eNanda Online: sharing Zulu cultural heritage on the Internet

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ABSTRACT

'eNanda Online' is a newly established, interactive, completely bilingual (English and isiZulu) website project that aims to digitally record and share the oral history and living cultural heritage of a predominantly Zulu community outside Durban on the South African east coast. The site contains personalised accounts of rituals and customary practices, memories of 'unsung heroes' and videos with custodians of 'living heritage', along with tourist information. In the long run, the site's interactive character is meant to facilitate community self-documentation. The paper illustrates how this project represents a new approach in the collection, promotion and safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, allied with the objectives and recommendations of important national and international policies and legislation. It then critically discusses some of the shortcomings and challenges associated with collecting and preserving living cultural heritage on the Internet. The paper concludes with some wider considerations about the project's contribution and its potential future.

Keywords

South Africa, eNanda, 'living heritage', heritagisation, ethics, information and communication technology (ICT), Internet, isiZulu, Zulu, community, Durban, trans-generational and inter-generational transmission of culture, mobile phones, ICOMOS Ename Charter.

Introduction

This article is the result of the multifaceted conceptual, technical and ethical considerations that underpinned the establishment of eNanda Online (http://enanda.co.za), an interactive community website project, which aims to digitally record, share and promote the intangible cultural heritage of Inanda, a historically important township community north of Durban on the

South African east coast. Being completely bilingual – English and isiZulu – the site creates online content in South Africa's most widely spoken African language and contributes to the promotion of isiZulu as an important vehicle and aspect of intangible heritage. The site contains oral history interviews, videos with custodians of living cultural heritage, personalised accounts of rituals and customary practices and their perceived significance, as well as personal memories and perceptions of the historical sites along the Inanda Heritage Route. The website's interactive character enables community self-documentation, currently with the assistance of trained students. Apart from preserving cultural heritage in an innovative way and fostering the emergence of grass-roots narratives complementing official tourism and heritage discourses, its ultimate aim is to increase community benefits from the area's heritage tourism by facilitating a more direct link between hosts and guests.

From a technological perspective, the project ties in with current international trends towards the digitisation of heritage, on-line access to heritage resources, and user-generated content on the Internet. In terms of tourism, it relates to the needs and expectations of 'new tourists' for immersive, interactive experiences, the ability to map their own journeys and have more direct contact with host cultures. It is also aligned with diverse international and South African policies ranging from digitisation, the conservation, management and promotion of intangible heritage, to cultural and heritage tourism, education and community development. Yet, despite its myriad potential benefits, the conceptualisation of the website and the process of data collection and presentation also resulted in a number of unforeseen challenges and critical issues, often of an ethical nature. This article explores the contribution of eNanda Online not only as a place of storage and distribution of digitised heritage material (videos, texts, images, sound files, etc.), but as an instrument for the identification and collection of such material, which – in conjunction with tourism – ultimately facilitates the 'heritagisation' of lived local culture. [Plates 1 and 2]

ICH: policy and law

In South Africa, the oral heritage and living culture of the African majority, including the Zulu speaking community, were historically not only subjected to marginalisation and sometimes misrepresentation, but also largely left without any official status of protection, as the prevailing heritage legislation focused almost exclusively on built structures and historical objects. After the first democratic elections in 1994, new legislation and policies were drafted to redress this historical imbalance by including the multifaceted tangible and intangible heritage resources of all South Africans (Manetsi; 2011: Hall; 2006: Deacon *et al*; 2004: Dondolo; 2005). The 1996 *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* states that attention must be paid to 'living heritage' and that: *...means must be found to enable*



Plate 1
Impression of the semi-rural township of Inanda, north of Durban (eThekwini Municipality). Photo: Author, 2013.

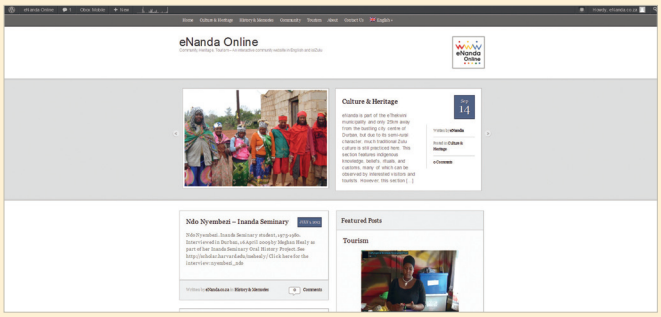


Plate 2
Screenshot of eNanda Online, English version of homepage.
Source: eNanda Online



Plate 3
Filming a practice session of the Inanda Mass Choir, Mzinyathi area, Inanda. Photo: Author, 2013.

song, dance, story-telling and oral history to be permanently recorded and conserved in the formal heritage structures (1996, sect. 5.2). [Plate 3]

In 1999, the National Heritage Council (constituted by the National Heritage Council Act of 1999) was set up with the specific objective to - among other things – *coordinate heritage management* and *promote and protect indigenous knowledge systems* (NHCA; 1999, sect.4). *The National Heritage Resources Act* (NHRA; 1999) promotes a more inclusive, holistic, and democratic approach to heritage conservation that takes into account the multifaceted cultural knowledge, beliefs and ritual practices of black communities and stipulates their active involvement in the conservation and management of heritage resources. Importantly, the post-apartheid heritage conservation legislation devolved responsibility for the identification of locally important heritage to the local level, including communities, both with respect to tangible sites and to the intangible heritage associated with them.

However, the NHRA (1999) safeguards living cultural heritage only as far as it is attached to tangible heritage, and the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) ultimately remains focused on the conservation of sites and objects. In reality, heritage authorities are rarely trained and sufficiently equipped to meaningfully involve communities in heritage management, or to collect, inventory and safeguard oral histories, memories and living heritage practices associated with the built historical environment (Manetsi; 2011: Hall; 2006: Deacon *et al;* 2004: Bakker; 2011). The legislation does not even specifically consider intangible heritage as an inherent component of *every* heritage site and as a result, notes Bakker (2007, p.18), heritage presentations and site interpretations tend to be formulaic and sadly miss out on opportunities for a rich layering of meaning created by diverse cultural associations.

UNESCO's adoption of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2003 marks the culmination of international heritage conservation efforts to protect and promote the oral heritage, ephemeral practices and living traditional culture *per se,* not only as associated with tangible heritage. Although no doubt a milestone in the international field of cultural heritage conservation, the *Convention* has also sparked much debate, including on the African continent, about matters of interpretation, implementation, and ownership; the intangible or 'living' cultural heritage has remained a slippery concept (e.g. Bouchenaki; 2007: Kurin; 2007: Keitumetse; 2006: Aikawa-Faure; 2008).

In an attempt to consult with stakeholders about the implementation of the 2003 UNESCO *Convention* in South Africa and to define a nationally coordinated management framework for the heritage sector, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) developed the *Draft National Policy on South African Living Heritage* (*Living Heritage Policy*; 2009). The *Living Heritage Policy* is based on the UNESCO *Convention's* definition of intangible heritage, but prefers the term 'living heritage' to emphasise *the continuity of heritage* (*Living Heritage Policy*; 2009, p.20), i.e. the underlying cultural logic of

African knowledge systems and world views. The latter were actively discouraged and disrupted during the colonial and apartheid eras when African tradition was often associated with primitivism, backwardness and superstition. The *Living Heritage Policy* explicitly includes popular memory as an aspect of living heritage as this became an important counterpart to the official emphasis on preserving colonial buildings and artefacts during the apartheid era (2009, p.9: see also Deacon *et al;* 2004).

Agency in the safeguarding of ICH

In many parts of the world, museums are considered the most appropriate institutions for collecting and preserving aspects of intangible heritage and a few have excelled in this regard (Kurin; 2007: Māhina-Tuai; 2006: Van Huy; 2006). In South Africa, too, many museums have established oral history projects and community outreach programmes focused on living heritage, especially since 1994. The intent is to research and document local cultural heritage, while simultaneously attracting 'new' audiences, affirming the relevance of the museum or heritage site for surrounding communities, and – in some cases (notably the District Six museum in Cape Town) linking oral history collection with social activism and advocacy for social justice (Coombes; 2003: Rassool; 2006). But museums ultimately remain focused on collecting artefacts and cannot do justice to the complex, multifarious tasks of documenting living traditions, much less ensuring that living culture is safeguarded *in situ* (Kurin; 2007, p.14).

Where museums do indeed conduct research, collect and diligently record intangible heritage material, using the latest digital technology, the question remains how to store, present and interpret these facets of intangible heritage for a wider audience and how to use these resources effectively for the management and safeguarding of such cultural knowledge. South Africa has a long history of missionaries, anthropologists and other researchers conducting ethnographic research and documenting 'tribal customs' and folklore without necessarily consulting their subjects on how these cultural expressions should be collected and represented, for what purpose and according to which criteria of authenticity.

In the post-apartheid South African context, consultation and active community participation are considered indispensable, but when state-funded museums and even purpose-established conservation bodies, as proposed by the *Living Heritage Policy*, are in charge of collecting living heritage, the danger prevails that officials and bureaucrats set the agenda and provide the directives about what cultural expressions should be included or excluded, approved or discouraged. When the *Living Heritage Policy* talks about *cultivating good living heritage* (2009, p.57) and stipulates that living heritage must comply with the Bill of Rights, the principles of sustainable development and the African philosophy of *Ubuntu* (shared humanity), one might worry about censorship and the dominance of top-down 'politically correct' interpretations over the diverse meanings that individuals and communities may attach to their rituals and cultural expressions.

While the UNESCO *Convention* provides no guidance with respect to the agency or organisation that should preferably be in charge of safeguarding the intangible heritage, it is important to note that it emphasises the active participation of the practising cultural communities (or individuals) themselves (UNESCO; 2003, Article 15). In the first instance, a tradition must be safeguarded by keeping it alive and actively practised in the community, not by storing a documentary record of it in a museum or archive. Internationally, policy makers, conservation agencies and academics agree that communities as the custodians of cultural knowledge and as producers and 'consumers' of traditional cultural practices must play a central role in the identification of intangible heritage worth safeguarding, the determination of criteria of authenticity and the mechanisms of safeguarding and Kurin (2007, p.160) recommends that:

...members of the relevant communities can and should be encouraged to do participatory self-research and documentation, work with civil scholars in devising and carrying out inventory activity, work with museums, performing arts centres, publishing houses, universities and the like on the presentation of their [intangible cultural heritage] ...

The *South African Living Heritage Policy* (2009, p.14) also asserts the centrality of community participation and assigns to the state a duty to help people record their heritage. This paper suggests that websites such as eNanda Online can be an important mechanism for the

documentation and safeguarding of living heritage in conjunction with, or as independent alternatives to, statutory bodies and memory institutions. An interactive website is not only an accessible, dynamic multimedia database for the inventorying and storage of living heritage, but it can also become a vehicle for community-based self-documentation and a grass-roots forum for negotiation and debate about criteria for identification, authenticity and the changing meaning of cultural heritage practices.

Heritage, digitisation and the Internet

The role of ICT internationally

The role of digitisation and information technology in relation to cultural heritage is often thought of in terms of the digital conversion, storage and presentation of heritage-related material, such as documents, paintings, photographs of artefacts, videos or sound recordings. Internationally, initiatives such as Europeana (http://www.europeana.eu/), a web portal linking Europe's leading museums, galleries, archives and libraries, or the Google Art Project (http://www.googleartproject.com/), which takes the cameras used in Google Earth Street View into the world's most famous museums and facilitates a virtual visit with highly detailed zoom views of the artefacts, have the potential to reach people who would otherwise never have entered such institutions.

Web-based spaces have also gained some international popularity as purpose-designed archives and forums for the presentation and sharing of local cultural knowledge and intangible cultural heritage (e.g. Cabral; 2011: Affleck & Kvan; 2008: Solanilla; 2008). In some cases, such sites are linked with memorialisation, as in the September 11 Digital Archive (http://911digitalarchive.org/) where memories of the tragic event and those who died are collected and shared (Walker; 2007: Foot, Warnick & Schneider; 2005). In other cases, documentation of oral histories and cultural practices is linked to preserving heritage and bolstering local identity and tourism, as in the *Mediterranean Voices* project in Southern Europe (http://www.medvoices.org/) (see also Robertson; 2006). With the advent of Web 2.0 technology from the late 1990s, such sites have become interactive, promoting user-generated content, soliciting comments, facilitating collaboration between different users, and linking with a host of social networking sites, video sharing sites, blogs and other web applications.

ICT and ICH in South Africa

It is, of course, no coincidence that such projects are mostly found in the developed world. On the technologically underdeveloped African continent, computer literacy, access to PCs and especially to the Internet, are still very low in comparison. In 2012, only 7% of the world's Internet users were located in Africa (*Internet World Stats*; 2012). It has been calculated that the aggregate band-width of an average African university equals that of a single European or North American household, and that the former pays 50 times more for far lower capacity than the latter (Song quoted in Alegi; 2012, p.210). In South Africa, 17.4% of the population had Internet access in 2012 according *to Internet World Stats* (2012), while other sources say the figure was closer to 20% (Speckman; 2012). However, mobile phone penetration is very high, and increasingly South Africans are accessing the Internet through their phones as smartphones and ordinary phones with Internet connectivity have spread rapidly within the past few years. *Mobile phones are fast becoming the African PC* (Greyling & McNulty; 2011a, p.266: see also 2011b). Even without Internet access, mobiles phones are powerful devices for the digital recording, storage, and dissemination of indigenous knowledge and intangible heritage, as almost all mobile phones today are equipped with camera, video, and voice recording functions, as well as bluetooth.

At the beginning of the post-apartheid era, the *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* (1996, sect. 5.2) recommended that living heritage should be permanently recorded and conserved within the formal heritage structure. Although the *White Paper* predates the widespread usage of the Internet, the recent *National Policy on the Digitisation of Heritage Resources* (2010, p.19) concludes that *it is fair to include the Internet into today's information environment as an* (sic) *practical alternative for the distribution of the products of heritage.* The latter policy includes in its scope digital born resources, as *today's records are tomorrow's heritage* (*Digitisation Policy*; 2010, p.12), but its main concern is the recording with digital technological devices of *born non-digital* resources, including those relating to living heritage. The policy even recommends the establishment

of a National Digital Repository for the Living Heritage; it views the emergence of digital heritage as an opportunity for a single and unified heritage management policy in a historical context of separation and division (*Digitisation Policy*; 2010, pp.12/13).

Most museums, heritage sites and memory institutions in South Africa have websites, some of them interactive, but the use of such sites as strategic tools for the community-based collection of intangible heritage material is rare. Among the exceptions is Sowetouprisings.com, an interactive website project associated with the Hector Pieterson Museum in Soweto. Developed in 2007 by the University of Witwatersrand fine art students, Ismail Farouk and Babak Fakhamzadeh, as part of an academic research project, this educational and commemorative on-line space is structured around routes – routes taken by the different groups of students on that fateful day of June 16, 1976, routes taken by the police, the funeral route taken in remembrance of the dead (Avalon Memorial Route), etc.. Viewers are invited to submit comments and identify further points of interest. A blog, administered mostly by Farouk, contains a variety of images (hosted on Flickr), research articles, short videos by the artists and audio files containing interview material with survivors. Anyone can upload material although few have done so; unfortunately, the site has not developed much in the past three years (see also Marschall; 2013).

The Ulwazi programme, initiated by Elizabeth Greyling and developed in conjunction with Niall McNulty, is funded by the eThekwini Municipality and administered through the municipal library system. Utilising open source and social media applications, this pioneering interactive web portal aims to develop user-generated content for compilation in an 'Indigenous digital library' (Greyling & McNulty; 2011b and 2011a: see also McNulty; 2013). Volunteer fieldworkers, mostly young people with some ICT skills, are deployed throughout the municipal area to conduct oral history interviews with older members of the community about history, cultural practices and other community issues. Supported by audio, and sometimes video, recordings, stories are written up and posted on the Internet in either English or isiZulu with short summaries in the respective other language. Members of the public can also submit information for posting on the site. The project involves working with learners at township schools, generating awareness about heritage and culture, while also developing ICT skills and media literacy.

The eNanda website project

eNanda Online and its modus operandi

The eNanda Online project shares many similarities with the Ulwazi programme; its technological infrastructure is likewise designed by McNulty; and its geographical focus overlaps, as Inanda is part of the eThekwini Municipality. However, being funded through research grants, eNanda Online is independent of the vagaries of local government politics and policy directives attached to municipal funding (McNulty; 2013, pp.51-52 and 63). In the long run, it is envisaged that it will accept a small advert from a suitable private sector enterprise to make the project financially self-sustainable indefinitely. Other differences include its focus on cultural heritage, tourism, and a commitment to complete bilingualism. Through its link with the Cultural and Heritage Tourism Programme, university student volunteers, some of them emanating from Inanda, will always play an important role in the collection of material, as well as training people in the community.

With the written consent of the participants, mobile phones are used to produce voice recordings of interviews, still pictures and sometimes video footage. In some cases, videos are recorded twice, in English and isiZulu, in other cases, verbatim translations are produced to attain full bilingualism. The long-term aim is a gradual move towards community self-documentation through student-facilitated awareness and training workshops in schools, churches and NGOs. Many people are already in the habit of taking pictures or videos of a wedding or ritual ceremony within their community, sometimes sharing them with family and friends. eNanda Online essentially invites local people to store and share some of this visual material with a broader public, soliciting feedback through the comment feature and integration with social media, notably Facebook and Twitter, and hence contributing to the promotion and transmission of age-old living heritage through cutting-edge technology.

Negotiating cultural identity

The foundational premise of the UNESCO *Convention* was that intangible cultural heritage all around the world is truly endangered. In contemporary South Africa, too, the intergenerational transfer of indigenous cultural knowledge is increasingly disrupted due to factors such as urban migration, fragmented family structures, HIV/Aids, the influence of the media and the general drift towards western values and life styles. Of course, the *Living Heritage Policy* (2009) is correct in stating that despite *...the colonial onslaught on living heritage, local communities have been managing their changing living heritage effectively for generations,* but scenarios such as *...the grandmother telling stories to young people around the fire, the potter making pots according to ancient patterns ...* (2009, p.14) are in reality increasingly rare in townships like Inanda. Discussions with learners at two local high schools revealed that many youngsters have little knowledge about traditional cultural beliefs and customs and are not much inclined to listen to the stories of elders. Surveys conducted through the eThekwini Municipal Library system confirm this observation (McNulty; 2013).

Only during important community events and ceremonies organised under the guidance of older members of the community, and in consultation with traditionalists (e.g. funerals, weddings, coming of age ceremonies, etc.) are young people inducted into the 'proper' ways of their community's culture. Thamo Mdlalose, a young tour operator from Inanda explained that 'How do you kill a goat?' is a question that might arise for many young men when suddenly expected to perform the ritual slaughtering of a sacrificial animal at a funeral (personal communication; 2012). A similar predicament is faced by young women who have never learnt how to brew traditional Zulu beer, an essential component in the communication with the ancestors and a prerequisite item for many cultural ceremonies.

Of course, this is not to suggest that youngsters might google how to perform a cultural ritual, but the increasing habit of browsing the Internet on mobile phones, watching videos that feature their friends, stumbling upon discussions about cultural traditions and possibly contributing to some of them, might become a new source of knowledge that complements more conventional channels of communication about cultural heritage. Statistical information derived from Google Analytics with respect to both eNanda Online and the Ulwazi programme shows that many users are searching for information on Zulu cultural traditions in isiZulu. eNanda Online draws an approximate monthly average of 5000 visitors, with the most popular posts being 'Zulu wedding', *umemulo* ('coming of age ceremony') and 'paying respect to the dead'; the latter is the most viewed webpage in isiZulu. The interactive dimension of eNanda Online still draws more comments in English than Zulu; reading through these comments is highly illuminating about the questions young people ask about their culture and the differences in meaning they attach to rituals and events. While the *Living Heritage Policy* (2009, p.48) emphasises the importance of formal education in promoting living heritage, a site such as eNanda Online could be considered an informal type of education which could, however, creatively be drawn into established formal educational channels to forge innovative and engaging modes of trans-generational transmission of living heritage.

The past decades have seen much debate in academia about distortions and misrepresentations of African culture and more fundamentally about issues of power in the research and representation of ethnic cultures (e.g. Clifford & Marcus; 1986). Museums and other memory institutions inevitably become interpreters of the symbolic and metaphorical meanings of artefacts and cultural heritage practices through decisions about the politics and poetics of exhibiting (Lavine; 1991: Hall; 1997). In the eNanda website project, the influence of the author, a cultural outsider, manifests itself in the conceptualisation of the thematic categories, the collection of material and the steering of student participants in certain directions, as well as in decisions about the presentation of the material, the choice of headlines, captions, coding, etc.. But it is important to note that eNanda Online avoids universalised narratives about customs and traditions written by masked authorities. All posts are implicitly presented as the personal perspectives of named individuals at specified points in time.

In this way, a diversity of views on intangible heritage practices and the meanings that individuals attach to them in relation to their own lives, will come to the fore over time, especially through the interactive dimensions of the site. Different interpretations, contradictions and contestations, not only among ordinary people, but even between traditional healers and cultural experts, reflect

local culture as dynamic and negotiated. [Plate 4] For cultural outsiders, including tourists, this might convey a sense of authenticity that contrasts with the static representations of Zulu culture and the essentialised exotic 'other' commonly found at cultural villages, in the tourist promotional media and even in some museum exhibitions. However, as in any online comment facility, there is ultimately no guarantee that the contributions are genuine. Postings from the public are monitored and approved by the project leader and team members, filtering out spam and racist, defamatory or otherwise unacceptable material, but no judgment call is made on the 'correctness' of the cultural heritage content.

This aspect of the website addresses one of the key concerns of researchers, policy makers and heritage conservation authorities, namely that the documentation and inventorying of intangible cultural heritage – as much as it is essential - can negatively lead to the 'fixing' of stories, the 'freezing' of traditions and the implicit legitimation or authentication of certain interpretations of cultural knowledge over others (e.g. *Living Heritage Policy*; 2009, p.12: Solanilla; 2008: Kurin; 2007). While all stakeholders agree on the dynamic, ever-changing character of intangible heritage, there is much debate on the acceptable degree of change, even within leading international authorities on intangible cultural heritage, such as ICOMOS (Truscott; 2013). eNanda Online places much emphasis on clearly dated recordings to facilitate the long-term monitoring and critical evaluation of evolutionary changes or disturbances of cultural elements, which the *Living Heritage Policy* (2009, p.32) highlights as an important objective in the safeguarding of living heritage.

Critique and challenges

Digital technology and the storage and sharing of data through the Internet are often associated with inclusiveness and the democratisation of knowledge (e.g. Alegi; 2012: van Veh; 2012), but these technologies are also associated with exclusion and limitations of access in their own right, especially in developing world contexts such as Inanda. Most schools in the township lack Internet access and where individuals are browsing the Internet through mobile phones the costs of bandwidth and poor connectivity remain constraining factors. Many older people are not only computer illiterate, but they are illiterate *per se*. All participants sign consent forms before their story, photo, or video is placed on eNanda Online, as is common practice with most websites of this nature and in line with the *Living Heritage Policy*'s (2009, p.16) insistence on 'active consent' and the UNESCO (2003) *Convention*'s requirement of 'free, prior and informed consent' from the bearer group. Obtaining credible evidence of community consent has been fraught with confusion and problems internationally (Rudolff & Raymond 2013), but even at the individual level, questions arise. In a community like Inanda, interviewees and

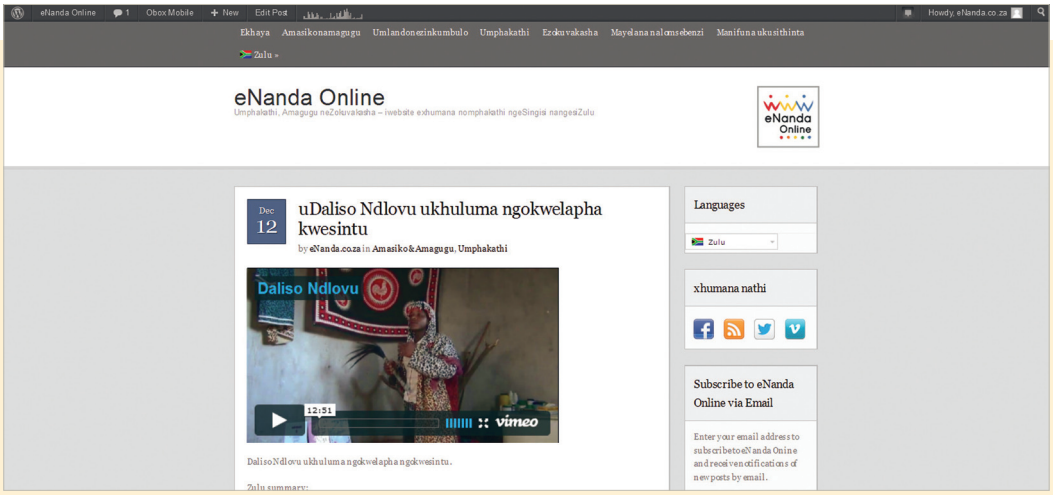


Plate 4
Screenshot of eNanda Online, isiZulu version of a post featuring Daliso Ndlovu, a traditional healer. Source: eNanda Online

cultural practitioners are often insufficiently aware of the potential abuse that can occur (e.g. re-publication of altered material, intellectual property theft, etc.) when making material available on the Internet. Despite explanations by project participants, one must ask whether these participants have really given their 'informed consent', especially in cases where people do not even know what the Internet is.

On the other hand, many young people are in the habit of sharing all kinds of images, videos and personal details about themselves and others with their 'friends' on Facebook, not necessarily always with the consent of affected third parties. The Durban eNanda Facebook fan page will inevitably be populated with much uploaded material for which no consent has ever been obtained. In short, ethical standards imposed by project administrators will almost certainly be ignored by those contributing through the interactive features of the site, which raises the issue of censorship and control versus authentic community voices and an independent process of community self-documentation.

Digital technologies and the Internet have added another dimension and much greater urgency to long-established debates about the multifarious legal, ethical and cultural ramifications of the inventorying, display or publication of intangible cultural heritage material. In fact, much of the scholarly literature on intangible cultural heritage deals with critical issues around ownership and intellectual copyright, implications in terms of human rights and the importance of secrecy in traditional culture, i.e. the consequences of making publicly visible what has traditionally been restricted to a select few (e.g. Brown; 2005: Silverman & Ruggles; 2007: Kurin; 2004: Deacon *et al*: 2004).

With reference to her Batlokwa case study, Keitumetse (2006, pp.166,167 and 169) argues that creating and publishing inventories of intangible cultural heritage can potentially degrade the cultural capital of communities, and destabilise the socio-cultural foundations upon which that heritage exists, because these processes make some elements of intangible heritage ubiquitous and hence decrease their existence and value within the local community context ('familiarity breeds contempt'). In some cases, the less knowledge there is about a cultural practice, the more valuable it becomes at both community and national levels. With reference to Walter Benjamin's famous essay (1936) on the impact of reproduction on the aura of the art work (or unique cultural heritage resource), it has been argued elsewhere that universal access both degrades and enhances the aura or perceived value – it depends on the audience and on what we mean by 'aura' (Marschall; 2013).

The expanded audience that results from sharing living cultural heritage material on the Internet can result in myriad advantages for the practitioners and the community, as points of contact, spaces of empathy and opportunities for support and networking arise (Solanilla; 2008, p.112). The website can also create awareness and garner support for local causes, potentially attracting development aid, or forging new supply chains for craft products, or identifying opportunities for the increasingly popular phenomenon of community-based volunteer tourism. One of the explicit objectives of the project relates to increasing the local community's chances of benefiting from the tourism generated by the Inanda Heritage Route. As the website provides direct access into local culture, it can help stimulate demand for cultural encounters not advertised by official tourism promotion channels, such as self-organised visits to traditional healers or taking part in cultural rituals and community events. Surveys regularly show that tourists seek more contact with local people and more authentic experiences of the host's culture (*Situation Analysis Report*; 2009: NTSS; 2011).

While this can result in much needed economic benefits and other forms of support for members of the local community, there is equally much potential for disaster. Given the area's high crime rate and poor infrastructure, as well as the lack of training and inadequate understanding of the tourism phenomenon within the community, local tourism authorities have devised various quality assurance methods and strategies to prevent tourists from becoming victims of either crime, unscrupulous service providers or other types of negative encounters that could adversely affect the image of the destination. The website that enables direct contact between tourists and local 'service providers', including those who perform cultural rituals, can potentially destroy what tourism authorities have spent much effort to build. Conversely, not all tourists are responsible, considerate visitors who have made the shift from 'people

who stare' to 'people who care' (Millar; 2011, p.735), and the website with its sometimes detailed information can lead to disruptive and disrespectful intrusions into community events and practices of living culture.

Conclusion

Although currently still a very marginal phenomenon, online forms of engagement are likely to increase dramatically in significance in South Africa, especially as they attract the younger generation, and as the most sophisticated mobile phones and digital devices of today are going to be the basic standard of tomorrow. Projects such as the eNanda Online website open up new possibilities and opportunities for the recording and sharing of oral history and living cultural heritage, storing and disseminating locally relevant archival resources, and facilitating dialogue between tourists and members of the community, especially through the interactive dimensions of the site. But only time will tell whether people will actually want to share their knowledge, submit material or leave comments on the site. A cursory glance at many other interactive web projects in the heritage field illustrates that even in the developed world, few seem to bother. In South Africa, Internet access will certainly expand over time, but so will the potential options for on-line engagement, as ever more applications and new interactive web-based projects compete for the attention of users.

Of course, eNanda Online will continue to grow through its integration with university programmes, and even if the shift towards community self-documentation and interactive engagement remains fledgling, the site will increasingly acquire value as a universally accessible reservoir of information on Inanda's history and cultural heritage. As an instrument for collecting the oral history and living cultural heritage associated with the area's historical sites, it responds to the NHRA's (1999) call for safeguarding the intangible dimension of tangible sites. Preserving and representing (e.g. through interpretation) the diverse meanings and customary beliefs and practices that communities attach to monuments and cultural heritage sites has become a key principle in current international heritage discourse (e.g. ICOMOS *Ename charter*; 2008).

This approach is pursued both to attain a more holistic understanding and appreciation of historical sites and as a way of safeguarding previously neglected and often vanishing aspects of local cultural heritage. Paradoxically, as Bortolotto (2010, pp.97-98) highlights, UNESCO considers globalisation a major threat to cultural diversity and the safeguarding of the intangible heritage, yet UNESCO itself represents a major globalising force through its international policies and bureaucratic apparatus, as well as through the introduction or imposition of external values and new ways of relating to the past and the inter-generational transmission of culture. The author shows with respect to the case study of Japan, how the terms and paradigms of international (western) heritage discourse are mapped onto the closest available local equivalent, yet often in an ill-fitting manner that leaves gaps and dissonances as they are improperly rooted in local experiences and world views.

The eNanda Online website is clearly part and parcel of this international heritage discourse and an instrument of its implementation; it represents another example of a globalising force, especially in conjunction with tourism which invariably fosters an externalised, reified, and to some extent materialistic relationship with culture. Turning living culture, a way of life, into intangible heritage, a resource to be safeguarded and exploited for socio-political or economic gain, is an instrument of modernisation and mark of modernity (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett; 2004.5, p.9). Graburn (2013) perceptively observed that heritage is the inverse of Bourdieu's (1990) concept of *habitus* (the way society creates attitudes). The latter embraces those aspects of culture that are unconsciously learnt, implicitly shared and individually embodied, while heritage is always consciously chosen, explicitly valued and shared – usually with an external audience in mind. One might argue that when people start seeing their own lived culture as 'heritage', something is already lost.

On a more positive note, the interest demonstrated by real and virtual visitors can lead to renewed pride in, and valuing of traditional culture, especially among young people. In any society, young people are the brokers of a new future, go-betweens of different cultural world views and invariably developers of hybrid value systems and practices. Their familiarity with ICT opens up new possibilities for modern 'uses' of old customs or

contemporary adaptations of traditional cultural practices. It is hoped that the eNanda project will in time lead to creative ideas and initiatives that safeguard intangible cultural heritage and integrate it with contemporary contexts and modern technologies, while equipping young people with marketable skills and better employment opportunities.

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