

**HERITAGE EDUCATION IN POST-COLONIAL SOUTHERN AFRICA: WHY IT SHOULD BE RE-POSITIONED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD)**

Cryton Zazu

Rhodes University, Environmental Learning Research Centre, South Africa

**ABSTRACT**

This paper draws on the findings of a study that was conducted for a doctoral degree at Rhodes University, South Africa. Framed within a critical hermeneutic research paradigm under-laboured by critical realist ontology, the study covered Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe as case studies. Besides exploring issues around representation of indigenous heritage constructs the study also explored how heritage education in the region is constituted and framed. The study found that even though the role of heritage education is widely acknowledged, it has however largely remained poorly constituted (defined) and dominated by socio-political discourses at the expense of promoting sustainability of the heritage resources themselves. It is against this observation that the paper argues for a re-positioning of heritage education within Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) framework to allow for the kind of learning that promotes the protection and sustainability of heritage resources in the region.

**Keywords:** Heritage, Education, Socio-political discourses, Sustainability and Education for Sustainable Development

## **INTRODUCTION**

Research conducted within the broader framework of heritage conservation and UNESCO's *World Heritage Education* initiative have already highlighted and acknowledged the role that education can play in enhancing the overall protection, sustainable management and use of a country's heritage resources (Crawhall, 2008; Deacon, 2004; Ndoro, 2001 & 2005; Sirayi, 2007; UNESCO, 2003 & 2010). Commenting on the role and value of education for sustainable development (ESD) Tilbury (2011) also highlighted the vital role that education can play in promoting environmental sustainability and ultimately human well-being. It is against this background that this paper explores and critique the current constitution and orientation of heritage education practices in post-colonial southern Africa, surfacing its main shortfalls and ultimately arguing for its repositioning within Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) framework. The paper starts by providing a historical overview of heritage education and its perceived roles in post-colonial southern Africa. Then it moves on to briefly outline what is considered as the key features of a kind of heritage education needed in the region given its long and contested history of colonisation. Next the paper outlines the research methodology underpinning the study on which this paper is premised. From the methodology the paper moves on to discuss the findings of the study relevant for understanding why heritage education, as argued in here needs re-positioning within ESD framework. Based on evidence generated in the study and insights gained from review of literature the paper concludes by presenting a synthesis of the argument for re-positioning heritage education within ESD framework. The rationale particularly that of enhancing the sustainability of heritage resources, of the proposed re-positioning is articulated in this synthesis. By orientation this paper therefore seeks to provide an exploratory critique of the constitution of heritage education in post-colonial southern Africa with a view to improving the relevance of such education to the protection and sustainable management of the region's abundant and precious heritage resources, be they natural or cultural, tangible or intangible.

## **HISTORICISING HERITAGE EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

The history of heritage education in southern Africa is not well documented (Shava & Zazu, 2012) and this paper is only going to provide a synoptic overview. Globally the history of heritage education dates back to the 1960s and emerged out of the realisation of the importance of the built environment and its ability to provide people with a sense of history and place (Hunter, 1988 cited in Zazu, 2013). The built environment provided a tangible link to people's past endeavours and because of that it was protected or preserved. According to Leeuw-Roord (2004), the importance of heritage education then was premised on the assumption that people protect that which they value. Accordingly preservationists saw the need to educate people about their past by using the historic built environment as a classroom (Hunter, 1988; Leeuw-Roord, 2004). Such thinking is still very strong and prevalent within contemporary heritage education practices (Zazu, 2013). Saunders (2007) also argued that heritage and history are inter-related; hence whilst the historians are concerned with what happened in the past, the heritage practitioner is concerned with the preservation of those aspects of the past which can be used to educate the public. This early desire to conserve the historic built environments has been extended over the years to other heritage aspects of society, including archaeology, palaeontology, natural history and personal artefacts, oral histories, documents and photographs (UNESCO, 2002 & 2006). In concurrence with Leeuw-Roord (2004), Saunders (ibid) also claimed that the educational value of heritage

education is embedded in the realisation that people will not appreciate and protect heritage resources unless if they understand their importance.

By the 1970s heritage education programmes had become popular across much of the Western world and its colonies, southern Africa included (Hunter, 1988; Shava & Zazu, 2012). In Australia (a country with a similar colonial history to southern Africa) the focus of heritage education programmes in museums is towards supplementing the school curriculum through introducing students to original works of art (Griffin & Paroissien, 2011). Of interest in this paper, the idea that heritage education is limited to museums and is often linked to the formal school curriculum can be understood from this historical perspective.

Based on an intensive review of literature Shava and Zazu (2012) concluded that the history of heritage education in post-colonial southern Africa is tied to the region’s colonial legacy and exists in different forms, practices, and activities with varying levels of depths and purpose. Elaborating on how heritage education is constituted and practiced in the region (Shava & Zazu, 2012) listed the interpretation and presentation of a heritage site or object to the public, organising an educational tour to a historical place such as the Cradle of Mankind or Great Zimbabwe monument, and the conduction of cultural festivals within which people can interact and learn more about specific cultures as examples. However heritage education practices have also evolved over time taking different orientations, forms, and perceived roles (Griffin & Paroissien, 2011; Zazu, 2013). Table 1 below illustrates some of these changes.

Table 1: Shifting trends in heritage perceptions and heritage education approaches

From	Towards
A focus on tangible heritage aspects	A focus on balancing tangible and intangible heritage aspects
A focus on architecture and environmental beauty (aesthetic value/narrow ontology)	Significance in terms of the past, present and future society (broader ontology)
Nationally and internationally based heritage focus	Social, ethnic, community based and intercultural heritage focus
Educator/instructor as the expert	Educator as a facilitator of education processes
Static, objective, classification based, positivistic learning approaches	Dynamic, emotive, flexible and constructivist learning approaches
Heritage as rigid, intolerant and inherited	Heritage as a source of renewal, a lever of transformation and a means of mediation between cultures
Singular heritage constructs and representations	Plural/multiple representations of heritage resources that give voice to previously marginalised groups and communities who are stakeholders in heritage resources

Source: Shava and Zazu (2012)

The changes overviewed in table 1 are tied to changes in the way heritage itself has been understood and constructed over time (Zazu, 2011 & 2013). The paper will later refer back to some of these changes as it strives to build a strong case for the proposed re-positioning of heritage education within ESD framework.

### **The role of heritage education**

As already pointed out in the introduction the role of heritage education in supporting the protection and sustainable management and use heritage resources is already widely acknowledged. Institutions such as UNESCO, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), continue to argue that heritage education is an integral part to the entire heritage management practice (Dumbrell, 2012; UNESCO, 2006 & 2010; Zazu, 2013). Within southern Africa and notably in South Africa and also quite recently in Zimbabwe the importance of heritage education is highlighted and confirmed by existing policy frameworks. For instance the South African National Heritage Resources Act no. 25 of 1999 states that:

To ensure that heritage resources are effectively managed (a) the skills and capacities of persons and communities involved in heritage resources management must be developed; and (b) provision must be made for the *ongoing education* and training of existing and new heritage resources management workers. (Section 5.2: 16).

As pointed out by Deacon (2004), Hunter (1988) and Leeuw-Roord (2004) carefully constituted education can generate interest in and appreciation of the interconnectedness of natural and cultural heritage resources which can translate into improved capacity to protect and conserve the same resources by local people. Increased interest and recognition of the role of heritage education in heritage resources management has seen conventionally *nature* conservation institutions such as the South African National Parks (SANPARKS), reorienting its environmental education programmes to incorporate cultural heritage aspects. SANPARKS's Mapungubwe education centre is unique case in that it incorporates both environment and heritage perspectives (Shava & Zazu, 2012) making it similar to what Crawhall (2008) called Heritage Education for Sustainable Development. The emphasis and interest in the role of heritage education in the management of heritage resources is not only restricted to South Africa. In Zimbabwe the recent school curriculum changes position *Heritage studies* as one of the central areas of study (Dokora, 2016). Other countries in southern Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia only to name a few are also implementing various heritage education initiatives (Zazu, 2013).

Drawing on literature, it emerged that the perceived roles of heritage education though wide ranging revolves around the following:

#### **Developing a sense of ownership, identity and responsibility**

Heritage education is considered critical in developing a sense of ownership, identity and responsibility within communities (Sirayi, 2007; Zazu, 2013). Through ongoing education local communities can develop a sense of identity and ownership needed to encourage them to actively participate in the management of local heritage resources (Deacon, 2004; Dumbrell, 2012 & Zazu, 2013). Shava and Zazu (2012) and Zazu (2013) further argued that such a sense of ownership, identity and ultimate responsibility is critical within the context of post-colonial southern Africa, given the region's contested history of colonialism and persistent marginalisation of local people in the management of heritage resources. Colonialism arguably resulted in local people losing their identity to, and ownership of local heritage resources (Mitchell, 2003; Ndoro, 2005; UNESCO, 2006).

### **Fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation**

Heritage education fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of the value of heritage resources (Saunders, 2007; Shava & Zazu 2012; UNESCO 2002; Zazu, 2013). According to Zazu (2013), drawing on UNESCO (2002 & 2010) heritage education practices taking place within museums and heritage sites, formal and informal settings provide learning experiences that can inspire and encourage the learners to collect, preserve, interpret, celebrate, present and disseminate their heritage. The relationship between an in-depth understanding and appreciation of one's heritage and one's consciousness of the need to protect and use heritage resources wisely is already acknowledged (Deacon, 2004; Makhoba, 2009; Saunders, 2007).

### **Enhancing social cohesion, access, enjoyment and participation**

According to UNESCO (2003) and Shava and Zazu (2012) heritage education has vast potential to promote equal access, and active participation of different ethnic and social groups in the use and enjoyment of heritage resources. To this effect it is seen as playing a crucial role in promoting social cohesion and national unity (Sirayi, 2007). Thus in the context of post-colonial southern Africa, heritage education, as Fairweather (2006) argued, has potential to promote respect and tolerance of cultural diversity thereby further promoting social cohesion and national unity as already alluded to. In South Africa the National Heritage Resources Act no. 25 of 1999 emphasises the importance of education and awareness by claiming that "a better understanding of cultural heritage by citizens promotes reconciliation, understanding and respect amongst people thereby contributing to a unifying South African identity" (NHRA, 1999, p.16). Accordingly the motto of South Africa's coat of arms "*ke.e/xarra/ /ke*" (Khoisan language) means "people who are different working together" (Bredenkamp, 2009).

### **Promoting critical thinking and creativity**

Heritage education provides valuable opportunities "to educate youth and children to be critical, and creative thinkers" (UNESCO, 2002, p.18). Critical and creative thinking are valuable ingredients for personal and social development (UNESCO, *ibid.*). Within a region like post-colonial southern Africa in which society is constantly evolving, the need to allow the youth to be creative and reconstruct own heritage is of paramount importance. Accordingly Deacon (2004) pointed out that heritage education is concerned with both the past and the present allowing learners to create and celebrate their own heritage. Heritage education if properly constituted can therefore go beyond just the dictation of the past by the older generation to the youth, towards critical engagement of learners and construction of heritage based on their own viewpoints (Hein, 2005; Hooper-Greenhill, 2007).

In the next section this paper articulates what emerged from the study as the kind of heritage education needed in the context of post-colonial southern Africa.

## THE KIND OF HERITAGE EDUCATION NEEDED IN POST-COLONIAL SOUTHERN AFRICA

If heritage education in southern Africa is to be able to perform its perceived roles, enhancing the protection and sustainability of the resources included, as articulated above, its constitution and orientation need to be carefully thought out (Zazu, 2013). The following are some of the features envisaged of the kind of heritage education best suited for the region;

- **Relevance to learner's context**

Heritage education practices need to be contextually relevant to learners' reality and everyday world views and should inculcate into children a sense of ownership, identity and responsibility for local heritage resources (Saunders, 2007; UNESCO, 2002, 2004 & 2006). As already noted earlier this sense of ownership and identity is often a pre-requisite for ensuring sustainability of local heritage resources (Chirikure & Pwiti, 2008; Deacon, 2004). Heritage education also needs to be socio-culturally situated, and responsive to the immediate needs and interests of local communities, not just the nation state and commerce (Zazu, 2013). Even the learners' interest in heritage education is likely to increase if in its orientation the learning processes are centred on issues relevant to their world views.

- **Acknowledging the multiple histories**

Zazu (2013) drawing on Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) pointed out that instead of simply attempting to reconstruct the past, heritage education should involve acknowledging the ways in which interpretations of heritage are context bound and value laden. Accordingly Graham, et al., (2000, p.2) argued that heritage education should not be concerned with whether one piece of heritage is historically more "correct" than another; instead it should be respectful of all periods of history as opposed to undue emphasis on one era at the expense of others. Heritage education in post-colonial southern Africa should rather strive for multiple interpretations acknowledging that there are many histories of the same place (Frederikse [1982] 1990; UNESCO, 2010; Zazu, 2013). Such education is more enriching.

- **Treating heritage as dynamic and evolving**

Heritage education should recognise that heritage is always changing, emergent and adapting to contemporary contexts (Art Council of Mongolia, 2007; Jokiletho, 1999; Zazu, 2011). Accordingly heritage representation should articulate the changes and help learners to celebrate grieve and appreciate their past, at the same time allowing them to move forward with greater vision. As Lowenthal (2005, p.188) cited in Zazu (2013) pointed out, "not all heritage is uniformly desirable". In southern Africa the history of colonisation is a reality which learners need to learn about but most importantly in a way that helps them to appreciate the good and bad realities tied to their past.

- **Recognising the nature-culture dualism**

Heritage education needs to be constituted and oriented in a way that enables the learner to understand and appreciate the interconnectedness of natural and cultural heritages. Heritage comes from both "nature" and "culture" (Graham, et al., 2000; Lowenthal, 2005, p. 83). Similarly Hughes (2009) talks of the danger of treating *nature as divorced from*

*culture* arguing that doing so often leads to the demise of both. Therefore it is important for heritage educators to work with a broader concept of heritage as denoting both natural and cultural heritages. To achieve this may require that the constitution and orientation of current heritage education be revisited.

- **Use of creative and participatory approaches**

Heritage education should not be only the dictation or prescribing of oral history to children but should be student centred and imaginative (Hein, 2005; UNESCO, 2002; Zazu, 2013). This entails use of participatory teaching and learning approaches that allow learners to be creative and also question dominant heritage discourses. Teaching and learning approaches which provides space for learners to critically engage in discussion about real issues of representation, ownership and interpretation of their heritages are needed (Shava & Zazu, 2012). Allowing learners to create their own heritage is important in that it helps them to realise that heritage, whilst historically grounded, is itself a discursive concept with varied meanings and interpretations (Graham, et al., 2000; Head, 2000; Smith, 2006; Zazu, 2011).

- **Making heritage accessible**

Heritage education should not be perceived as a preserve of the elite and (as often misinterpreted) the domain of scientists and other heritage professionals (Shava & Zazu, 2012). Instead heritage education should be popularised through formal and non-formal practices allowing for increased access of local people to learning opportunities (Makhoba, 2007 & 2009; Mhlungu, 2009). Heritage education should promote participation of local communities as well as underscore the importance of using local sources of knowledge such as oral traditions, myths, and legends.

These desired features of heritage education as overviewed above further provide the basis against which this paper critiques the manner in which heritage education in the region is currently constituted and oriented adding value to the call for its re-positioning within ESD framework.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Framed within a critical hermeneutic research paradigm under-laboured by critical realist ontology, the study was carried out using a multiple case study research design (Bhaskar & Regan, 2011; Yin, 2009). The data collection protocol was three-phased, starting with a process of contextual profiling (entailing literature review and document analysis), within which insights were gained into discourses shaping the constitution and orientation of heritage education practices at the Albany Museum in South Africa, the Great Zimbabwe Monument in Zimbabwe and the Supa Ngwao Museum in Botswana. The second phase of data collection saw the researcher conducting modelling workshops (with heritage educators/school teachers) to explore practice of heritage in the region. The last phase of data collection entailed conduction of in-depth interviews with twelve purposively (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) selected research participants to further deepen the researcher's understanding of heritage education in southern Africa. Table 3 below provide more detail on each of the three data collection phases.

Table 3: Summary of research phases, data collection protocols and objectives

Phase	Data collection protocols	Research objectives
Phase one (1)  Contextual profiling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document analysis</li> <li>• Review of literature</li> <li>• Focus group interviews at each of the three case study sites</li> <li>• Field observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping, mapping and surfacing inherent <i>heritage discourses</i> and developing preliminary insights into ontology and <i>heritage constructs</i> representation and use in the heritage education practices in the three sites in post-colonial southern Africa</li> <li>• <i>Historical</i> analysis of trends in heritage education in each of the three cases</li> <li>• <i>Developing a contextual case report of each of the three case study programmes with regard to constitution and practice of heritage education</i></li> </ul>
Phase two (2)  Modelling workshops and participant observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct four generative workshops</li> <li>• Group discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Probe</i> influence of inherent discourses of social transformation and inclusivity on how educators construct heritage and ultimately <i>heritage education</i></li> <li>• Surface tensions and challenges educators face in trying to attain a broader heritage construct inclusivity (denoting the nature-culture aspects of heritage)</li> </ul>
Phase three (3)  In-depth probing, reflection and consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 in-depth interviewing conducted</li> <li>• Purposive sampling used to identify data rich informants</li> <li>• Audio recording and transcribing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In-depth</i> follow up or probing of emerging insights</li> <li>• Seeking in-depth understanding of inherent post-colonial discourses and <i>how</i> they could be determining current <i>heritage education</i> Generating additional data for <i>cross referencing</i>, deepening and <i>validating</i> of emerging insights relating to focus of study</li> <li>• Seeking to make more <i>meaningful</i> knowledge claims regarding research focus and questions</li> </ul>

Source (Zazu 2013)

Data generated across the study was then processed and subjected to different levels of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2002; Foucault, 1980). Fairclough’s (1995 & 2002) three-part analytic model was used to give direction and a systematic approach to the entire data analysis process. In practice, the model involves three mutually explanatory phases of data analysis, namely “description”, “interpretation” and “explanation” (Fairclough, 1995; Janks, 1997).

Based on data (evidence) generated it emerged that heritage education in South Africa is loosely framed ranging from education activities taking place within museums, formal schools, and cultural villages, to the interpretation and presentation of archaeological sites such as Mapungubwe, Cango caves and the Cradle of Mankind (interview transcript #PM & #AM). Furthermore it was observed that heritage education in South Africa, as the case of Albany Museum seemed to be overly shaped and influenced by the political discourses of “social transformation”, “inclusivity”, and “nation-building” embedded in the country’s history of colonisation.

Confirming the changes influenced by post-apartheid discourses such as those named above, that have taken place in the way education at Albany Museum is constituted one of the education officers at the museum was quoted saying:

“Yes bhuti, we have changed a bit than in the past, and now we have a mobile museum, as I am saying reaching to the people, going to schools, this museum service goes to poor farm schools to educate learners about South Africa history and ... iculture” (Interview #AM).

The museum’s anthropologist and curator added that:

“Things have changed in that regard because we have now become more inclusive in our work and displays. We no longer work in a vacuum and interpret things for the people ... as if we are champions of that culture” (Interview #PZ).

The same interviewee further highlighted how the Albany Museum’s perception of the general public has changed by saying that:

“We want people to understand that museums are their institutions and not only a place where you can fold your arms and work and interpret things for the people. Yes there is a lot happening due to the change and people are getting involved because we now don’t necessarily take them as visitors, we now take them as stakeholders because we changed our policies” (Interview #PZ).

The focus on social inclusivity and the need to strengthen the role of heritage education in enhancing social cohesion and nation building came out quite clearly in the case of Albany Museum’s education programme. The case of Albany Museum also sheds more light on how the current constitution of heritage education may be limited to issues around socio-political discourses at the expense of sustainability of the resources themselves.

Similarly it was also established that heritage education in post-colonial Zimbabwe, as observed in the study is historically tied to the establishment of museums across the country. The museum at the Great Zimbabwe ruins provides opportunities for learners and the general public to learn more about the origins of the monument (Manyanga, 2000; Nemerai, 1995; Ndoro, 2005; Zazu, 2013). This observation was corroborated by a local school head who, when asked to explain why his school had just undertaken an educational tour to the monument, said:

“Yes the learning at Great Zimbabwe is very important. I actually accompanied the children myself when they went there because I also wanted to see what is being taught there. In the museum we were given somebody who went with us showing us and telling us when it [the monument] was built, how it was built, who built it and what was practised there” (Interview #GOB).

When asked to elaborate on who was said to have built the monument the same interviewee said:

“They said it was the vaRozvi who built it and that they believe that they are people of the totem of Moyo. Eh, eh... [a bit unsure] something of that sort. They said its vaRozvi who actually built that place some long time ago, although there is actually some people before them, but they said it’s the vaRozvi themselves” (interview #GOB).

Of interest to note in the case of education at Great Zimbabwe monument is that whilst the role of museum education is certainly valuable, the emphasis and focus on the discourse of “identity and ownership” of the monument maybe problematic (British Museum, 2010; Fontein, 2006; Zazu, 2013). Inherent in this observation is the shift in the debate on who built Great Zimbabwe from a tension between the monuments having been built by the Phoenicians or by indigenous people, to contestations within different indigenous tribes themselves. It is clear that the interpretation as reported by the school head is biased towards the VaRozvi people, whereas at nation state level the monument is of Shona origin and not a particular Shona tribe (interview #NM; #DocTGGZ & #DocGZflyer). The rationale of representing the origin of the monument within education settings and

public as of Shona origin is, as Fontein (2006) observed, indicative of the government's desire to promote discourses of "national unity and sovereignty". Further illustrating the focus around identity and ownership of Great Zimbabwe the senior heritage education officer at the museum said:

"It's not like it was always like that but this is like when we began to have black archaeologists. When I joined this there was not any black archaeologist, only white, in 1983. Yes they were white but when the black archaeologists, vana (those like) Ndoro, Chipunza and Pikirayi came, they gave us lectures that these were built by indigenous people and like we can't say this group of Shona people but these are of Shona ancestors, not Mazezuru or VaKaranga" (Interview #NM).

The observed contestations around the origin of the monument also illustrates challenges associated with achieving inclusivity of the multiple histories associated with a particular site more so in a context such as post-colonial Zimbabwe within which issues of national unity, and sovereignty are of greater concern (De la Torre, 2002; Ndoro, 2001 & 2005; Zazu 2013).

Drawing on insights emerging from analysis of data (#DocNPC, #DocMRA & #DocV2016) it further emerged that the heritage education landscape in post-colonial Botswana is centred more on processes of enculturation than anything else. The country's National Policy on Culture of 2001 stipulates that:

"Education in every society is an institutionalized means of enculturation or cultural transmission. As such cultural continuity and understanding depend largely on the content and method of this process of knowledge development and the inculcation of social and moral values. The curriculum of the education system must be based on the Botswana culture and provide programmes and facilities aimed at teaching skills of culture centred discipline" (#DocNPC).

Unsurprisingly culture is at the centre stage of museum education practices in the country. Asked to describe the nature of learning experiences at Supa Ngwao museum the education officer said that:

"I think all regional museums; I think we are doing same things. Often we give the learners a lecture, say on a particular heritage topic e.g. the importance of the Kgotla or the cultural value of cattle to Batswana people. We take learners, you saw those cultural objects [referring to exhibited objects] yes we take them around and talk about those objects. The children like it; they enjoy it" (interview #NGWAO).

For Botswana it is the constitution and framing of heritage education as a vehicle of enculturation (Mazonde, 1994; Obanya, 2005) and the curriculum as a selection from the *SeTswana* culture (McKernan, 2008) that this paper problematise as it argues for the re-positioning of heritage education in the region within ESD framework. Limiting heritage education to transmission of culture reduces its potential to fulfil the diverse range of its perceived roles (as overviewed earlier in this paper).

It is therefore arguably clear that the constitution of heritage education in southern Africa, as represented by the cases of Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, besides being loosely framed (Shava & Zazu, 2012), is to a great extent shaped and influenced by discourses of socio-political discourses such as that of "social transformation" "nation building and sovereignty" and "culture and identity". Implications of this poor framing and orientation on the potential of heritage education to support the protection and sustainability of heritage resources in the region are what motivate this paper to argue for its re-positioning within ESD framework. The next section presents the argument in detail.

### **Why re-positioning heritage education within ESD framework?**

Based on the observations that heritage education in southern Africa is poorly constituted and narrowly oriented this paper argues for the need to rethink and re-imagine the same education practices as integral to ESD. The narrow constitution of heritage education to focus more on socio-political discourses inherent in the region's colonial history than on helping learners to appreciate the need to support the protection and conservation of heritage resources is arguably problematic. Furthermore the limiting of heritage education practices in the region to intergenerational transfer of culture is also being critiqued as it makes heritage education learning not very interesting to 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. One of the reasons of why learners are not keenly interested in heritage education is this presentation of heritage as culture frozen in time and space and the working with a narrow conception of heritage as limited to culture (Nyoni & Nyoni, 2010; Zazu, 2013).

Re-positioning heritage education within Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) framework has its own merits. Firstly because ESD acknowledges both issues of social justice and the nature-culture duality of heritage it allows for the kind of learning experiences that go beyond mere engagement with social transformation, and culture and identity discourses to cover the relational interplay between learners everyday ways of living (culture) and how these are shaped by the natural environment (Crawhall, 2008; Hughes, 2009; Lowenthal, 2005; Smith, 2006). Conversely even though the Albany Museum in South Africa and the museum at Great Zimbabwe provide a rich collection of objects of both natural and cultural orientation the presentation of these objects to learners continues to be more focused on cultural than natural dimensions of heritage. This way, learners are exposed to a narrow concept of heritage as limited to culture and or history (Des & Leon, 2011; Kelly & Ni Laoire, 2005; Szekeres, 2011). Kros (2003) and Deacon (2004) argue that heritage and history, though similar, are not necessarily the same, and that to conceive of heritage as limited to history, is problematic.

Currently the conceptual linkage between culture and nature is weak resulting in learners not realising how not protecting their natural heritage has negative implications on the sustainability of their own much talked about cultures and identities. Therefore whilst heritage education in post-colonial southern Africa is expected to and should support nation building, social cohesion and unity in diversity as pointed out earlier, its focus and goals need also to encompass development of a sense of responsibility and stewardship towards local heritage resources.

Secondly, and because ESD emphasises the notion of inclusivity (plurality) re-positioning heritage education within its framework helps learners to work with and appreciate the multiple histories of their pasts. The need for heritage education to allow learners to appreciate the multiple histories of their past and accept that not one history is more correct than the other is already widely recognised (Graham, et al., 2000; Smith, 2006). For instance the different and often conflicting histories around who built Great Zimbabwe monument is an example that calls for heritage educators not to push forward one side of the history at the expense of the others, as was observed during the study. The need to encourage learners to engage critically with their past and create their own heritages is, as already alluded to earlier, one of the features of the kind of heritage education needed in post-colonial southern Africa. ESD with its emphasis on learner centred teaching and learning approaches (Crawhall, 2008; Tilbury, 2011) does have potential to reorient heritage education towards the desired inclusivity including representation of the

marginalised indigenous knowledge systems and practices (Shava & Zazu, 2012). This is important as the meaning and value of heritage resources lies in the cultural practices of the people living with and interacting with the resources (Katsamudanga, 2004; Munjeri, 2004; Ndoro, 2005).

Thirdly because ESD, as noted by UNESCO (2004), Tilbury (2011) and Lupele and Lotz-Sisitka (2012), pedagogically entails use of socio-culturally situated teaching and learning approaches reorienting current heritage education towards what Crawhall (2008) refers to as Heritage Education for Sustainable development can enhance critical thinking, problem solving and learner's active participation. Again it must be noted that critical thinking and problem solving are perceived as key features of the kind of heritage education needed in the context of post-colonial southern Africa.

## CONCLUSION

However, in making the proposition to re-position heritage education the paper is fully aware of the fact that Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) has its own shortfalls, and is a notion that has not yet been fully evidenced (Jickling, 1992 & 2006; Tilbury, 2011). What the paper argue for is that, without losing its identity, as an educational field of practice, heritage education in post-colonial southern Africa can benefit from working within the framework of (ESD) particularly its principles of inclusivity, active learner participation, and critical thinking and as well as its acknowledgement of both existence of multiple-realities and the interplay between nature and culture. This paper has therefore interrogated and explored current heritage education practices in the region with a view not to only share the study findings but also to stimulate more thinking around the subtle implications of not being clear of what heritage education really is, and how it is practiced against what it is perceived to do or achieve. Re-positioning it within ESD framework is one way out of the woods and certainly not the only one. The paper has also re-emphasised the need to reorient current heritage education practices towards the promotion of environmental sustainability, which if attained can in many ways also enhance human wellbeing.

## REFERENCES

- Art Council of Mongolia. (2007). *Museums Cultural Heritage Education: A hand book*. Canada .
- Bredenkamp, J. H. (2009). *The Cultural Heritage of Democratic South Africa: An overview*. Cape Town: Iziko Museums. [www.dissanet.com/ifla/pdf/](http://www.dissanet.com/ifla/pdf/), accessed March 24, 2010.
- British Museum. (2010). *The Wealth of Africa*. Great Zimbabwe: Teachers' notes.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education* (6<sup>th</sup> Ed). London: Routledge.
- Crawhall, N. (2008). *Heritage education for Sustainable Development: Dialogue with indigenous communities in Africa*. UNESCO 2009. Cape Town.
- Deacon, J. (2004). *Heritage and African History*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press
- Dokora, L. (2016, February 12). Clarifying the changes in the new education curriculum in Zimbabwe. *The Sunday Mail*, p. 2.
- Dumbrell, K. (2012). *Heritage Resources Management 1: Training Module*. Grahamstown: Environmental Learning Research Centre, Rhodes University.

- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Boston: Addison Wesley.
- Fairclough, N. (2002). Critical Discourse Analysis as a social practice. In M. Toolan (Ed). *Critical Discourse Analysis. Critical Concepts in Linguistics*. London: Routledge.
- Fairweather, I. (2006). Heritage, Identity and Youth in Post-colonial Namibia. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 32(4).
- Fontein, J. (2006). *The Silence of Great Zimbabwe: Contested Landscapes and Power of Heritage*. New York: Left Coast Press.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge*. London: Harvester.
- Frederikse, J. [1982] (1990)**. *None but Ourselves*. Harare: Oral Traditional Association of Zimbabwe with Anvil press.
- Graham, G., Ashworth, G. J. & Tunbridge, J.E. (2000). *Geography of Heritage. Power, Culture and Economy*. London: Arnold.
- Griffin, D & Paroissien, L. (2011). "Museums in Australia: from a new era to a new century", in D. Griffin & L. Paroissien (Eds.), *Understanding Museums: Australian Museums and Museology*, National Museum of Australia, published online at [nma.gov.au/research/understanding-museums/DGriffin\\_LParoissien\\_2011a.html](http://nma.gov.au/research/understanding-museums/DGriffin_LParoissien_2011a.html), accessed June 9, 2011.
- Hamilton, L. (2011). Case studies in educational research, British Educational Research Association online resource. Available online at [http://www.bera.ac.uk/files/2011/06/case\\_studies\\_in\\_educational\\_research.pdf](http://www.bera.ac.uk/files/2011/06/case_studies_in_educational_research.pdf), accessed April 10, 2012.
- Head, L. (2000). *Cultural Landscapes and Environmental Change*. MA: Oxford Press.
- Hein, G. E. (2005). The Role of Museums in Society: Education and Social Action. Seminar paper Jyväskylä, Finland, 9 November 2005.
- Hooper-Greenhill, E. (2007). *Museum and Education. Purpose, Pedagogy, Performance*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Hughes, J. D. (2009). *An Environmental History of the World. Humankind's changing role in the community of life*. London: Routledge.
- Hunter, K. (1988). *Heritage Education in the Social Studies*. Eric Digest. <http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/misc/heritedu.html>. Accessed September 7, 2011.
- Janks, H. (1997). Critical discourse analysis as a research tool. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 18(3), 329-342.
- Jickling, B. (1992). Why I don't want my children to be educated for sustainable development, *Southern African Journal of Environmental Education*, 23(4), 5-8.
- Jickling, B. (2006). The Decade of Education for Sustainable Development: A useful platform? Or an annoying distraction? *Australian Journal of Environmental Education*, 22(1), 99-104.
- Jokiletho, J. (1999). *History of Architectural Conservation*. Butterworth: Heinemann.
- Katsamudanga, S. (2004). The Dilemma of preserving intangible heritage in Zimbabwe. Paris: UNESCO.
- Kelly, C. & Ni'laore, C. (2005). Representing multiple Irish heritage(s): a case study of the Ulster-American Folk Park. *Irish Geography*, 38(1), 72-83.
- Kros, C. (2003). History vs Heritage: The end of the Noble Tradition? *Historia*, 48(1), 326-336.
- Leeuw-Roord, J. (2004). Heritage and History Education at Schools, *Hague Forum (2004) Heritage and Education: A European Perspective*. The Hague.
- Lowenthal, D. (2005). Natural and Cultural Heritage. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 11(1), 81-92.
- Lupele, J. & Lotz-Sisitka, H. (2012). Learning Today for Tomorrow: Education for Sustainable Development Learning Processes in sub-Saharan Africa. Howick: SADC REEP.
- Makhoba, K. L. (2007). Educating the SA Black community on Heritage: Is there a need? Conference paper, 2007.
- Makhoba, K. L. (2009). Is the scope of Heritage wide enough in the National Curriculum Statements (NCS)? *Journal of South African Heritage Resources Agency*, 1, 80-85.

- Manyanga, M. (2000). Tourism and cultural heritage controversy of key tourist destinations in Zimbabwe, in *Expression of Cultural identity and Meaning in Tourism*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe.
- Mazonde, N. I. (1994). Culture and Education in the development of Africa. <http://www.unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/IDEP.html>, accessed September 18, 2010.
- McKernan, J. (2008). *Curriculum and Imagination: Process theory, pedagogy and action research*. London: Routledge.
- Meskell, L. & Masuku Van Damme, L. S. (2008). Engaging Descendent Communities. In Colwell, C. & Ferguson, T.J. (Eds.), *Collaboration in Archaeological Practice: Engaging Descendent Communities*. London: Altamira Press.
- Mhlungu, Z. F. (2009). Heritage as portrayed in the national curriculum statement of Education. *Journal of South African Heritage Resources Agency, 1*, 3-25.
- Mitchell, P. (2003). *The Archaeology of southern Africa*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Munjeri, D. (2004). Tangible and intangible heritage: From difference to convergence. In *Museum International, 58*(1-2), Oxford: Blackwell.
- National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) (1999). Cape Town: Government of Republic of South Africa.
- Ndoro, W. (2005). *Your Monuments Our Shrine*. The preservation of Great Zimbabwe. Department of Archaeology and Ancient History. Sweden, Uppsala University.
- Nemerai, J. (1995). Adopt a Site Programme. Community involvement in conservation, preservation and management of heritage sites: case study of Majiri ruins. Archaeological heritage education and interpretation course handout. Great Zimbabwe monument.
- Nyoni, T. & Nyoni, M. (2010). The 'culture hut' concept: A case of Danda and Chimedza schools in Zaka district. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, 12* (1), 146-157.
- Obanya, P. (2005). Culture-in-Education and Education-in-Culture. Paper presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of Ministers of Culture, Nairobi, and African Union.
- Saunders, C. (2007). The Transformation of Heritage in the New South Africa. In H. Stolten (Ed.) *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*. Stockholm: Nordiska Afrika Institutet.
- Shava, S. & Zazu, C. (2012). Heritage Education Practices in South Africa. Training Module, Grahamstown: Rhodes University, Environmental Learning Research Centre.
- Smith, L. (2006). *Uses of Heritage*. London, Routledge.
- Tilbury, D. (2011). *Education for Sustainable development: An expert review of processes and learning*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2002). *World Heritage in Young Hands. To know, cherish and act* (An educational resource kit for teachers). Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2003). *International Convention for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural heritage*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2004). *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014. Draft International Implementation Scheme*. Paris. UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2006). *Cultural Heritage and Local Development, A guide for African Local Governments*. Paris: CRATerre-ENSAG/Convention France-UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2010). *Incorporating Education for Sustainable Development into World Heritage Education: perspectives, principles and values*. Bangkok: UNESCO.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Zazu, C. (2011). Heritage – A Conceptually Evolving and Dissonant Phenomenon: Implications for Heritage Management and Education Practices in Post-Colonial Southern Africa. *Southern African Journal of Environmental Education, 28*.
- Zazu, C. (2013). *Representation and use of indigenous heritage constructs: Implications for the quality and relevance of heritage education in post-colonial southern Africa*. Unpublished doctoral thesis. Grahamstown: Rhodes University, Education Department.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Cryton Zazu, Dr. Rhodes University Environmental Learning Research Centre

Cryton Zazu holds a doctorate degree in Environment and Sustainability education from Rhodes University, South Africa. Born into a family of eight, Zazu was brought up in a typical African traditional family context, a background that influenced his research interest around the integration of indigenous knowledge systems into mainstream policy and practice as a way of improving the relevance and quality of education and sustainable development practices in post-colonial southern Africa.