

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

*Considering that, in a society where living conditions are changing at an accelerated pace, it is essential for man's equilibrium and development to preserve for him a fitting setting in which to live, where he will remain in contact with nature and the evidences of civilization bequeathed by past generations, and that, to this end, it is appropriate to give the cultural and biophysical heritage an active function in community life and to integrate into an overall policy the achievements of our time, the values of the past and the beauty of nature.*¹

This statement introduces the UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Biophysical Heritage as written and adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 1972. Nations across the world have been active in defining and identifying their cultural landscapes, with Australia and the Australia Heritage Commission being at the forefront of such activity. Others such as Victor Hart, Jeannie Sims, Danny O'Hare and Helen Armstrong from Queensland University of Technology, among numerous others across Australia are considered as specialists in the field of cultural landscapes. Armstrong² defines cultural landscapes as follows:

Cultural landscapes can be represented as stories, myths and beliefs, which may be applied to wilderness landscapes or ordinary landscapes. This can apply to landscapes used to represent national identity, to local landscapes invested with local folklore, or sacred landscapes invested with ancient mythological meaning.

It is the focus of this thesis to show that while research is ongoing and documentation is undertaken and maintained by various research institutions to document the South African biophysical landscape there is, as yet, no co-ordinated system for recording or creating a data-bank for the South African cultural landscapes. In an attempt to alleviate this shortcoming and extend the ambit of the National Monuments Act 1969, the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA) has been promulgated. The President³ of the country introduces the 1999 Act with the following statement in the preamble:

This legislation aims to promote good management of the national estate, and to enable and encourage communities to nurture and conserve their legacy so that it may be bequeathed to future generations. Our heritage is unique and precious and it cannot be renewed. It helps us to define our cultural identity and therefore lies at

¹ UNESCO Document 17 C/107 1972

² Armstrong, 2001.

³ National Heritage Resources Act. No. 25 of 1999.

University of Pretoria etd – Breedlove, G (2002)

the heart of our spiritual well being and has the power to build our nation. It has the potential to affirm our diverse cultures, and in so doing shape our national character.

Our heritage celebrates our achievements and contributes to redressing past inequities. It educates, it deepens our understanding of society and encourages us to empathise with the experience of others. It facilitates healing and material and symbolic restitution and it promotes new and previously neglected research into our rich oral traditions and customs.

The passage in the preamble that reads: *enable and encourage communities to nurture and conserve their legacy*,⁴ requires the identification, assessment and validation of the resources to be recognised and categorised, to thus be available for the community and for management purposes. Furthermore, item 4 of the Aims of the National Heritage Resources Act⁵ specifically states that:

It is necessary to introduce an integrated system for the identification, assessment and management of the heritage resources of South Africa.

These two sets of statements indicate the necessity of recognising cultural landscapes and establishing methods for their evaluation, documentation, categorisation and conservation. Although all the aims mentioned in the Act are required for a complete management system for South African cultural resources, without a workable and comprehensive systematics, management will be ineffectual. Systematics in this thesis address cultural landscapes specifically, and mean the holistic and comprehensive processes employed to identify, describe, name, classify, grade, manage, monitor, and conserve, emphasizing the interrelated nature of these processes. This study will thus research the requirements for and propose a systematics to accomplish the fundamental requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act. A comprehensive literature search has indicated that no other study exists that has begun to address this topic of research in South Africa.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Cultural heritage has been recognised as consisting of those ideas, things, and places we have inherited from past generations and desire to leave as our legacy for future generations.⁶ Cultural heritage is important because it helps us to define who we are, where

⁴ National Heritage Resources Act. No. 25 of 1999.

⁵ National Heritage Resources Act. No. 25 of 1999.

⁶ UNESCO. 1992, Grossberg. Nelson, Treichler 1992, Lennon. 1996, Artibise, Stelter.1981, Jackson. 1989. Tuan.

University of Pretoria etd – Breedlove, G (2002)

we have been, and where we are going. A people without a tangible, visible, knowable past is indeed poor, no matter how many contemporary riches they may possess. Preserving one's cultural heritage is an important aspect of preserving the culture itself. Cultural heritage includes language, belief systems, knowledge, and ideas, as well as the more tangible places and things. All aspects of culture interrelate⁷, so it is important to understand that one cannot change one part of a culture without it causing changes in many other aspects of that culture. The built cultural heritage includes buildings, bridges, and other human constructions, but also the affected environment of the landscape near such built things. The landscape provides the context for the built environment, and together they provide the context for understanding the present, by examining the past. Hampton Adams⁸ rightfully says that: *Only by looking at the past, can we plan the future.*

Although the National Heritage Resources Act⁹ encourages South African communities to identify and bring the landscapes and places they value to the attention of the authorities, a comprehensive adaptable and implementable systematics does not exist that could assist the communities to accomplish this daunting task. Among others, it is the aim of this study to generate a data-capturing procedure so as to complete a cultural landscape map that could be linked to existing data projection products.

Other than academic treatises by Gwen Fagan¹⁰, Karen Fourie¹¹, and Noëlene Murray¹², the historic and cultural landscapes of South Africa have mostly been studied as part of commercial projects or building restoration projects. These studies are numerous and have made an important contribution to the knowledge of cultural landscapes in South Africa. The majority of such projects have been concentrated in the major metropolitan areas such as Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and Pretoria. Also, the majority of work has been completed in the field of architecture and other urban structures or artefacts. No research¹³ has been done on developing a system for assessing cultural landscapes. This study addresses these shortcomings and proposes a valid effective systematics for cultural landscapes. It is therefore groundbreaking and topical for South Africa.

This research project is a proposal to the South African community of concerned individuals, institutions and agencies dealing with the conservation and protection of the national cultural resources. It is to be considered and adopted as usable and supplemental

1974

⁷ van Schalkwyk. 2001

⁸ Hampton Adams. 2001

⁹ National Heritage Resources Act. No. 25 of 1999.

¹⁰ Fagan. 1994.

¹¹ Fourie. 1995.

¹² Murray. 1999

University of Pretoria etd – Breedlove, G (2002)

to existing methods of management. The research and proposals will be developed with the knowledge of South African Heritage Resources Agency, the Department of Social Ecology and the Conservation Development Division of the South African National Parks Board, and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS - South Africa). The proposed Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities will gain valuable information to assist them in preparation of their legislation and regulations regarding heritage as required by the National Heritage Resources Act. These agencies are the major bodies concerned with the management of the majority of South African cultural landscapes on a regular basis. Also, agencies such as the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology and others may begin to apply the results of the study towards a more effective systematics for cultural heritage.

This research for cultural landscape management tools and techniques will supplement current programs by the South African National Parks. These are considered to be holistic, combining African cultural perspectives on environmental values with the traditional western approach to conservation, thus amalgamating cultural and biophysical issues. Although the South African National Parks Department of Social Ecology has started to develop strategies regarding the relations with neighbouring communities, and the documentation of the heritage within the parks, the work of the Department has not been expanded to produce management techniques.¹⁴

Currently, a western approach to conservation, which is focused on a non-consumptive aesthetic and scientific approach is implemented in the management of resources of the National Parks¹⁵, but it can be extrapolated to all heritage resources. As an alternative to this option, new and innovative adaptive management techniques are currently being developed by national and international organisations to more effectively manage biophysical and cultural ecologies.¹⁶ These have not been incorporated into workable principles that can suitably address cultural ecologies in the current South African context. This study will aim to formulate those principles to address cultural ecologies in South Africa.

Terminology used to describe biophysical and cultural resources; their capacity to be used, their quality and their inherent value are often emotionally articulated, thus potentially provoking irrational reactions among a novice audience. There is a need to use adaptive techniques to overcome this hurdle, if the communities of South Africa are to grow and

¹³ Bruwer. 2001

¹⁴ Dladla. 1998.

¹⁵ Spude. 1995.

prosper together as part of an open and just system. It would be desirable to have the use and benefits of the proposed systematics extend beyond the borders of South Africa to the entire southern African region.

1.2 Research Strategy

The problem statement of this study reads as follows: This study proposes a systematics for South African cultural landscapes. Further, the study aims to strengthen the potential for penetration of the system by identifying a suitable platform for implementation.

The problem statement is dissected into workable sub-problems, and presented each with its own hypothesis. Because this study is primarily concerned with "how" questions, and with developing pragmatic relationships, it is appropriate to formulate hypotheses for the sub-problems. To test the hypotheses, it is necessary to establish whether a relationship exists among the variables presented in the hypothesis¹⁷. A combination of research methods are employed to test the hypotheses and those employed are discussed under each sub-problem below.

A separate theoretical framework is not provided in this thesis. Rather, for ease of reference, it was decided to combine the discussion of sub-problem with its relevant literature together with the research for each hypothesis. Thus, a short summary of sub-problems and hypotheses is provided herewith in the introduction and each of the sub-problems and related works are presented in separate chapters of the thesis.

The study is both qualitative and quantitative, by identifying and describing current conditions, and by collecting field data to test and correlate the documented data. The presentation is thus both discursive and narrative as well as analytical and syncretic.

1.2.1 Sub-problem one and Hypothesis one.

Sub-problem: How are conservation policies of South African concerned with cultural landscapes?

Hypothesis: There are shortcomings in current South African conservation policies regarding the systematics of cultural landscapes.

First, a review of all relevant literature in South Africa will be completed to understand how conservation policies in South African are concerned with cultural landscapes. The review

¹⁶ Carpenter, Brock, Hanson. 1999.

University of Pretoria etd – Breedlove, G (2002)

will focus on conservation policies of all types; those addressing biophysical resources and those addressing built or cultural heritage. In addressing the hypothesis it will be necessary to establish that there are shortcomings in these policies as they relate to cultural landscapes. Exploratory interviews with key individuals in the field of cultural heritage will be conducted. This method is the most reliable in establishing shortcomings that are experienced in the day-to-day operation of the participants. . A comparative summary from the interviews will provide a suitable assessment for the hypothesis.

1.2.2 Sub-problem two and Hypothesis two.

Sub-problem: How are international conservation policies, the resultant implementation systems, concerned with cultural landscapes?

Hypothesis: The international administrative systems pertaining to significant cultural landscapes can inform South African systematics for cultural landscapes.

The literature review will identify international conservation policies that can be employed in a developing country, such as South Africa, where the recognition of cultural landscapes is a new concept. The literature review will begin by focussing on a review of African countries and others where indigenous cultures are recognised as having a unique relationship to their biophysical surroundings. Western conservation policies such as those employed in Europe or the United States of America will be scrutinised for those components that can be applied to South African cultural landscapes.

The research method for testing the hypothesis will comprise the extraction and recompilation of relevant instruments that could suitably be applied in a South African systematics. In addition, a deductive summary will be compiled to present heritage management guidelines that can inform a South African systematics for cultural landscapes.

1.2.3 Sub-problem three and Hypothesis three.

Sub-problem: How can the cultural landscapes within South Africa be characterised?

Hypothesis: The South Africa cultural landscapes have characteristics that can be identified and captured into a data management system.

The literature review will investigate the current methods employed to characterise landscapes by such analyses as perceptual, cognitive, territorial or attitudinal. Various methods of reading the landscape will also be investigated. To test the hypothesis, the

¹⁷ Blaikie. 2000. p.27

University of Pretoria etd – Breedlove, G (2002)

findings of the literature review will be compiled into a set of comparative characteristics. Three examples are evaluated in an attempt to establish a representative record of current South African cultural landscape practices and possible shortcomings in these. The proposed examples are the following:

- a. Colonial /Urban - Johannesburg Fort.
- b. Autochthonous/ Archaeological - Mapungubwe
- c. Biophysical Conservation area that encompass cultural heritage - Au-grabies Falls National Park.

1.2.4 Sub-problem four and Hypothesis four.

Sub-problem: How can suitable methods be found or developed to display the characteristics of the cultural landscape?

Hypothesis: Suitable discrete methods can be found to display parameters for cultural landscape characteristics.

The literature review will focus on establishing the qualities and requirements of a suitable and appropriate database structure for cultural landscapes. The review will attempt to identify the appropriate method to display first the documentation methods, the evaluation methods and criteria, and the classification criteria. Secondly, the cultural character must be displayed as spatial data with an aim to convenient access, maintenance, expansion and retrieval. In addition, appropriate methods, to capture data, evaluate data, classify the data and to store the data must be identified.

To test the hypothesis the research method will seek to discover a structure or mechanism that has previously been unknown in South Africa, but that is suitable for a systematics for cultural landscapes. The mechanism may not be evident in any one systematics but may be a combination of several elements from several different systematics. The mechanism, vehicle or tool will be sought by considering methods or procedures available in other systematics dealing with cultural heritage, or more specifically landscapes.

1.2.5 Sub-problem five and Hypothesis five.

Sub-problem: How could the systematics for South African cultural landscapes be formed in relationship with a displayable set of parameters?

Hypothesis: The systematics of the South African cultural landscapes can be formed and can be described by a set of displayable parameters.

The final sub-problem requires the deduction of appropriate components from the previous chapters to effectively implement and incorporate the systematics for cultural landscapes.

University of Pretoria etd – Breedlove, G (2002)

The National Heritage Resources Act No 25 of 1999 will be used to guide the proposals to ensure applicability within the South African legal constraints.

1.3 The Delimitations.

- a. This study will be limited to the geographical area of South Africa, but will not include the maritime zones of the Republic.
- b. This study will be limited to the review of landscapes and will not review structures, artefacts, or monuments. However, these are considered important expressions of culture and will thus be noted where the information or significance is an extension of the landscape.
- c. This study will deal with nationalities and tribal origin in South Africa as defined by the South African Census Board.
- d. The study will be limited to the identifiable tangible and intangible cultural expression and values, and will not address social concerns such as economic conditions, living standards, employment opportunities, or other aspects customarily dealt with under social issues.
- e. Questions will be addressed to organisations and institutions concerned with systematics of South African heritage. Although communities provide valuable contributions in identification and claiming ownership of cultural landscapes, the certification institutions ultimately govern, manage, or maintain the facilities and the related the databases.
- f. This study will address only the peculiarities of cultural landscapes and will avoid assigning universal identification to these.
- g. This study will be concerned only with systematics and will not aim to be normative.

1.4 The Assumptions

- a. It is possible to distinguish between cultures.
- b. Culture is understood to be emotions, interests, manners, taste et cetera. Thus it is the result of ways of thinking, talking, and acting. Culture is time bound and is thus the ideas, customs, skills, arts, et cetera of the given people in a given place at a given time.
- c. This study recognises the various and particular understandings and readings of culture by different people.
- d. The peculiarities amongst cultures define them.
- e. Cultures have varied values for diverse landscapes.
- f. Cultures express their peculiarities both tangibly and intangibly.
- g. Communities both express their values and are able to articulate aspects of those values expressed.

University of Pretoria etd – Breedlove, G (2002)

- h. Values, and that which is valued, may be distinctive from one community to another.
- i. Associative relationships are formed between communities and the biophysical environment they inhabit.
- j. Conservation is a land use requiring human intervention, which constitutes management at minimum.
- k. Adaptive management tools are successful.
- l. Electronic media is effective and convenient to use for the management of databases and to display spatial data related to the databases.
- m. Unless otherwise stated, all dating refer to the chronology of the Christian Era.

1.5 Definition of Terms

All terms not in the list of terms are as described by Webster¹⁸ unless otherwise topically defined, or discussed. Specific subject terms are presented in Appendix One.

¹⁸ Guralink. 1980.