

SPEECH BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF ADM, ALDERMAN S. SOMYO ON THE OCASSION OF THE LAUNCH OF A BOOK ON THE 19th AND 20th CENTURY AFRICAN INTELLECTUALS OF SOUTH AFRICA AT KENNAWAY HOTEL IN EAST LONDON ON 27th SEPTEMBER 2007

All protocols observed

Amathole District Municipality initiated the Amathole heritage Initiative which arises from the Amathole District Municipality Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of 2003/04 with its LED and Environmental Sector Plan. The purpose was to develop heritage sites and routes in order to stimulate local economic development while simultaneously safeguarding the heritage resources.

Four heritage tourism routes such as King Phalo, King Sandile, Chief Maqoma and Makana (Makhanda) have been developed. This is done in honouring them and their contribution to a struggle against colonialism, oppression, land dispossession, and racial discrimination. The Initiative is being enhanced with the aim to unearth various layers of history and heritage in the district while also improving the conditions of the identified heritage sites.

A number of community-based heritage initiatives have been supported through grant funding support for community-based heritage projects. This funding aimed at assisting communities to identify and rehabilitate their heritage sites, erect memorials, and create information centres and community museums that will be visited by locals and the visitors. These projects are integral part of the four identified heritage routes in the district.

The 19th century and early 20th century public figures and intellectuals (including organic intellectuals) like Majeke, Ntsikane, Rev. Tiyo Soga, Dr. J.K. Bokwe, Rev. Elijah Makhiwane, Dr. W.B.M. Rubusana, John Thengo Jabavu, S.E.K. Mqhayi,

Gweki Tyamzashe, Philmi, D. Majombozi etc. are left out of the spectrum of memorialisation, thus, being erased in the minds of people. But with the introduction of the Early Modern African Intellectual Heritage Trail Project initiated by the Amathole District Municipality in partnership with the National Heritage Council the above-mentioned aspects of our history and heritage will be taken to the fore and get the attention and recognition it deserves. Then there will be a shift in the construction of the post-apartheid memorial landscapes, particularly in terms of historical epochs linked to that African intellectual heritage.

The afore-mentioned Early Modern African Intellectuals which are a product of two worlds, Western and African, are signifiers of what Frantz Fanon has described as the "progress of national consciousness among the people..." . The class created by the high breed of these traditions produced or paved the way for the emergence of new national consciousness against colonialism and later apartheid; and laid the foundation for public scholarship and culture in South Africa. On the contrary, if the role of these African Intellectuals cannot be recognized national consciousness that is produced through memorialisation in post-apartheid South Africa could be based on narrow interpretation of history and euphoria of creating national icons in the new political dispensation which so far excludes these individuals.

Avishai Margalit asserts: Every process of political transformation is accompanied by a tension between apprehension to forget and the apprehension to remember too much. Necessarily with every negotiated settlement lies the requirement to forget (Margalit, 1997).

Is the production of the post-apartheid memorial landscapes in South Africa trapped in this dilemma?

The identified individuals that form this project were public scholars of their time who contributed in various spheres of life. For ADM, this project is an integral part of Heritage Route Development which is part of Amathole Heritage Initiative. Though the project was initiated and started in the district (Amathole District Municipality) we view it as of national and international importance.

The book that we are launching today is the outcome of the first phase of the African intellectual heritage project which, among other things, unearth the African intellectual heritage, foreground its relevance and importance in the present. The project is multi-fold and aimed at addressing various aspects of heritage resources management. This project with the epochs it epitomises could add an impetus in the production of the post-apartheid memorial landscapes, and making it more comprehensive, meaningful and be a true representation of our history and heritage.

The project is linked to similar heritage projects that are undertaken within the district, province and country. Linkages, alignment and co-ordination assist in the enhancement of heritage resources management. This is also the case with regards to the envisaged 'Liberation Heritage Route' as the project of the Early Modern African Intellectual Heritage Trail mirror an important epoch which could be linked to the 'Liberation Heritage Route' and echo another dimension of the struggle for human emancipation, the role these individuals played and their influence to those who later became iconic figures associated with the mid 20th century struggle for liberation.

In our view, heritage resources play a major role in the production of the post-apartheid memorial landscapes, social cohesion, nation building, unity in diversity, reconciliation and in 'forging' a national heritage and identity that

transcend colour line. The primary benefits for communities have intangible significance; value and meaning that underpin unity in diversity.

In commemorating our heritage, South Africans are provided with an opportunity to celebrate their heritage and history while simultaneously promoting cultural diversity, social cohesion, nation building, nationhood, sense of pride and identity.

The end products of the project play a major role in informing the public about the identified individuals and their legacy. These products and the narratives of the identified sites would be educational, as heritage resources are systems of knowledge that inform and shape the people in a particular manner.

As heritage forms part of school curriculum for learners and there are tertiary institutions that are offering heritage and museum studies there will be a need to find a way of including the published work of the project into their material. This information can be used for intellectual growth and research purposes by different people and capacity building for senior citizens.

The focus of the project is on unearthing of other layers of our heritage while simultaneously safeguarding them rather than being purely an academic exercise. Thus, the identified sites associated with them and their legacies would need to be safeguarded for present and future generations.

The development of the Early Modern African Intellectual Heritage Trail Project adds value on the existing heritage resources and understanding. The research that is conducted, among other things, reflects the conditions of the identified

sites which will then be rehabilitated by the responsible structures taking into account conservation principles and heritage resources legislations.

The research mirrors the Statement of Significance of the identified sites which will help in motivating for grading and declaration. The relevant stakeholders will handle the grading and declaration process jointly with the provincial heritage manager of the South African Heritage Resources Agency as stated in the Act. The Statement of Significance will be used to determine the level of importance of the identified sites. The stakeholders will also develop a comprehensive Conservation Management Plan that will take into account a range of issues for sustainable development, utilisation and where possible local economic development.

Protection of these sites would be of high importance and thereby gathering against any un-coordinated development.

The identified sites will also be an integral part of the district and national heritage inventories. District Heritage Resources Inventory Project initiated by ADM intends to develop a comprehensive database of the available heritage resources in the district.

For the Early Modern African Intellectual Heritage Project, all forms of memorialisation would need to be exploited depending on the circumstances, institutions and other logistics. These forms shall include the following: memorial lectures, geographical name change, bursary or scholarship named after certain individuals, naming of certain hostels at tertiary institutions, naming of chancellor's chair, memorials etc.

The Early Modern African Intellectuals Heritage Trail Project involves a number of stakeholders, multidisciplinary in nature and has a potential to contribute to

socio-economic, cultural development and skills transfer in support of ASGISA and JIPSA. Heritage sector is one of the sectors that have potential to contribute significantly to the GDP. The packaging of this initiative and other heritage initiatives could be positioned in such a way that they become an integral part of sport tourism, especially for 2010 soccer world cup.

Heritage through tourism, particularly cultural tourism, cultural industry, hospitality industry, SMMEs, local economic development and film industry contributes to the GDP. Inspiring both economic envy and intellectual approbation, the Early Modern African Intellectuals Heritage Trail Project has a potential to create heritage products, many of which assert socio-cultural, economic and political issues.

The development of the Early Modern African Intellectuals Heritage Trail Project has potential to create conducive environment for Public and Private Partnership (PPP), Non-Profit Organization (NPO), Section 21 Companies, Community, Public, Private Partnership (CPPP) which will not merely contribute to job creation and poverty alleviation but also to the development of new entrepreneurs within tourism sector, cultural industry and hospitality industry. This partnership will be enhanced by empowering the local residents with skills; knowledge and training that will make them active participants in these sectors respectively.

Most importantly, communities ought to take the opportunities created by the initiative as, among other things, attempts to enhance the local economic development opportunities by creating job opportunities; joint business venture opportunities, community-based enterprise and facilitate regional tourism partnerships.

In attempting to contribute to local economic development and to the aims of ASGISA and JIPSA a challenge is to strike a balance between heritage resources

management and commercialization and commoditization of heritage resources through tourism and hospitality industries, as tourism may impact negatively on heritage and has potential to reconstruct history, reinforce ethnicity/tribalism and heritage for tourist interest. Thus, it is imperative to develop strategies that are aimed at striking a balance between heritage management and the above-mentioned sectors. For the above-mentioned opportunities to be realized there would be a need to link and align the project to other existing initiatives in the district, province and possible in the country for sustainable development.

Though heritage is an integral part of socio-economic and cultural development, economic spin-offs through heritage resources are by-products of heritage resources management. As the core of heritage resources management is about safeguarding the available heritage resources, social cohesion, nation building, play a major role in 'forging' national heritage and identity.

Heritage is by definition a highly politicized and contested phenomenon. The changes within heritage sector cannot be isolated from the broader transformation agenda of the post apartheid South Africa. However, in safeguarding the available heritage resources, we need to be objective.

In conclusion the intangible significance, links, and memories attached to the sites associated with individuals that form this study make them valuable in various ways to different people. The post-apartheid memorial landscapes assist in 'forging' national heritage and identity, as they nationalizing history while simultaneously historicizing the nation.

The African intellectual heritage is one aspect of our rich history that has not been fully researched, documented and safeguarded for present and future generations. This

layer of heritage needs to be unearthed, promoted and put to the fore for transformation of heritage sector, comprehensive heritage resources management and production of knowledge. The African intellectual heritage discourse which epitomises different epochs has a long tradition which shaped present in different ways.

Lastly, congratulations to all those who have made efforts for the success of this day.

I thank you