

Provenances of knowledge and preservation of referred sources

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As custodians of Cultural Heritage, museums are not only responsible for the care and protection of its collection to ensure prevention of damages but are required to carry out in-depth documentation to assist in tracking the usage and condition of the artefacts and events of history. To accommodate these needs, museums must adhere to museum protocols, standards and practices, which serve to create a secure environment for collections with clear and precise accompanying documentation.

By documenting original information relating to an experience through collecting and recording, museums can ensure capturing the past that might easily be forgotten. Those who lived through experiences of mass death, incarceration and forced removals suffer from a collective trauma. In not recording and sharing a victim's emotions of such a past means a loss of a significant aspect of history. If a nation does not confront its past, it will be gravely handicapped in shaping its future. The solution here is to allow the victims to acknowledge publicly the endurance of untold humiliation and sufferings of a particular era. This not only is a form of meta-data but it is a form of catharsis.

Museums' thorough unbiased documentation of history can help us to face the present and future by enabling us to understand the dark forces, however shocking, that made our world and our society what it is. Making accessible the original sources of information for the current and future generations through proper management and preservation, contributes to knowledge-sharing by researchers, academics and students.

Biography

Rebecca Naidoo is a Museum Officer within the Durban Municipality at the Durban Local History Museums, where she is responsible for the historic and contemporary collection of the city museum and archives and ensures that the culture heritage of Durban is well conserved, maintained and promoted.