

The management of heritage resources in the Maloti-Drakensberg Park, Lesotho-South Africa: reflecting on the benefits of World Heritage status

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ABSTRACT

The boundary of uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park (uDP), first inscribed on the list of World Heritage Sites on 29 November 2000, was extended in 2013 to include the Sehlabathebe National Park in Lesotho. The new transboundary World Heritage Site was named the Maloti-Drakensberg Park. This paper offers a critique of the management of heritage resources in the South African portion of the World Heritage Site, the uDP, and the involvement of and benefits for communities living on the borders of the site. I note that the management authority for the South African side of the Maloti-Drakensberg Park does not have cultural heritage management expertise. I further show that the concept of indigeneity is problematic, that neighbouring communities have been historically and in some quarters continually disregarded in the management of protected areas and heritage, and that there are still a number of challenges when it comes to the structures established to improve their involvement in the uDP. However, there have been positive benefits accruing as the result of this inscription.

KEY WORDS: World Heritage Sites, involvement, benefits, indigenous, Secret San.

The Maloti-Drakensberg is the highest mountain range in southern Africa, rising to about 3000 m or more in places (Dodds 1975; Sycholt 2002). The Maloti-Drakensberg Park (uDP) was first inscribed into the World Heritage Site list in 2000, in part because of its well-known rock art. It is one of the most richly painted areas south of the Sahara desert, and among the most comprehensively researched areas in southern Africa. Research shows that Bushmen were the authors of most paintings in the uDP. It is estimated that they began making rock art in the Park as early as 3000 BP and continued until the 20th century (Vinnicombe 1976; Mazel & Watchman 2003; Wright & Mazel 2007; Mazel 2009a, b). Research shows that these paintings reflect the complex spiritual life of the Bushmen (see Vinnicombe 1976). Around the 13th century, Iron Age agriculturalists Bantu speakers came to live side by side with these Bushmen (see Pager 1971; Wright 1971; Vinnicombe 1976; Willcox 1976, 1984; Pearse 1989; Mitchell 2002; Wright & Mazel 2007).

The management of rock art has always been highly debated (see Mazel 1982, 2012; Ndlovu 2005). As should be evident from its history (see Pearse & Byrom 1989), the authorities managing the uDP have always been biased towards the conservation of biodiversity. Over the past 17 years, Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (hereafter Ezemvelo)¹ has focused only on the biodiversity management plan, while Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali² facilitated the implementation of the Cultural Resources Management Plan (CURE) following the signing of an agreement in 1999 to establish a Liaison Committee between the two organisations. As a result, Ezemvelo has never appointed people with cultural heritage expertise to ensure a successful and proactive management of the rich history represented in this mountain range. Mazel's (2012) historical account of cultural heritage conservation in the uDP highlights this very point (see also Ndlovu

2005, 2011a, 2014). I must highlight that as per clause 9 of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), as the government-designated authority, it is the responsibility of Ezemvelo to manage the heritage resources within the uDP in the same way they manage biodiversity. Amafa's role should be an advisory one, guided by the provincial legislation since the uDP has never been declared a Grade I site under the national heritage act. Politics within Ezemvelo and Amafa have stalled the appointment of heritage managers for the uDP for over a decade (see Ndlovu 2005; Mazel 2012). It is my sense that if Amafa were to play an advisory role, like they should as per the legislation, they felt they would be losing power over the uDP.

The management of cultural resources in the uDP, especially rock art, must consider the social history of the place. This is because social aspects that are not adequately considered by the legislation (even though living heritage was incorporated) are crucial for understanding an interest in using rock art sites for ritual purposes. I briefly outline it below.

The arrival of various groups of people in the uDP put pressure on the available natural resources (Pager 1971). Competition for resources led to raiding activities, with the government instituting a number of strategies to deal with this scourge (see Dreyer 1947; Wright 1971; Liebenberg 1972; Vinnicombe 1976; Willcox 1976; Webb & Wright 1976; Guest 1978; Mazel 1981, 1996; Wright & Manson 1983; Pearce 1989). It was not just the under-sieged Bushmen who were conducting the raids; they also enlisted the assistance of those who were meant to be their enemies (see Challis 2008, 2009, 2012). This highlights the difficulty behind the identity of the raiders (Challis 2008, 2009, 2012). Some of the government records indicate that there were raids conducted by "a large tribe of Bushmen, Hottentots and runaway slaves" (Challis 2012: 266). Challis refers to this group as the 'AmaTola' (Challis 2012: 266). As a result, when we use the term Bushmen in discussing raiding activities, we should not be oblivious to the ethnic complexities.

Amongst the many attempts to deal with the raiding activities was the establishment of the barrier locations along the foothills of the 'Little Berg', which are still evident today when one explores the foothills of the uDP, defining the habitation of the mountain range (Dreyer 1947; Wright 1971; Willcox 1976; Vinnicombe 1976; Webb & Wright 1976; Guest 1978; Wright & Manson 1983). For the purposes of this paper, there are two issues to raise here. First, that some Bantu speakers today are direct descendants of Bushmen. Some of these people attach spiritual significance to rock art. Second, that even those that attach no direct lineage to Bushmen have over the years began to accrue financial benefits resulting from the use of rock art and other attributes of the uDP for tourism purposes. Some of these people have also attached spiritual significance to rock art, as will be illustrated for the northern uDP (see Ndlovu 2005).

As early as 1925, Dornan (1925: 199) predicted that within a short space of time Bushmen would cease to exist. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the practice of talking about the Bushmen in the past tense, as a vanishing or extinct people, gained momentum (Sollas 1924: 489–90; Dornan 1925: 199; Tobias 1974: 22–3; Willcox 1975; Jolly 1986; Pearse & Byrom 1989; Lewis-Williams 1990: 82–94; Dowson & Lewis-Williams 1993: 56; Blundell 1996: 136, Skotness 1996: 17, Prins 1996, 2001: 3; Solomon 1997: 8). Considering Bushmen as extinct in the uDP was fuelled by the failure of researchers to identify people who fitted the perceived physical and linguistic

description of Bushmen (see Battis n.d.; Stow 1905; Greenberg 1966; Willcox 1975, 1976; Tobias 1978; Malherbe 1983; Pearse & Byrom 1989; Deacon & Deacon 1999; Lewis-Williams & Dowson 2000: 11; Wessels 2012). However, Schapera (1930: 40) gave an accurate view of Bushmen. He argued that after having survived persecution, Bushmen were absorbed by their Bantu-speaking neighbours, particularly through intermarriage (Ndlovu 2005, 2009; Francis 2007, 2009), concubinage, and other social strategies. The same is true for the uDP region (see Ndlovu 2005).

As a result of these social relations, there are Bushmen descendants around the uDP. They do not look physically similar to the Bushmen who once occupied the mountain range for millennia. However, work by Frans Prins and Pieter Jolly has revealed that many Bushmen descendants live within Zulu- and Xhosa-speaking communities (Jolly 1986; Prins 1996). This challenges the argument by Jeursen (1995: 127) who mentioned that “no-one can claim direct descentance [descent] from the painters and engravers”. Although the descendants have been absorbed into the Bantu communities, some of them still hold on to their Bushmen culture by attaching spiritual significance to the art (see Mazel 1996; Prins 1996; Ndlovu 2005, 2009). Frans Prins invented a term for such individuals, calling them ‘secret San’,³ as they had hidden their identity for fear of persecution by their neighbours (Prins 1996, 2001, 2009; Francis 2009). However, not all Bushmen descendants had a hidden identity during apartheid, and the Duma clan in the uDP is one example of such a group of people (Ndlovu 2005). They have been living near Kamberg Nature Reserve for at least eighty years, having originally come from the Underberg area to the south of the uDP. These people are amongst those who were relocated from the Game Pass Farm, which today forms part of the Kamberg Nature Reserve, to make way for the new protected area in 1951 (see Ndlovu 2005).

Because of the complexities surrounding the occupation of the uDP over decades, identity issues need to be considered in the management of the cultural heritage of the mountain range. Given the fact that extinction has been presumed for a long time, the cultural heritage of Bushmen descendants and other forms of heritage has been appropriated by the state, and it is now perceived to belong to all South Africans.⁴ Section 3 of the National Heritage Resource Act provides a list of heritage resources that are considered part of the national estate.⁵ Rock art is amongst such heritage resources. I would argue that the cultural resources of this ‘extinct’ society have been seen as ‘not dividing’ in the same way as the heritage of other groups would be. This explains why the current coat of arms has a KhoiSan language, as using an emblem from one of the 11 cultural groups in South Africa would have caused significant divisions within the country that was ‘hard at work’ creating a ‘Rainbow’ nation.

In further discussions over the debate surrounding who is indigenous and who is not, Tim Ingold speaks of relational and genealogical models of indigeneity. For the former, “indigenous peoples draw their being from the relationships with the land” (Ingold 2000: 150) while for the latter, indigenous peoples are defined as descendants of those who arrived in a given land “before people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived” (Ingold 2000: 132). The relational model would seem to support the view proposed by Chirikure and Pwiti (2008), emphasising continued relationship to the land such that such a group of people should be considered indigenous. The genealogical model is considered to be colonial by Ingold (2000), as it puts emphasis on colonisation of the land by the settlers.

By the relational model of indigeneity, supported by the archaeological data, it is evident that Bushmen are the indigenous people of the area⁶ (Stow 1905; Willcox 1975; Willcox 1984; Pearse & Byrom 1989; see also Ingold 2000: 150). However, the definition of who is indigenous in Africa is extremely political. In South Africa or in Africa in general, none of the Bushmen people or any First People hold a powerful political position. In the case of South Africa, none of the 11 official languages is of Bushmen origin. As a result, Bushmen are not only limited to struggles over land, resources, recognition and sovereignty, but also the fragile issue of defining the term 'indigenous'. What is clear is that the definition of 'indigenous' is a politically loaded process (Chennells & Du Toit 2004; Chirikure & Pwiti 2008). For example, Chennells and Du Toit (2004: 98) mention that there are two parallel definitions of the term in South Africa, "one referring broadly to all South Africans of African ancestry, the other developing along the lines of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP), which refers to non-dominant groups of aboriginal or prior descent with distinct territorial and cultural identities". They further highlight that the second definition still brings further debate regarding which groups should be considered.

For a contrasting viewpoint, Chirikure and Pwiti (2008) argue that there is general agreement supported by archaeological and anthropological evidence that Bushmen are indigenous in southern Africa in much the same way as the Saami of northern Europe, the Inuit of Canada, the Native Americans, and the Aborigines of Australia. They then go forth to argue that in sub-Saharan Africa, including southern Africa where Bushmen are considered to be indigenous (see Chennells & Du Toit 2004), everyone claims to be of indigenous background (see Shepherd 2003; Lane 2006). Chirikure and Pwiti (2008) raise an important argument: considering the movement of people in the past 500 years within southern African region, how long does it take for someone to occupy an area before the person is considered indigenous? Following this question, they point out that descendants of the African farmers who arrived in the region at the beginning of the first millennium AD now consider themselves indigenous considering how long they have been in this area. Having no political power in the current South Africa, Bushmen have 'lost' their indigenous status. Instead, African or Bantu people who now have political power in the previously colonised continent, and have the majority in terms of the population, widely define themselves as indigenous.

What this discussion on indigeneity highlights is the complexity of the debate surrounding who is indigenous and who is not (see UNESCO 2012: 18). Here I am simply highlighting the problem with the definition, rather than offering a view on this discussion. Having done so, I refer to only those who consider themselves descendants of the Bushmen as indigenous. Furthermore, and as indicated above, my use of the term indigenous does not ignore the complications of the description. I am aware, as also confirmed by the position taken by Chirikure and Pwiti (2008), that many other communities, such as the Zulu and Afrikaners, claim to be indigenous on the basis that they were born in the place, even though their ancestry derives from other homelands.

The issue of who is indigenous is not only political but also has implications in heritage management. For example, the Duma clan consider themselves to be Bushmen descendants and still hold to some of the values that Bushmen would have had when it comes to rock art (see Francis 2009; Prins 2009). A few Bantu-speaking traditional

healers attach spiritual importance to the rock art sites. In my research a few years ago, it transpired that one of the diviners (an *isangoma*) at Mnweni believed in the spiritual significance of the rock art sites, and made ancestral offerings every time he approached any such site (Ndlovu 2005). In another case from oKhombe, I found a shelter in which ‘new age rock art’ had been ‘recently’ made. This art consisted of paintings of crosses, lines and stars. I managed to locate the painter, who is a diviner, and she originally denied having made these paintings (Ndlovu 2005).

It must be noted that these two cases of diviners attaching spiritual significance to rock art were recorded outside protected areas. They show that the effective implementation of heritage legislation in communally owned land is much more challenging than within protected areas. Access to Mnweni and oKhombe sites is much more relaxed, since these territories are communally owned areas under the leadership of the local chiefs. The black crosses that are painted in some rock art sites at Mnweni and oKhombe should not be mistaken for what I define as ‘new age rock art’ (see Ndlovu 2005). These black crosses are not painted only in rock art sites but can be found at sites without Bushmen rock art. The same crosses can also be seen on the doors and windows of houses belonging to those who still subscribe to African religious beliefs. Therefore, these black crosses have nothing to do with the spiritual power of the painted shelters. Painted shelters are often big and can therefore offer better protection from lightning and thunder during the herding season.

While I have highlighted the spiritual links attached by the Duma clan and the few diviners to rock art, the majority of the Bantu communities who live at the foothills of the uDP do not attach the same values to rock art (see Ndlovu 2005). Therefore, the significance of the mountain range to them lies in non-spiritual attributes. The management of heritage resources has not taken these differences into consideration, for reasons that become clear later in the paper.

THE INSCRIPTION OF THE UDP INTO THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE LIST

When South Africa ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1997 following the formal end of apartheid, it did not have any World Heritage Sites. World Heritage Sites are sites considered to have universal value. Today, South Africa has eight and the uDP was the second one to be accorded this universally significant status. The uDP, covering an area mass of 242 813 ha, was inscribed into the World Heritage List in 2000 at the 24th session of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee, so recognising the natural and cultural values of the mountain range (Wright & Mazel 2007). The inscription was made under cultural criteria (i, iii) and natural criteria (vii, x), thus becoming the 23rd mixed World Heritage Site. Notably, the area proposed for inscription excluded the communally owned land to the north.⁷ The nomination of the uDP was in line with the goals to rejuvenate the economy as set by the South African government in the White Paper on tourism gazetted in 1996. Therefore, having sites declared as World Heritage Sites was seen as an investment towards achieving that aspiration (Ndlovu 2005).

A decision to extend the boundary of the World Heritage Site was made during the 37th session held from 16–27 June 2013 at Phnom Penh in Cambodia (World Heritage Committee 2013). As a result, Sehlabathebe National Park in Lesotho has now been

added to the uDP on the basis of criteria (i), (iii), (vii) and (x). The new, enlarged World Heritage Site is now known as Maloti-Drakensberg Park, Lesotho/South Africa.

Interestingly, the new Statement of Outstanding Universal Value adopted during the 2013 meeting was heavily biased towards the uDP, with no mention of Sehlabathebe National Park in the presentation of the four criteria, integrity, and the statement of authenticity.⁸ It was only in the 2014 meeting held in Qatar that the inclusive Statement of Outstanding Universal Value was adopted. Lesotho is only briefly mentioned in the protection and management requirements, showing a strong bias towards the uDP. I limit my discussion in this paper to the South African part of the World Heritage Site. I must indicate that the Department of Environmental Affairs has initiated a process of formalizing the new name of the mountain range (Maloti-Drakensberg Park), which requires that it be gazetted. Thus, I shall still refer to this South African portion of the Maloti-Drakensberg Park as the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park (uDP).⁹ I must highlight, however, that my discussion will include the un-inscribed portion of the uKhahlamba Drakensberg within KwaZulu-Natal Province, that is, the area belonging to the amaNgunwane and amaZizi Traditional Councils that lies between the northern and southern sections of the uDP.¹⁰

As mentioned earlier, the decision to nominate the uDP was ratified at the 24th session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) held at Cairns in Australia on 29 November 2000 (Derwent et al. 2001).¹¹ Prior to the finalisation of the nomination dossier, local stakeholder workshops had been held. Communities neighbouring the uDP people were amongst those involved in the process of nomination through these stakeholder workshops. This was through the general social consultation process that ensued after a decision to send the application to the World Heritage Committee was made. Notably, the consultation process failed to adequately cater for the inclusion of those who represented the interest of Bushmen. This might very well be because ‘none of them’ lived near the uDP at the time because they were presented as extinct. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, rock art made by the Bushmen ancestors would have been considered part of the national estate rather than belonging to any one community. The lack of consultation with Bushmen representatives during the nomination process is well captured in the assertion by Chennells and Du Toit (2004: 110):

During the process leading to the application for the listing of the Drakensberg mountain range, with its internationally recognized wealth of San rock art sites, as a World Heritage Site, the government officials of KwaZulu-Natal inexplicably failed to recognise or negotiate with the recognised leaders of the San as the current custodians of the San heritage. This situation was rectified after WIMSA’s urgent intervention and, by the time of the formal opening of the Didima San Rock Art Centre at Cathedral Peak Game Reserve in November 2003, the southern African San leadership had been fully recognized and afforded due honour as key dignitaries at the ceremony.

I must acknowledge that these leaders were not part of the neighbouring community. The Duma clan and these leaders recognise each other. The declaration of the uDP means that its management does not conform to national management guidelines only, but also to international guidelines such as the World Heritage Convention. But what does this declaration of the uDP mean for the communities who have lived in the uDP for many years before ‘formal’ conservation?

THE IMPACT OF THE WORLD HERITAGE SITE STATUS ON THE COMMUNITIES NEIGHBOURING THE UDP

It is important that I begin this section by referring back to the earlier discussion on indigeneity. It should be noted that the majority of communities neighbouring the uDP are not indigenous, in the context of how I use the term. Therefore, the majority of communities who are benefiting from the uDP being a World Heritage Site are not necessarily direct descendants of those who are responsible for the rock art that played a critical role in the inscription of the site. When I was still the manager of the Didima San Rock Art Interpretive Centre (2003–2006), there were a few isolated calls for the descendants of the Bushmen who made the art to benefit financially. Descendants were of the view that they should derive financial profits from the centre and thus wanted access to the financial records of the centre. When I indicated that the centre was actually not making any profit due to the expensive nature of its operations, the interest dissipated.

The declaration of the uDP has had a positive impact in a number of ways. Three consequences are particularly significant here: (i) the number of tourists has increased drastically over the past 14 years since the inscription as the World Heritage Site (Duval & Smith 2014), (ii) a Community Levy Fund was initiated to assist communities living near protected areas, and (iii) the biodiversity management of the uDP has been enhanced. There is a direct link between the number of tourists visiting uDP and the Community Levy Fund. The fund was established in 1998, two years before the declaration of the uDP, to bring meaningful benefits to people living on the borders of protected areas. Every tourist pays an entrance fee when visiting the protected areas within the uDP, and a portion of this fee is then allocated towards the Community Levy Fund (see Duval & Smith 2013). It is through this fund that various community projects have been supported financially.

Besides this financial incentive, members of various communities are allowed access to natural resources inside the uDP. For example, they are allowed at certain times of the year to enter the protected areas in order to collect wood for fire, grass for roofing and craft work. However, they are not allowed to collect herbs as some of the plant species are protected.

Nine years after the declaration of the uDP as a World Heritage Site, Ezemvelo established Local Boards as a strategy to include communities neighbouring protected areas (Mkhize 2004). This followed the promulgation of the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Management Act of 1997, which introduced the concept of statutory Local Boards and a Community Trust for protected areas. As Mkhize (2004) has noted, the idea of Local Boards first emerged from the 1995 'Peoples and Parks' symposium convened by the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA). The major aim of this concept was to strengthen relationships between biodiversity managers and nearby communities. There are two aims of these structures: (i) promote local decision-making regarding the management of biodiversity and heritage resources within protected areas, and (ii) to promote greater cooperation between the activities of the protected area and those of the surrounding areas (see Mkhize 2004). Through Local Boards, communities neighbouring protected areas thus become active participants in the management activities of the uDP. This biodiversity conservation model responds to the criticism of fortress conservation—defined as a conservation model that aims

to preserve biodiversity through emphatic exclusion of local communities. Under this model, the assumption is that biodiversity and local communities are not compatible (Brockington 2002). Thus, these communities have no direct socio-political and economic benefits from the application of fortress-model conservation (see Wells et al. 1992; Adams & Hulme 2001; Bond & Frost 2005; Nyambe 2005; Mashinya 2007).

Local Boards are appointed by the MEC of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs following a public nomination process (Mkhize 2004). Besides managing the disbursement of funds from the Community Trust established in 1998, Local Boards should also be actively involved in compiling and monitoring the implementation of management plans for protected areas for which they were established. These management plans must also represent the development needs of the people living adjacent to protected areas. As a result of such a requirement, a number of projects have been funded through the Community Levy Fund (Mkhize 2004). Amongst these are building additional classrooms at schools, community halls, craft centres, and setting up business enterprises at Giants Castle and Didima at Cathedral Peak Nature Reserves. To ensure sustainability, Ezemvelo procures the services of the Giants Castle and Didima business ventures. For example, the laundry from Giants Castle and Didima Camps is taken to these community structures rather than to bigger and well-established businesses in the nearby towns of Estcourt, Bergville, and Ladysmith. However, as one of the lodge managers has informed me, they pay higher prices at these community facilities than at independent service providers. As a lodge manager tasked with managing a profit-making centre, it is significant that expenditure cost is decreased wherever possible. This threatens the long term survival of these community business ventures and thus it is something that should be attended to.

Besides the Community Levy Fund, the national government has continuously provided funding for various conservation and development projects through the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP). The first phase of the EPWP was launched 2004 while the second phase began in 2009. Its main aim is to alleviate poverty by providing an income relief through temporary work for the unemployed, focusing in particular on women (40%), youth (30%) and people living with disabilities (2%). Ezemvelo has continued to receive the EPWP funding for uDP projects such as construction of camp sites, removal of invasive alien species, land rehabilitation, fire protection measures, and waste management programmes. While these projects have had a significant impact on the lives of communities neighbouring protected areas through short-term employment opportunities, there are a few concerns that must be noted. A number of the youth, as one of the target groups for the EPWP, leave school before they finish their studies because of being enticed by the opportunity to earn a salary. One school principal informed me that rather than producing professionals to help grow the country, his school is providing an employment base for the EPWP funded projects. This was an area of concern to him. Because of the lack of adequate education, there is continued likelihood that the staff managing nature conservation and tourism facilities will continue to be drawn from outside the communities neighbouring the protected areas.

There have been a number of hostilities shown by these societies, complaining about the employment of people from areas afar. At one stage, the only roads entering the Giants Castle and Cathedral Peak Nature Reserves were blocked off by communities

staging a protest. This threatened the lives of tourists and provided negative publicity for Ezemvelo. These negative impacts of the projects aimed at alleviating poverty must be attended to by Ezemvelo because they threaten the long-term survival of the same communities they are aimed at. There is a need, therefore, to ensure that amongst the projects funded through the community levy, career guidance is highly emphasised. I am aware that the career guidance organised by the Bergville Builders Community Group, composed of professionals from various disciplines, has not had the desired impact. While this career guidance has apparently been implemented for the past 12 years, it has been funded through the Community Levy Fund for the past three years. Having a successfully implemented career guidance programme will ensure that there is a greater pool of staff members who could be drawn from these communities, something that will reduce tensions between them and conservation authorities.

I must also highlight that plans are afoot to create a Community Wilderness Area that will encompass land of amaNgwane and amaZizi authority areas, north of the uDP. This is not necessarily the extension of the World Heritage Site, as that is a national competency that must adhere to the gazetted World Heritage Site nomination procedures. The community is in a process of establishing their own community trust which shall thus be delegated to manage the wilderness area. This is a process that will not impact negatively on land ownership.

CRITICAL EVALUATION

This section reflects on how consultation is conducted within the communities neighbouring the uDP. I begin by focusing on the struggles of the Duma clan members, who, because of heritage legislation that favours the physical approach (see Ndlovu 2009), are negatively impacted in their attempts to achieve their objectives. I end the section by focusing on the ineffective Local Boards which were established to manage processes by which neighbouring communities benefit from the uDP.

Every form of consultation happens within an ideological framework and assumptions that determine the nature of that discussion, and thus the outcome. The same is applicable in the form of consultation that took place prior to the inscription of uDP as a World Heritage Site. For example, while there were indications that Bushmen had become assimilated during the contact period and thus not extinct, it was generally assumed that their rich heritage belongs to the government for all to share and appreciate. Such an assumption failed to realise the fact that rock art sites have spiritual significance to some. Both the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA, no. 25 of 1999) and KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (no. 10 of 1997, as amended) also promote a physical approach to heritage management, even though they acknowledge the existence of intangible heritage. I have discussed in detail elsewhere (Ndlovu 2005: iii, 2009, 2011b) what I define as physical and spiritual approaches (see also Ndoro & Pwiti 2001: 21). I have defined the spiritual approach as a paradigm that puts emphasis on the spiritual power that the painted site has. In contrast, the physical management of the site gives emphasis to the aesthetic value of the paintings (Ndlovu 2005). The former puts emphasis on the aesthetic values, while the latter gives more significance to the spiritual power that a given site has. This does not mean, necessarily, that those who attach spiritual significance have no appreciation of the physical aspects. Rather, it is what is emphasised over the other. Under the physical management of heritage

resources, emphasis is on what one can see, and while this approach may acknowledge the spiritual significance, it considers its relevance against the premise that the physical aspects are superior.

Ideologically, consultation during the inscription was within a approach that values the physical aspects of heritage sites and where spiritual significance was highlighted, it was in terms of the past. This directly puts an overemphasis on ‘universal values’, which threatens the appropriate consideration of values attached by some of the neighbouring communities. The practices of communities, where allowed, are perceived to be a threat to rock art in the uDP and thus any approved ceremonies must be performed within the limited guidelines given by heritage resources authorities (Ndlovu 2005, 2009). For example, even though the Duma clan members are granted annual access to Game Pass Shelter for a ritual ceremony, there are minimum standards that fit within the physical approach which they need to fulfil. These standards determine the actions to be undertaken inside the shelter during the ceremony and make allowance for a representative from the heritage resources authority to be on site for inspection purposes to ensure that the guidelines are followed. Critically, by not having access to Game Pass Shelter on their own terms, the Duma clan members are prevented from performing the ritual ceremony in the way they intend. Based on the limitations provided, the ritual becomes a public performance attended by outsiders to the clan where a staff member accompanies them. It is not clear what such a performance is supposed to achieve and for whose benefit (Ndlovu 2009).

The difference of values and the form in which consultation with the communities happened was cause for concern from the very beginning. It should be noted, however, that such challenges did not begin with the nomination of the site to be a World Heritage Site, but have been in existence from the time protected areas in the uDP were established. This was a period in which conservation decisions were unilaterally taken and forcefully implemented. People were therefore forcefully removed from the land deemed to be worthy of inclusion in the list of protected areas. As a result, there was collision from the very beginning in terms of different form of values attached to rock art in the uDP. We should not lose sight of the fact that communities did not necessarily own any of the land that was proposed for nomination as a World Heritage Site. Therefore, consultation could easily be seen as having been instituted for administrative and information purposes, to fulfil nomination requirements and inform neighbouring communities of the intentions of the South African government.

As a result of these opposing values and the fact that land ownership was not in the hands of communities, their way of life would not have been considered in any significant detail. Using the Duma as a case study, what emanates from this critical review of the nomination and consultation process is that their values were not directly pursued. They were just like any stakeholder living outside the protected areas but having to be consulted as per nomination requirements. This consultation was within the ‘formalised’ frameworks, whereby advice from UNESCO advisory bodies was considered key. It could be argued, therefore, that the nomination dossier was based mainly on ‘scientific values’ of the uDP and the historical spiritual significance of rock art. Hence, the continued spiritual significance of the area was ignored. A review of the decision adopted by the World Heritage Committee during its 37th meeting held in June 2013 with regards to the new Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for

Maloti-Drakensberg Park, Lesotho/South Africa highlights the fact that the concern with the 2001 decision is still relevant (WHC 2013: 171–2). Criteria (i) and (iii) which address the cultural significance of the extended World Heritage Site have remained the same.

Significantly, this highlights the fact that the ‘scientific values’ are still given predominance. Bushmen are not spoken of as living people. Instead, they are discussed in past tense. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that the assumption that Bushmen are long gone might have played a role in ignoring the spiritual values attached by their descendants and other communities. It is indicated, however, that the current Draft Cultural Heritage Management Plan, sections 2.3.1 and 3.2.1 incorporates the issues of physical, cultural, and spiritual significance of rock art. This is not yet an official document that can be reviewed by the public.

It was a significant development that Ezemvelo decided in 1998 to establish Local Boards, as discussed earlier. However, they have not been particularly effective in ensuring that there is a move away from the *status quo*—they do not effectively ensure the participation of the neighbouring communities (see Mkhize 2004). I would also argue that the operation of these Local Boards is within the confines of the current nature of heritage legislation. Similarly, the voice of the communities they represent must be measured against such legislation. However, the voice of communities needs to be more emphasised, to ensure that their values, especially spiritual values, are adequately addressed. Such a move requires that there are changes in heritage legislation at national and provincial levels. As long as the heritage legislation is applied in its current form, it will not lead towards a successful involvement of indigenous people (see Ndlovu 2011a).

While the uDP has been on the World Heritage Site list for many years now, a number of local communities still do not have the same appreciation of the universal significance of this mountain range as the World Heritage Committee. When I worked as the inaugural Manager at Didima San Rock Art Interpretive Centre, I was asked by youths from the neighbouring community what was fascinating about rock art. They had seen visitors over many years hiking, in some cases long distances, to go and view rock art. In response I organised regular activities for them at the centre, to expose them to the World Heritage status. These activities entailed celebrating Heritage Day (24 September) through extensive festivities and free guided tours inside the centre.

There can be no doubt that the tourism industry and by extension, the neighbouring communities, has benefited from the inscription of the uDP into the World Heritage Site list. Communities have benefited immensely through the funding of various kinds of development projects. However, while there has been a positive impact, we should not lose sight of the negative and unintended consequences that have been identified. The drop-out rate from active schooling must be attended to. Otherwise, it will threaten the gains that have been achieved in the long-term and will cause instability in the management of protected areas that have been deemed to have universal values.

CONCLUSION

The uDP has been in the World Heritage Site list for well over a decade. This was a culmination of conservation efforts that began in 1903 when Giants Castle Game Reserve was declared as a protected area. There can be no arguments against the

positive impacts that have accrued as a result of this declaration. These impacts have been mainly supported by the increased revenue collected from tourists visiting the World Heritage Site. However, the effectiveness of the Local Boards tasked amongst others with the distribution of the Community Levy Funds needs to be interrogated. Such an interrogation will lead to a meaningful inclusion of indigenous and African communities in the active management of the World Heritage Site. At the heart of such inclusion is the bias of the management authority towards nature conservation. Because Ezemvelo does not have trained cultural heritage specialists, management activities do not fully consider spiritual significance of some heritage sites within the uDP to the Bushmen communities. The annual Game Pass Shelter ritual ceremony led by the Duma clan is the classic example of this. There is, therefore, a need for an integrated approach to the management of the World Heritage Site. By employing cultural heritage specialists and working towards an integrated approach, Ezemvelo officials might move closer towards incorporating what I call spiritual approach to heritage management.

NOTES

- ¹ Ezemvelo is the conservation authority responsible for maintaining wildlife conservation areas and biodiversity for the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. It was previously known as the Natal Parks Board.
- ² Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali is the provincial heritage resources authority, first established under the 1997 provincial heritage legislation (amended in 2008) with a responsibility to manage heritage resources in the province.
- ³ The use of this term has been highly contested by others (Vusumuzi per. comm. 2004), who say they are not 'secret', and are proud of their identity. Thus, they refuse to be called 'secret'.
- ⁴ Section 3 of the National Heritage Resources Act (no. 25 of 1999) illustrates this argument very well.
- ⁵ These are, but not limited to, places, buildings, structures and equipment of cultural significance, archaeological and palaeontological sites, graves, sites linked to slavery, etc.
- ⁶ Because of their nomadic life (Pearse & Byrom 1989), they were never regarded as the owners of the land they occupied for 20 000 years (Deacon & Deacon 1999) before the arrival of Bantu speakers about 2000 years ago.
- ⁷ The reason for this exclusion was that the area did not have an officially appointed government authority tasked with the management of biodiversity.
- ⁸ The ICOMOS report had recommended that the extension of the uDP to include Sehlabathebe National Park be deferred for a number of reasons, amongst which is that a detailed inventory of rock art in the area must be undertaken and differentiated from the rock art of the uDP in South Africa. In spite of the ICOMOS recommendations, the World Heritage Committee approved the extension.
- ⁹ This is the preferred name of the mountain range. *uKhablamba* is a Zulu word meaning 'barrier of spears'. Settlers of Dutch origin named the mountains 'Drakensberg', meaning 'Mountain of Dragons' (Liebenberg 1972; Dodds 1975; Derwent et al. 2001; Sycholt 2002). 'uKhablamba Drakensberg Park (uDP)' refers to the area inscribed into the WHS list on the South African side.
- ¹⁰ As a result, my use of the term 'uDP' in this paper will be inclusive of the 2001 inscription together with the tribal owned land under the jurisdiction of the Traditional Councils. The World Heritage Committee recommended, at its 37th session, that cooperative agreements between the Traditional Councils of the AmaNngwane and amaZizi and Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife be envisaged. The committee also recommended extending the conservation areas in the south of the uDP through negotiations with the private land owners.
- ¹¹ There are seven other World Heritage Sites (four cultural and three natural) in South Africa: Sterkfontein Cradle of Humankind, Robben Island, Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape, Vredefort Dome, Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape, iSimangaliso Wetland Park, and the Cape Floral Region.

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