed in previous studies. The paper uses an ethnographic approach involving participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Six months of research revealed two aspects. First, in terms of the type of visitors, it revealed that most visitors were tourists and students from outside Soweto and that few Soweto residents come to HPMM, except on the 16th of June. Second, HPMM is now in the transitional phase of commemoration, the phase of potentially activating and relating different generations in Soweto. This is evident in the fact that there are local guides born after 1976, some even after the 1990s. Now seems to be the time to consider not only how the memory of the Soweto Uprising should be recorded, but also how to connect the 1976 generation with the local youth of today, and how to involve the local youth in the commemoration through HPMM, including how to take over the role of storytelling, especially since the museum deals with the local history in which it is located.

KEYWORDS: Soweto Uprising, Commemoration, Memorial, Born-Frees, Everyday Life

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Introduction

This paper explores the prospects for commemoration in current South Africa as it undergoes a generational change after decades of democratisation. It focuses on the Hector Pieterson Memorial and Museum (HPMM), one of the commemorative sites of the struggle against apartheid, to identify its current use and roles as well as historical significance, especially for the local young population.

Since the end of apartheid in 1994, South Africa has been struggling to resolve its negative impact. Under former president Nelson Mandela's Rainbow Nation vision, reconciliation was emphasized, and the nation was rebuilt in a way that was inclusive. One of these efforts was commemoration, which was a symbolic form of reparation for the restoration of the human dignity of people who had been oppressed. Under colonial rule and apartheid, the commemorations legitimised the position of oppressors, white people (Ndlovu, 2017: 138-139). In addition, Ngcobo (2018: 148) notes that former government-led commemorations tended to ignore the youth and women.

After the end of apartheid in 1994, South Africa witnessed what has been called a Memory Boom (Hlongwane, 2015; Hlongwane and Ndlovu, 2019). During this period, the government led in the memorialisation and commemoration of the history of previously voiceless people through the construction of monuments, museums, and statues. The government also used the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999, to declare national holidays (e.g., June 16 as Youth Day and August 9 as Women's Day). Along with HPMM, which is the subject of this paper, other museums established include the Nelson Mandela Museum in Umtata in the Eastern Cape opened in 2000; the Luthuli Museum opened in Groutville in KwaZulu-Natal in 2004; and Freedom Park, in Pretoria in Gauteng in 2004. This movement can also be seen as a response to the global trend of building memorial museums to address human rights violations in different societies, especially after the construction of the Holocaust Museum (Sodaro, 2018).

In the commemoration policy, the South African government decided not to remove existing statues of white people but add new statues or memorials commemorating black people. Marschall (2019: 1098) considers this to be because Mandela anticipated that democratisation and national integration would be difficult if historical and cultural symbols of white people were removed.

However, the vision of the Rainbow Nation gradually crumbled, and the social context changed especially after Mandela died in 2013. In 2008 and 2015, people's anger at the lingering social issues mainly unemployment, burst and was directed at migrants. This xenophobia repeatedly caused serious incidents in South Africa. Subsequently, a new generation of decolonising movements also emerged in this context of questioning who South Africans are and what South Africa's national identity is. Such change in the social context has an impact on commemoration. The new generation, known as Born-Frees - born in the 1990s, especially after 1994 (Booysen, 2016: 137), gained prominence in 2015 through the Rhodes Must Fall movement, when students at the University of Cape Town tore down a

statue of Cecil Rhodes, a symbol of colonialism and imperialism, on campus to call for the decolonisation of higher education institutions. The movement spread across the country and became a massive movement linked to the Fees Must Fall campaign to reduce university fees, which began around the same time. Judin (2021: 2) contextualises this protest at a time when statues were being attacked around the world, inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, a movement against structures of racism and oppression rooted in colonialism.

In addition to its global significance, the movement can be explained in two aspects. On the one hand, it can be seen as an extension of the historical context of protest against the negative legacies of apartheid, such as educational inequality and poverty, which remain despite the abolition of the apartheid system. On the other hand, it can be seen as a movement against the commemorative methods of the previous generation, so that it attracted much attention as the arrival of a generation with a new historical and political consciousness.

This suggests that today South Africa is in a period of transition. While this has been noted in relation to democratisation and nation-building, I argue that it is also occurring in relation to commemoration. Considering that the population of Born-Frees will grow, it is necessary to rethink commemoration with a focus on the generational shift.

What is the 'Post' Space and Time in South Africa?

In recent years, after almost two decades of discussions by political scientists, human geographers have also started discussing the problem of using the word 'post' for societies which have experienced conflicts. In the case of South Africa, 'post' is a common adjective to describe the society after the 1994 democratisation. It is mainly used in the field of Political Science to discuss nation-building and has a variety of definitions (Houssay-Holzschuch, 2021). Houssay-Holzschuch (2021: 7) defines the 'post' as 'the messy situations of societies that have undergone a systemic change but remain thoroughly entangled with their pasts'. This is because the racial power relations created by apartheid still exist in the space and time of contemporary South Africa. Houssay-Holzschuch cites, landscape, population density, and income which causes a difference in living conditions, as examples of the legacies of apartheid. On the other hand, Houssay-Holzschuch also points out that 'post' indicates the probability of positive change in the future. In this way, the 'post-apartheid' space-time is considered to bring both disappointment about the present and hope for the future.

Drozdzewski (2021) adds to Houssay-Holzschuch's argument, by stating that the space-time implied by 'post-apartheid' is optimistic in that people can separate the past from themselves and make positive changes. While it is not easy to change society, the preference and tendency for the use of 'post' and the acceptance of this optimism are seen as good things in the development of societies that have experienced conflicts, as it proves that the society is on the road to recovery and progress by global standards (Drozdzewski, 2021: 481).

Drozdzewski criticises the political nature of the use of the word 'post', but in this paper I aim to use this term strategically in the context of commemoration, to appeal to the 'need' to change the future rather than the 'probability' of changing the future. I use the term 'post' as an adjective to describe the Memory Boom and examine what kind of places the memorials and museums have become, and what kind of issues emerged there today, almost two decades after they were built during the Memory Boom.

The need to focus on the 'post' also stems from the reality that memorials and museums will not necessarily be preserved forever. Making and preserving are two different activities, so the permanence of what is made cannot be guaranteed by the making itself. For example, Hlongwane and Ndlovu (2019: 112) cite the case of the Red Location Museum in Port Elizabeth. It was forced to close temporarily due to vandalism by residents who felt that investment in improving daily life, including job creation and infrastructure development, should take precedence over the construction of the memorial. It shows that the government's commemorative policy, especially the construction of monuments and museums, is a community development project that is always weighed against the needs of the local population and requires negotiation and coordination. Such aspects of commemoration deeply rooted in the current concerns of the community fits well with the definition of the adjective ‘post’.

Overall, memorials regarding apartheid undoubtedly symbolised liberation and victory over racism and oppression, especially at the time of the Memory Boom, but this may have changed in this 'post' 25 years. This is because people's perspectives or historical understandings change over time, including generational shifts, as the Rhodes Must Fall movement has shown. In short, since commemoration always reflects the current reality of society, looking at the meaning attached to the place of remembrance through the experiences unfolding there now helps to understand current social issues in South Africa.

Basic Information about Soweto Uprising and HPMM

This paper identifies how HPMM which commemorates the Soweto Uprising has been used and what characteristics are emerging to discuss the prospects for commemoration and memorialisation of apartheid in South Africa. Before entering the methodology, this section outlines the history of the Soweto Uprising and the basic information of HPMM in accordance with previous scholarship, including Marschall (2006), Nieftagodien (2014), Brown (2016), Ndlovu (2017), and the South African Democracy Education Trust (2017).

The Soweto Uprising started in 1976, in Soweto, a township south-west of Johannesburg. After the apartheid regime passed the Natives Resettlement Act in 1954, many black people who had lived closer to the centre of Johannesburg were forcibly relocated to this place. Soweto is therefore a symbolic site of apartheid. Since the end of apartheid in 1994, the population has continued to grow due to an influx of migrants, and it is now the largest township in South Africa.

Soweto is also famous for being a stronghold of the anti-apartheid struggle and for being home to many activists at the time. However, after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, the apartheid regime banned the ANC (African National Congress) and PAC (Pan Africanist Congress), the political parties that had led the struggles, and arrested and imprisoned their leaders. This led to a temporary decline in the anti-apartheid movement, but from the 1970s a new movement called the Black Conscious Movement was developed and led by Steve Biko and other university students. In this context, students in Soweto also began a campaign against the discriminatory education system enforced by the Bantu Education Act of 1952, including the boycott of classes. The immediate reason for their opposition was that the government was forcing black pupils to use Afrikaans, the first language of the oppressors at the time, as a medium of instruction. Yet more broadly, they were opposed to apartheid, the system of oppression itself.

The protest was planned by the student organisation SASM (South African Student Movement) to march from Soweto to the office of the Department of Bantu Education to present a petition. It was implemented on 16 June 1976. But as the students walked in Soweto that morning, the police came and attacked the unarmed students with tear gas and guns, killing many, including Hector Pieterson and Hastings Ndlovu. The uprising did not end in one day, and the situation became more serious by the day as people began to retaliate, for example by setting fire to government buildings. Eventually the revolt spread to the surrounding townships and became a national movement.

The Soweto Uprising was an event that contributed to the end of apartheid by re-igniting the anti-apartheid movement on a large scale, after a temporary lull, and because of its historical importance, it is included in the social studies curriculum and the date of 16 June has been declared a national holiday. The Soweto Uprising is also known around the world as a symbol of the apartheid regime's human rights abuses because Hector Pieterson's photograph was taken by Sam Nzima and reported worldwide. This is because the memorial and museum discussed in this paper is named after Hector Pieterson.

HPMM was opened on 16 June 2002 in Orlando West, Soweto. The museum is named after Hector Pieterson, one of the first victims of the Soweto Uprising, whose photograph, taken by Sam Nzima, was broadcast around the world and became an icon of the Uprisings and the symbol of the human rights violation by the Apartheid government. The museum’s construction was prompted by a photographic exhibition held there in 1996, the 20th Anniversary of the Uprising. This led to a proposal for a permanent exhibition. The museum was designed by Mashabane Rose Associates, which specialises in museum design, and the main funder was the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism with R16.8 million, followed by the City of Johannesburg with R7.5 million (Marschall, 2006: 151). As can be seen from the main funder, the development was initially intended to develop tourism, in this case, specifically dark tourism, which is considered as ‘phenomena which encompass the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites’ (Foley and Lennon, 1996: 198). The development of this area has also been driven by the fact that it is the former home of two prominent Nobel Peace Prize winners, Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu. It was thought that this area would be a tourist attraction (Marschall, ibid). There are also some houses of famous activists

such as Zeph Mothopeng, who was one of the founding members of the PAC, Walter Sisulu, who was Deputy President of the ANC and Winnie Mandela, who was President of the ANCWL (ANC Women's League) (Fig.1).

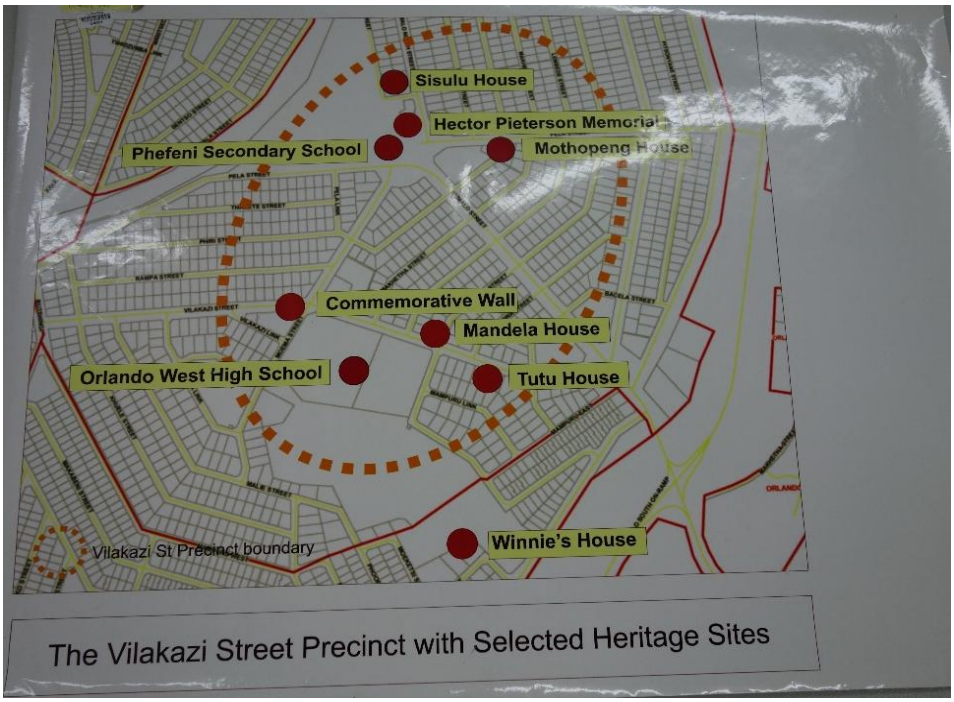

Fig.1. The map of historical sites around HPMM (Source: HPMM Archives)

The exhibition is presented in chronological order, from the origins of Soweto, life in Soweto under the apartheid regime, the poor educational environment under the Bantu Education Act, the Black Consciousness Movement that began in the 1970s, to the events of 16 June and the subsequent development of the anti-apartheid struggle through oral testimonies, photographs and videos, and objects including placards used by students during the protest. A new exhibition on Hector Pieterson has recently been added. The exhibitions are designed by a curatorial team of architects, curators, filmmakers, city politicians, community representatives and historians who lived through the Soweto Uprising, including Sifiso Ndlovu and Ali Hlongwane (South African Democracy Education Trust, 2017: 227). However, the content of each exhibition will not be discussed in this paper, as it is beyond the primary concern of my research.

Methodology

This study examines who visits HPMM and what their experiences are, from the perspective of everyday life, not just the days of memorial events. As a methodology, I use ethnography in the Geography of Commemoration, developed from Anthropology and is 'a process of creating and representing knowledge or ways of knowing that are based on ethnographers' own experiences and the ways these intersect with the persons, places and things encountered during the process' (Pink, 2013: 35).

When discussing memorial sites in the field of Human Geography, Levent (2017) and Sumartojo (2021) point out that traditional research has depicted the characteristics of a place from the messages represented by the objects present there, such as monuments, which is not sufficient to understand a memorial site. They argue that this is because the experiences and feelings people have at the site, and the atmosphere created by these accumulations, can also shape, reinforce, or change the characteristics of the memorial place. They have developed anthropologist Pink's Sensory Ethnography, using it to examine the memorial sites on the day of commemoration through the sensory experiences of visitors, including the researchers themselves. I employ this methodology because it fits my research interests. However, this study is not only concerned with special occasions such as commemorative events, but also with everyday life. This is because the identity of a place is always incomplete and remade and thus requires continuous observation (Jones and Garde-Hansen, 2012: 2).

The meaning of the word 'everyday' in the title of this article also should be defined. Firstly, I use the word 'everyday' to indicate the ordinary day and to analyse experiences on days not just special occasions, including a public holiday. Next, as mentioned above, the characteristics of a place are formed and changed not only by objects but also by the accumulation and repetition of experiences on-site. Hence, the term 'everyday' is used to depict the characteristics of a memorial site as a phenomenon resulting from experiences that accumulate or change over time.

My data comes from various sources, including 1. site observation at HPMM, 2. semi-structured interviews with HPMM staff members, 3. interview with history teachers at local schools in Soweto, and 4. observation at memorial events at/near HPMM. I conducted participant observation and semi-structured interviews at HPMM from December 2021 to June 2022 (except for some interviews were conducted after this period because of the schedule of interviewees). Unfortunately, I was not able to talk to tourists due to the time constraints of their sightseeing tours, but I was able to talk to local people coming to this place. Research participants agree to the content of their interviews being used by signing a consent form. I will not go into the detailed profiles of the interviewees here. This is because in this study their backgrounds are also seen as part of the characteristics of the place, HPMM. For this reason, all their information is presented in the empirical results section, together with the information from the observations. People who took the time to be interviewed individually were Hector Pieterson's sister and storyteller Antoinette Sithole, HPMM resident storyteller Thulani Twala,

HPMM chief curator Prince Dube, personal tour guide and storyteller Mxolisi Twala. I also visited eight historical high schools in Soweto (Madibane High, Orlando High, Meadowlands High, Orlando West High, Phefeni High, Morris Isaacson High, Naledi High, Sekano-Ntoane High) and observed history lessons, and spoke to history teachers responsible for Grade 12 students studying the Soweto Uprising to find out how high schools in Soweto use the HPMM for history teaching. While the content of their history lessons will not be discussed here, as it is beyond the scope of this paper, some information will be described that provides a useful insight into my research.

I also attended some memorial events around HPMM in June and recorded what was said. Recording media included a voice recorder, a smartphone camera and field notes. The information I gained from this research is used to describe the characteristics of the place from the perspective of me, who is a foreigner and born in 1992. I need to mention my background because the personal identity of the researcher cannot be separated from the research (Pink, 2013: 42).

Although this paper may be criticised as being merely a subjective description, any observational research carried out by an individual cannot completely avoid selectivity and bias, which is why it should be examined and analysed repeatedly (Magnusson, 2016: 119), and hence, it can give a more productive analysis when there are indeed a variety of perspectives on the same issue (Drozdzewski, Sumartojo and Waterson, 2021: 46). I present this study to stimulate a more active debate on this case. This means that the findings in this article are not the conclusion of my research. In this paper I draw on different types of visitors and their activities that continually build, enhance, or change the character of this memorial site. They can be seen as some of the elements that make up the complexity of the memorial site of the post-memory boom in South Africa. It should also be noted that this paper is not intended to judge the views of any individual or political party as right or wrong, even if they are conflicting.

Empirical Results

This section illustrates some of the characteristics of the HPMM as revealed by the participatory observation that the site was visited daily by international tourists, students from outside Soweto, street vendors, tour guides, photographers, and museum staff. However, local people also use it as a path, including children who walk to and from school every day. In the end, four aspects of the site emerged from everyday experience: a place for tourism and business, a place for history education, a place for a political rally and a place of commemoration. These four aspects are interrelated and interdependent, existing simultaneously and intermingling.

A Place for Tourism and Business

As intended by the government, HPMM functions as a tourist attraction. In December 2021, when I began my fieldwork, the government had just lifted the COVID protocol and the site was deserted, but the museum was open. Since then, there has been a gradual increase in the number of tourists and group visits have been in evidence in January 2023.

Tourists usually arrive in large buses or the tourism company vans. They are led by their tour guides. Most tourists seem to be from other countries, and many are white people. Their presence creates a unique atmosphere in Soweto, which has historically been predominantly black people. They listen to a commentary in English by a guide in front of the memorial with a photo of Hector Pieterson, and then they go into the museum. While the tourists are looking at the exhibitions inside the museum, the guides are waiting outside. Visitors leave after 20-30 minutes of stay at HPMM and board buses for other tourist attractions such as the Mandela House on Vilakazi Street, as it is well-established as a typical sightseeing route of Soweto. Sometimes people come by bicycle or by tuk-tuk, and some of them walk from a guesthouse near HPMM.

Occasionally, Antoinette Sithole, Hector Pieterson's older sister, also comes to HPMM. She used to be the museum's official storyteller, but due to her busy schedule and the exhaustion of recounting her painful past, she has retired from full-time storytelling and now takes private bookings for storytelling tours. She is sometimes invited to the schools, which are outside Soweto and multi-ethnic and multi-racial schools, to tell the story of her life[i]. Like other guides, she gives a talk to a group of tourists in the space where the memorial is located. While she is at HPMM, she is usually asked by tourists to take a photo with them.

HPMM's function as a tourist attraction also means that it is a place of business with tourists. In addition to the tour guides, the memorial also attracts photographers who take pictures and sell them to tourists, as well as souvenir vendors. There were 18 vendors, all but one of whom was male. They come to work every morning at 10 am, when the museum opens, and take out items stored in a warehouse behind the museum and place them on the ground or tables. They said the warehouse had been donated by Transnet, a transport company. The company also provided containers for the 1996 photo exhibition held at the current HPMM site. Their goods were imported from abroad via the market, or privately bought or produced, and not necessarily all from South Africa. Pictures of elephants or zebras, together with carved wooden dolls and masks, create an exotic space that seems to be African but of unknown nationality. This may reflect the image of Africa demanded by the tourist market, but Soweto is a residential area and clearly not a place for wildlife. These commercialised images of Africa are also sold on Vilakazi Street and all the items are similar. In short, this finding suggests that these products are a representation and creation of a space of imagined Africa, detached from the context of a specific place, Soweto.

Fig.2. Souvenirs sold by local street vendors (Source: Author, 2022)

A Place for History Education

As many visitors as tourists are South African students. Most students whom I met during the participant observation were black students. They visit on large buses with teachers. Most schools inform the museum in advance of the date, time, and number of pupils, but often they do not turn up on time. On arrival, teachers from each school gave their explanations or hired a guide, but in most cases, Thulani Twala, an official museum guide, gave the explanations. The age of the students coming to HPMM is wide, from primary school children to college students. He changed the language and the way of communicating according to the age of the students. With the younger children, he would ask them a series of questions to make them think and not distract them, and he would use their first language, such as Zulu, to describe to them. Meanwhile, explanations to college students were given almost exclusively in English, although indigenous languages were occasionally used to facilitate understanding. Alternatively, when he taught primary school children from the province whose first language was Tswana, the teachers translated Twala's explanations into Tswana because the children did not understand either Zulu or English, and because Tswana was not Twala's first language. This seems to be a phenomenon that can only occur in a multi-ethnic, multilingual country.

Some information about Twala is added here because he also contributes to the character of HPMM, which is a place for history education, so his background should be included as well as what he is doing at HPMM. He succeeds Sithole and is a storyteller and administrator. He is 38 years old, did not

experience the Soweto Uprising and is not from Soweto. However, from childhood, he grew up hearing adults talk about their experiences of the struggle against apartheid, as his mother had many friends who were activists and often invited them to her home and served them meals. As a result, he has been interested in storytelling and the memories of struggles. When he first visited HPMM in 2010 on another assignment, he was so impressed by the exhibition that he decided to work there and asked the chief curator of the museum to employ him. He first joined HPMM as a volunteer undergoing training and became a full-time staff member in 2014. When I asked him what his vision was for the future and what role HPMM should play, other than planning a 'Kids Club' education programme for children before the end of 2023, he shared his goal as follows:

> I will be dealing with the projects that will happen at the museum, implement them, start them from scratch, stakeholders…that's what I wish to do. In order to see more kids, increase the number of kids coming to the museum, using the museum for them, not for the tourist attraction. For the museum is the place which can inspire and transform their lives to the history of our country[ii].

Generally, school bookings are concentrated in May and September[iii]. This may be because of June, the month of Soweto Uprising, is an exam and semester break month so schools prefer to come before, and September is a month of celebration of heritage, called 'Heritage Month'[iv]. I would like to describe a particularly memorably day of my observation at HPMM, which was 13 May 2022, when the museum had seven schools booked to visit, plus two schools without a booking thus a total of nine schools came. It was very busy, and students had to wait outside the museum for their turn to enter. The square was filled with schoolchildren. Apart from one school, I was unable to speak to, three of the eight were from Gauteng Province, where HPMM is based, three were from the Free State, one from the North West, and one from the Northern Cape.

Fig.3. HPMM on the 13th of May in 2022 (Source: Author, 2022)

During my fieldwork, I hardly saw any Soweto schools visiting the museum, albeit they are much closer to HPMM than other schools from outside Soweto. Furthermore, when I asked eight history teachers at Soweto's historical high schools, none of them said they would be visiting the museum in 2022. More surprisingly, teachers in some of those schools were unaware that Sithole, who usually comes to HPMM, was alive. It is necessary to examine the reasons for this disconnect, as one teacher has given some reasons: 'We used to take students on field trips to HPMM, but we stopped because of COVID and because parents complained that they did not want to pay to send their children to learn things they already knew'. It suggests how the current generation of parents perceive HPMM, and history education needs to be included in the discussion[v].

The parental statement 'we already know', introduced here by the history teacher, seems to have two connotations. The first meaning is that they literally know what kind of event the Soweto Uprising was. The other was mentioned in an interview with Prince Dube, the 47-year-old chief curator of HPMM. When I asked him why the people of Soweto did not visit the museum as much as tourists and students from outside Soweto, he gave me two reasons. Firstly, he assumed that since the museum has been running for 20 years, the local people would have visited more than once and know the contents, so they would not feel the need to come again. Secondly, he said that people are not interested in things that are close to them because they have become so commonplace that they are not interested in them. Instead, they are interested in things far away. He speculated that this is why many visitors come

from outside Soweto and concluded that it is a basic human behaviour[vi]. This second point he made seems to be an explanation of the nature of tourism.

From above, when Soweto local people say 'because we already know' when they do not want to come to the museum, 'know' potentially has two meanings: (1) they know about the Soweto Uprising, and (2) they know what the museum's exhibition is about. And if they do not come only because of (1), then there is room for HPMM to approach them to get them to come.

A Place for a Political Rally

On 18 February 2022, when I arrived at HPMM, I saw some police cars. The space in front of the museum was fenced off and a huge truck was parked there. The museum staff told me there was going to be an EFF rally. At Uncle Tom's Hall, a community centre next to the museum, EFF members were handing out many of their party T-shirts for free. The square was filled with people wearing red T-shirts and waving EFF flags. The place, normally occupied by international tourists and students on field trips, was transformed into a completely different world. The rally seemed to be aimed at recruiting new party members. Party leader Julius Malema also came and gave a speech, so the square was filled with a frenzied atmosphere of call-and-response.

From this case, we can see aspects of HPMM functioning as a site of political meaning. Firstly, the Soweto Uprising itself was an event that symbolised the anti-apartheid movement and acted as an opportunity for people to unite and fight to achieve liberation for future generation (Ndlovu, 2017: 139). It is still referred to on various occasions as something of symbolic political significance, although its context has changed. Particularly, the very act of the opposition party EFF holding a rally in a public place, i.e., a place maintained by the government, has a political and performative significance, even though this was not a rally directly related to the Soweto Uprising. Furthermore, although it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss in detail, the EFF's commitment to free and better-quality education has something in common with the goal of improving the educational environment, children in the Soweto Uprising were aiming for. While this paper is not intended to endorse any political party, it was insightful to observe the link between EFF's vision and HPMM[vii].

20th Anniversary of the Hector Pieterson Museum

On 12 June 2022, I attended the 20th Anniversary event of the museum, which took place at Uncle Tom's Hall, next to the museum. Speakers included Prof Noor Nieftagodien, a leading historian of the Soweto Uprising, representatives from the Nkhanyezi Stimulation Centre for Children with Multiple Disabilities, the Soweto HIV/AIDS Counsellors Association, and the Southern African Association of Youth Clubs. The main theme of the talk was the promotion of community development in Soweto and the support of today's youth. The participants were local people who had been involved in the Uprising, as well as many high school students from nearby schools. Grade 12 students had remedial classes on Saturdays, so it seems they attended on their way home from those classes. Their teachers also came along.

There were two memorable moments during this event. Firstly, when one of the speakers asked the children in the audience to raise their hands if they had been to the museum before, only a few hands went up. It should be noted that students at Orlando West High School, which is the closest school to HPMM also did not visit the museum for history lessons in 2022. The fact that few local students had used HPMM was perceived as a problem. Currently, the museum charges all students, both local and international, an entrance fee, although the price varies[viii]. It is seen as a reason why local schoolchildren did not visit the museum. This case seems to have a similar problem to that of the teacher mentioned above, who was told by the parents that they did not want to pay for what they already knew. Dube, the chief curator, replied that the museum would be reviewing its entrance fees again this year, but also needed to secure funding for its operations.

In another interview, Dube was aware of the current disconnect between local schools and the museum in Soweto and he would be developing measures to address the problem. Firstly, an education programme planned by Thulani will be organised to revive interactions between HPMM and schools in Soweto that were active but disappeared before Dube became HPMM chief curator in 2019. Secondly, there will also be an outreach to Soweto School principals with whom HPMM no longer has contact, encouraging them to use the museum as a resource for history education[ix].

The other striking moment during this event was a young person's comments during the floor discussion. He was not from Soweto but was interested in the event and attended. He said he could not relate to the history presented in the museum exhibition because it was written by people in privileged positions. This overlaps with an issue that has long been debated in historical and academic circles (Nieftagodien, 2010, Rassool 2010): whether only scholars have the right to write an official or public history[x], and whose history, it is. This remark by the young man also suggests that the generation of Born-Frees is not monolithic and that there may be inequalities and frictions among them. That is, those who can participate in public discussions about Rhodes Must Fall and express their views may be the elite group among the Born-Frees, while the rest of the population may still be in a subaltern and voiceless position.

Commemorating the Soweto Uprising

The 16th of June was declared a public holiday in 1994, called Youth Day[xi]. I took part in the celebration of Youth Day in Soweto in 2022. Memorial events were held throughout Soweto from the morning of the 16th, and the Mayor of the City of Johannesburg came to HPMM for the ceremony. Other events included a walk along the route taken by the children of the 1976 demonstration (from Morris Isaacson High School to Orlando West). Throughout the day, HPMM had a festive atmosphere. For instance, a marching band entertained children with music, and supporters of the political party, the PAC gathered at the memorial to sing and fire blanks to celebrate the day. They marched to the house of Zeph Mothopeng after gathering at HPMM.

The day was notable for the large number of local people who visited the museum, many were accompanied by their parents or children. Parents were explaining the exhibits to their children as they

looked around. The museum is open to the public free of charge on Youth Day. There were so many visitors that the entrance was restricted and many queued outside the entrance. Outside the museum, some people placed flowers and food in front of the memorial to remember that the Soweto Uprising was a tragic event that resulted in the deaths of many young people.

Fig.4. Long queue in front of the museum (Source: Author, 2022)

In the evening, the museum's 20th Anniversary was celebrated again with a dinner at Uncle Tom's Hall. Sithole and many others from the Soweto Uprising attended. Dube spoke about the Soweto Uprising and the museum's anniversary. He was followed by Seth Mazibuko, who was the youngest member of the Student Action Committee of SASM led the protests during the Soweto Uprising. He spoke about the need for the audience to think about what they can do for the future of today's youth, and the problem that today's children do not know the history of Soweto, even though it is the place where they grow up. Finally, a microphone was passed around the room for a discussion. People who were involved in the Soweto Uprising shared their memories of the time and how they feel now looking back.

According to Dube, the dinner was the first time HPMM had officially interacted with the local community in Soweto. He said that he was in the process of setting up the association to develop the local community in Soweto and increase the interaction with HPMM, and he hoped to strengthen the relationship between the people of Soweto and the museum. He is also working on revising the museum's current exhibition and adding some new objects to attract local people again. When I pointed out in the interview that I could not find any Soweto people coming to the museum except on Youth Day, he replied that they did come at weekends and that he had met them before. Meanwhile, 32-year-old Mxolisi Twala, who grew up in Soweto and has been coming to HPMM every day since

2018 as a storyteller and guide, was critical of the current situation when I interviewed him. He said that there is an ignorance about HPMM in Soweto[xii].

Conclusion as Part of the Never-Ending Story

The above findings show that HPMM in the Post-Memory Boom period is a place with the following characteristics. Firstly, tourists and students usually come to this place, making it both a tourist attraction and a place of education. However, it is not necessarily a place of education for all children. I found that few students in Soweto who had family or relatives involved in the Soweto Uprising came to HPMM for history lessons. All eight historical high schools in Soweto I visited did not use the museum in 2022. Even students from Orlando West High School, a few minutes' walk from HPMM, did not come. This fact suggests that the reason was not physical distance, and HPMM does not seem to be functioning adequately as a place to teach Soweto children about local history now. Of course, recent social conditions such as the COVID pandemic must also be considered when discussing the causes.

Although HPMM is normally occupied by tourists and students from outside Soweto, on the day of the political rallies and Youth Day, it is filled with Soweto local people. On political rally day, it becomes a place to discuss social issues in South Africa and chant a statement of unity and determination to change the status quo. On 16 June, the place is filled with laughter, music, and a festive atmosphere. Some people also lay flowers at the memorial in memory of the victims. This suggests that HPMM functions as a place of remembrance and commemoration of Soweto Uprising for local people. However, the question remains as to why many people in Soweto do not come to HPMM other than on 16 June.

It is also clear that there has been a generational change in commemoration at HPMM, with the role of storyteller now being passed on to the Born-Frees, who were not part of the Soweto Uprising and have little or no experience of apartheid. This is one of the characteristics of the Post-Memory Boom in Soweto and might also be valid for some cases in South Africa. The Born-Frees is now not only the recipient of the history of apartheid, but also the transmitter. Meanwhile, as Mazibuko raised, there may be a problem that young people in Soweto currently have little knowledge of the history of Soweto, albeit it is where they were born and grew up. This contradiction between the development of memory transfer for global tourism or national history education and the decline of local memory transfer in Soweto also seems to be one of the important characteristics of memorial sites in the post-memory boom period and is an issue that needs further study.

In these circumstances, HPMM has a potential role to play in connecting different generations in Soweto through local history in the context of the Post-Memory Boom in South Africa. It provides an opportunity for different generations to discuss the future of commemorating the Soweto Uprising. Intergenerational exchange is essential, whether it is passing on history to young people or taking over the role of storyteller itself. HPMM is exactly the kind of place that has a potential to inspire and connect people from different generations and positions to weave local history, because it deals with the local history in which it is located, and people are living in that history right now.

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[i] Interview with Sithole, HPMM, 22 March 2022.

[ii] Interview with Twala, HPMM, 3 February 2022.

[iii] Statistics of HPMM in 2022.

[iv] Heritage Month was explained in the interview with Dube, HPMM, 24 January 2023.

[v] Although not the case in Soweto, there are examples of black parents who received discriminatory schooling during apartheid forcing their children to choose science or math classes, which are thought better for employment, over history classes. Reasons include a desire for children to have a good life in a profession that pays better than their own. Langa, M., Wassermann, J. and Maposa, M. 2021. Black African parents' narratives on apartheid schooling and school history. *Perspectives in Education*, 39(3): 3-16.

[vi] Interview with Dube, HPMM, 24 January 2023.

[vii] Tandwa, Lizeka. "EFF produces ambitious manifesto, promising land redistribution", Mail and Guardian, 26 Sep. 2021. < https://mg.co.za/politics/2021-09-26-eff-produces-ambitious-manifesto-promising-land redistribution/ > (Accessed 4 February 2023.)

[viii] Admission Local Adults (South African) R22, Senior Citizen R11, Students (13 years and over with proof of student card) R11, Children (6 to 12 years) R5, Children (under 6) free. International Adults R50, Students (13 years and over with proof of student card) R33, Children (6 to 12 years) R16, and Children (under 6) free. That information is as of 2023.

[ix] Interview with Prince, HPMM, 24 January 2023.

[x] Historian Gary Baines argues that historians do not have ownership of the past, but rather play a birth attendant-like role in helping to create history. Baines, G. 2007. The Politics of Public History in Post-Apartheid South Africa. In: Stolten, H E (ed.) *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, p. 167.

[xi] South African Government Website, "Youth Day 2022". <https://www.gov.za/YouthDay2022#:~:text=Youth%20Day%20commemorates%20the%20Soweto%20youth%20uprising%20of%2016%20June%201976.> (Accessed 4 January, 2023.)

[xii] Interview with Mxolisi Twala, coffee shop nearby HPMM, 30 January 2023.