

BaTonga Culture: A Rich Heritage

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Abstract

There is a tendency in which so called ‘developed’ ethnic groups, given their economic, political and social advantage placing them at the ‘center’, are the chanters of development even for the groups considered to be at the periphery. Ironically, in heritage terms, so called marginalized groups have had much of their heritage less contaminated by forces of modernity as has been the case with much of the BaTonga culture. This article explores the BaTonga culture and heritage as the Zimbabwean aquaculture from which its consumption, preservation and use can benefit other ethnic groups in the country. Using results from studies by Saidi (2016a) as well as complementary studies by Mashingaidze (2013) and Ndlovu (2013), this article establishes the richness of BaTonga culture which subsequently feeds the rich Zimbabwe multicultural heritage. The article argues that heritage utilization reflects the active participation of its owners pointing to the character of the culture making heritage management a priority for any African country seeking its true identity. Further, the article argues that a rich heritage is a shared commodity regardless of ethnic-specific dichotomies in oriented communities like Zimbabwe. Given this basis, the article shows that public spaces, media and the education curriculum are expected to uphold and incorporate all aspects of heritage such as BaTonga cultural realities in order to foster tolerance, acceptance as well as visibility and ultimately cultural and economic development of all ethnic groups in nation building.

Key Words: heritage, culture, ethnic, BaTonga, development, aquaculture