

## Editorial

### ***The Journal of Cultural Heritage and Development* – Volume 1, Issue 1 Culture, Heritage, and Development: Forging Pathways to a Shared Future**

On behalf of the Editorial Team, it is with boundless joy and gusto that we present to you the maiden publication of *The Journal of Cultural Heritage and Development*. This periodical materializes timeously because it serves as a bold initiative, dedicated to expanding and hollowing out an understanding of the vibrant interaction between culture, heritage, and sustainable development. At a time when global engagement progressively acknowledges and embraces the significance of identity, memory, and cultural continuity and diversity, our unveiling of this issue marks a momentous contribution to discourses relating to the establishment of inclusive, resilient, and culturally grounded societies.

This inaugural issue reflects the journal's undertaking, which is to stimulate and give an impetus to multiscious scholarship and innovative research focused on the safeguarding, promotion, interpretation, and celebration of the diversity of cultural heritage in all its forms. These scholarly offerings span varied milieus and themes that range from digital remembrance practices in Zimbabwe to indigenous ecological knowledge and the revitalization of endangered languages, validating how cultural heritage contributes in aiding as a potent engine for social, educational, and environmental development.

## **Key Themes and Scholarly Insights**

### **1. Digital Remembrance and Narratives from the Subaltern**

The first piece, *“Digital Memorials: The Internet as a New Space for Remembrance and Counteremory in Zimbabwe,”* explores how digital technologies are restructuring heritage practices and memory-making from below in postcolonial settings. By means of social media, online archives, and digital storytelling, Zimbabweans are reclaiming and retelling suppressed histories and fostering cross-border dialogues. The article high spots how digital spaces can capacitate silenced communities to contest dominant, state-sanctioned narratives and democratize the act of remembering and re-membering the dis-membered.

### **2. Naming, Identity, and Cultural Expression**

In *“Antonomasia and Personal Naming among the Ndebele of Lupane,”* the author explores the representative and figurative depth of naming in Ndebele culture. Through the use of Cognitive Metaphor Theory, the inquiry exposes how the substitution of personal names with eloquent descriptors replicates individual distinctiveness, social roles, and lived experiences. This work locates naming as a living heritage practice that strengthens communal bonds and transmits cultural values.

### **3. Indigenous Knowledge and Environmental Stewardship**

*“Reviving Indigenous Wisdom: The BaTonga’s Role in Environmental Conservation”* scrutinizes the Indigenous ecological knowledge of the BaTonga, elucidating how ancestral practices offer treasured perceptions into sustainable environmental management. The article serves as an advocacy for the official acknowledgment and acceptance of Indigenous Knowledge Systems and their incorporation into current safeguarding policies and strategies, accentuating their relevance in addressing climate and ecological challenges.

### **4. Reconciling Heritage Management Frameworks**

The article *“Bridging the Divide: Western and Indigenous Systems of Heritage Management in the African Context”* critically examines the often-contentious connection between colonial preservation and management models and Indigenous heritage practices. It propositions an amalgam, a community-centered stratagem that tributes and embraces resident traditions but at the same time integrating Western scientific conservation methods, calling for collective stewardship as the pillar of effective heritage preservation.

### **5. Media, Representation, and African Identity**

The representation of African Identity in Western creative works of fiction and film has long been at the heart of Western imagination, where Africans are presented as the Other. *“The Representation of Africa’s Intangible Heritage in Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (2008)”* proffers a critical examination of how African cultures are largely and negatively portrayed in Western animated media. While detecting and isolating persistent stereotypes, the paper furthermore exposes occasions where the film affirms African values such as community, resilience, and oral tradition. It emphasizes the importance of genuine self-representation and the need for African voices in global storytelling.

### **6. Language Revival and Educational Equity**

Closing the issue is *“Enhancing Inclusivity and Cultural Diversity: Deminoritisation, Revitalisation and Digitalisation of formerly Marginalised Languages in Teacher Education Institutions”*. This article addresses the exigent mission of re-energizing marginalized languages within Zimbabwe’s teacher training colleges. The study gives emphasis to the transformative potential of digital tools in language safeguarding and promotion, while calling for curricular restructurings that uphold linguistic diversity and promote cultural equality and equity in education.

## **Forward Impetus**

This inaugural issue lays a sturdy foundation for future scholarship at the intersection of culture, heritage, and development. As the journal further develops, we are dedicated to positioning voices from the Global South, advancing decolonial methodologies, pushing boundaries, and fostering partnerships among researchers, policymakers, cultural practitioners, and local communities. We invite sustained engagement from academics and advocates who share our vision of cultural heritage as a living, evolving force that transforms and shapes equitable and sustainable futures.

We extend our wholehearted indebtedness to the authors, peer reviewers, and readers whose commitment has made this publication possible. Together, we can reimagine heritage not as a relic of the past, but as a vital, dynamic force that inspires, connects, and transforms.

**Jacob Mapara and Josiline Chigwada**