

Heritage and Values

A Practical Case Study in De Rust

Introduction

In considering the issue of the role played by “Heritage” in the preservation of buildings and other artefacts it is important to note that what “Heritage” is to one person is not necessarily “Heritage” to someone else from a different value system in the same society.

The above is reflected globally in a number of ways where items having historical “Heritage” value to one community may not necessarily be of similar importance to other groupings within the same broad community.

Much research has been carried out relating to the above and in this instance I will use as a basis the work carried out by Professor Clare Graves of Union College in New York shortly after World War 2 using in depth interviews with returning servicemen and women. These individuals had all experienced very different environments and values around the world and provided Professor Graves with a new way of looking at “**Human Values**”.

Professor Graves identified an open-ended system with eight different levels of values using a double helix approach linked to DNA including the following:

- Level A-N Beige: The Basic Conditions of Existence (Individual Values)**
- Level B-O Purple: The Tribe and Role of the Chief (Communal Values)**
- Level C-P Red: Unrestricted Power & Authority as in Warlords (Individual)**
- Level D-Q Blue: A Sense of Order and Stability (Communal Values)**
- Level E-R Orange: The Role of Enterprise and Progress (Individual Values)**
- Level F-S Green: The Role of Nature and the Group (Communal Values)**
- Level G-T Yellow: A Systems Approach with Interconnected Groups (Evolving)**
- Level H-U Turquoise: A Holistic Worldview where Everything is Connected**

In terms of the various levels the **A-N, C-P, E-R and G-T** are seen as being the **individualistic systems with the B-O, D-Q, F-S and H-U** being the **communal ones**. In considering the above each system leads to the next as in the gearbox of a car, where individuals can move up and down depending on the stresses or otherwise of their conditions of existence at a particular time. In many cases there is a “**core value**” with other values present which can reappear from time to time as life conditions change.

Based on the above the issue of “**Heritage and Values**” is more than just preserving what a particular section of society considers important at a particular time. As societies evolve their perceptions of “Heritage” can differ greatly as they move along the values spectrum. We therefore, need to ensure that the issue is seen from a multi-dimensional perspective in

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our multi-faceted 21st Century world of many differing values, and certainly not from “one size fits all” as is the case in many societies both developed and developing. .

Using the Above Approach in a Practical Case Study

In considering a integrated approach to the issue of “**Heritage and Values in South Africa**” it is worth noting that following the initial research by Professor Graves this approach was further refined and developed in collaboration with Dr Don Beck from the United States.

Don Beck visited South Africa over thirty times over 15 years from the early 1980’s until the late 1990’s while the country was undergoing a major socio-political transition. During this period Dr Beck consulted widely both with business and politicians, especially during the transition to our new democracy. During this period he wrote the book “**Spiral Dynamics**” with one of his doctoral students Christopher Cowan, also from the US.

It was during this period that I worked closely with Don Beck in implementing the “Values Approach” in a number of companies where I was involved at senior executive level. This included the planning and building of a fully integrated workers village in Middelburg, Transvaal for our company Middelburg Steel and Alloys (part of the Barlow Rand Group). In 1983 this was the first integrated company owned village for workers in the country and provided both married and single accommodation for those employed at MS&A, valued in today’s terms at over R 120 million.

At the same time we also developed an integrated program “**MS&A 2000**” looking forward to the turn of the century using the values approach as the basis of our communication. This was so successful that our Chairman, the late John Hall was requested to Chair the National Peace Accord which was formed to carry out important consultations during the transitional period. This approach was also used successfully within the Barlow Rand Group of Companies which at the time employed over 225 000 people at all levels in our various operating divisions.

This knowledge base was then used to set up the “**Global Values Network**” which was formed around a multi-disciplinary international team in order to further research the issue of values. This included how to apply these results in a wide variety of fields around the world including Brazil and the Philippines as well as Europe and North America.

One of the important findings made in the GVN Group research was that globally over 65% of the world’s population in the developing nations fall into the first three values levels. The balance of 35% comprising the next three levels, include most of the developed world and the emerging middle class in the developing world including both China and India.

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The key question then is how does one relate to the different values levels in terms of Heritage and how are conflicting views around the issue resolved in order to preserve artefacts and ideas which are seen as important to each individual group of values?

Reconciling Heritage and Values in South Africa

In considering South Africa as a microcosm of the world (**Mandela's "Rainbow Nation"**) it is important to apply the values approach in all walks of life and at all levels of society. Too often we believe that our "worldview" is the only one that matters and we discount those values espoused by others with whom we do not agree.

The concept of an orchestra is appropriate here, where different musicians have different but equally important roles to play. The same attribute applies in sports teams where the varying roles often require very different skills and abilities.

It is with the above in mind that we return to the issue of Heritage and how it is perceived by different players in society. Some of the questions could be:

- **Why is it that certain individuals are passionate about preserving the environment and others do not seem to understand or even care?**
- **Why do some individuals understand the need to preserve history with all its good and bad aspects while others only want to know of the here and now?**
- **Why do some companies assist with corporate social responsibility, bursaries and in-house training while others do not have a focus in this area but only on short term financial gain?**
- **Why do some organisations and individuals care about preserving "their heritage" and others do not seem to be aware of this aspect of life?**

The above are some of the key issues in today's "**Global Village**" and are often magnified through the media and fake news". It is therefore, extremely important that new practical applications need to be developed which are multi-value while at the same time reflecting the needs of an increasingly multi-cultural society at both the global and local levels.

A Practical Application of Heritage Values in the Real World

Bearing the above issues in mind we will now consider a practical application where the issue of "Heritage" is seen as important in a small rural community like De Rust in the South Eastern region of the Western Cape. De Rust was established in the late 1800's and is situated at the foot of the Swartberg mountain range at the entrance to Meiringspoort which is the gateway between the Klein Karoo and Great Karoo on the N9 between Oudtshoorn and Beaufort West.

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The original village of De Rust has some 300 residential stands and a population of around one thousand. The majority of the buildings in De Rust were built in the early 1900's with the Dutch Reformed Church being a provincial heritage site. Another designated building is the Old Mill which is located on the farm Voelgesang adjoining De Rust.

The settlement of Blomnek was developed by the National Government prior to 1994 and has a mix of formal and informal housing with a population of around six thousand. There are as far as it can be ascertained, no dwellings of more than 60 years old in the settlement. Blomnek is almost totally reliant on work opportunities from the surrounding farms and the village and currently experiences high unemployment, particularly among the youth.

The role of "Heritage" needs to be conceived and built around sustainability and this means that any initiative must have a positive job creation element linked to it. As mentioned before the term "Heritage" means different things to different values sets and in De Rust many people view it as a hindrance to doing their own thing. In addition, many believe it is more expensive to preserve the old (particularly old buildings) which is not entirely true. However, a multi-faceted communication element needs to be pushed strongly in terms of the "**why heritage**" to all members of the community including those who have previously shown little or no support for this approach and have very different values.

In wishing to create a positive Heritage environment in De Rust one needs to emphasize the case of Prince Albert where property prices for similar properties to De Rust are far higher. In many ways De Rust has a superior geographic location and tourist potential to Prince Albert but this potential has not been fully utilised. However, the socio-economic mix of the Village is changing with increasing significant investment in heritage properties. This then provides a sound economic argument for having De Rust declared a "**Heritage Sensitive Area**" as the return on investment is a key component of the integrated approach.

In addition to the above, the approach by the Provincial Government of the Western Cape is mainly driven from the **Blue Order - DQ Value** (see draft document appended) rather than considering a fully integrated approach where all value systems can buy in to the concept. Officials at both provincial and local government with Heritage responsibilities at both the local and provincial level are often short on resources (staff and budget) as well as being reluctant to step out of line and make a mistake, so too often remedial action is lacking.

Not only is the Draft document not multi-values based but looking at the requirements it is doubtful if too many communities and their municipal authorities have the required skills and resources to move ahead on preserving heritage properties. This could result in exactly the reverse effect to what is anticipated with heritage being a casualty of this approach.

The De Rust Project 2018

In considering using De Rust as a practical Heritage Project the size of the village and the fact that over 85% of all properties were built in the early 1900's provides a very strong case for an initiative of this type. Where in most towns "Heritage" properties are separated by more modern buildings, this is not the case in De Rust and we believe provides a strong motivation to proceed with such a project. De Rust is also ideally situated near Oudtshoorn but within an hour driving distance of Prince Albert, the Swartberg Pass, the Kango Caves and other local Klein Karoo tourist attractions providing ideal tourism opportunities.

In the past extensive work was carried out in De Rust to compile a "**Heritage Register**" including over 150 properties. This exercise was carried out by architectural students from the Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth. The original project was carried out over 10 years ago and we are planning to update this through an initiative with the architectural faculties of either the University of the OFS or Nelson Mandela University in Port Elizabeth.

De Rust already has two Grade 2 listed sites the Dutch Reformed Church and the "Old Mill" at Voelgesang which fall under Heritage Western Cape. The balance of the properties fall into the Grade 3 category which fall directly under the local authority and the local Heritage Association in Oudtshoorn, which is one of the few active groups of its type in the country.

It is considered that the cost of carrying out an update of the Heritage Register will be in the region of between R 30 000 and R 40 000. This includes a team of eight final year students and one academic assisting for a week including travel and accommodation costs. Following various discussions it has been suggested that it may be possible to source some of the required funding from the Western Cape Government through Heritage Western Cape.

Following the field work it is anticipated that the students involved should use the De Rust Project as a university project which would go towards their year-end results. In addition, to collecting the basic data this would need to be collated including photographs and grades where appropriate. It would then be possible to use this data as a "starting point" with Heritage Western Cape in terms of having De Rust declared a "**Heritage Sensitive Area**".

As an added benefit the project could bring a new integrated approach to how heritage issues are approached and managed. The current Western Cape Draft Regulations (attached at Annexure) are primarily out of the "Blue Value" system and exclude the other values levels where strong buy-in is required from the community involved. This needs to be expanded to include the major value systems as part of a fully integrated approach.

It is suggested that each of the value systems could be incorporated as follows:

- **Level A-N Beige: The Basic Conditions of Existence:** This level in South Africa includes the SAN and their sacred places but also covers many of today's unemployed who are also struggling to survive.
- **Level B-O Purple: The Tribe and Role of the Chief:** Includes tribal customs and burial sites among others and includes many residents in the tribal areas of the country. A good example is the controversy caused by the recently released film **"The Wound"** looking at tribal rituals and beliefs showing the importance of this system.
- **Level C-P Red: Unrestricted Power as in Warlords:** Generally this value system does not have any appreciation of "Heritage" –**We demand action NOW including State Capture and other related issues such as corruption. A good example is the student unrest at UCT and Wits Universities during 2017.**
- **Level D-Q Blue: A Sense of Order and Stability:** Statues and monuments of past "hero's" – the Voortrekker Monument and Freedom Park and the rapidly emerging middle class in both government and business.
- **Level E-R Orange: The Role of Enterprise and Progress:** Includes buildings and technological achievements including many of those formally employed in business, both corporate and other. New technologies play a major role in this value system.
- **Level F-S Green: The Role of Nature and the Group:** Eco-friendly approaches and artefacts and "Green" NGO's. Also involves organisations and individuals involved in exposing corruption such as OUTA and the Black Sash.
- **Level G-T Yellow: A Systems Approach with Interconnected Groups:** All of the values mentioned above. This value is only found in a small group of individuals – from the GVN research data this includes less than 1% of people globally.
- **Level H-U Turquoise: A Holistic Worldview where Everything is Connected:** Includes the universe and everything contained in it. A handful of individuals working together for the greater good. **Very rare** – people such as Jan Smuts and others with similar highly integrative holistic worldviews.

In order to move forward with the project it is suggested that the properties identified in the original "Heritage Register" should be used in Phase 1 with Phase 2 including the balance of the properties in De Rust identified as having a intrinsic "Heritage Value".

The above paper provides a new values template, based on the extensive research by Professor Clare Graves and Dr Don Beck over the past 60 years on how to re-look at the issue of Heritage in our rapidly evolving and changing world in the 21st Century. Increasingly the "old concepts" do not work any longer and this is seen around the world in many different ways and in many contexts from politics to economics and the environment.

Don Beck is of the opinion that in South Africa we have the full spectrum of all the above values present across the country from A-N Beige Survival to the Yellow G-T Systems Approach. This in all probability is greater than in any other country on the globe.

Some Broad Conclusions

In considering the issue of **“Heritage and Values in the 21st Century”** it is critical to be able to incorporate, as far as possible, all the differing “value systems” in order to move forward. Old thinking patterns are proving unworkable in many different global settings from politics to business and the environment as well as many other spheres of human activity. ***It is also important to look at the first three value systems as being “traditionalist” with the following three being “modern” and the final two being “evolving post-modern”.***

The above ideas are important to consider as being a “way forward” in our rapidly evolving environment both at the global and local levels. New challenges require new approaches in all spheres of life including the issue of Heritage and how to enhance its role and reach.

In South Africa we have an ideal opportunity to recast our future as a country while preserving our “various” heritages both past and present going from the San to the technological age of Artificial Intelligence and the Internet. However, in order to achieve this objective we are all required to step outside our respective values boxes and consider how the whole can be enhanced and built upon for the future.

South Africans throughout our varied history have a reputation for being an adaptable people who when “**life conditions**” are tough, manage to navigate through difficult periods to move the country forward. This is one such opportunity which I believe should be taken on as a challenge – the preservation of our Nations Heritage could depend on it.

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De Rust – Western Cape

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References:

Spiral Dynamics: Mastering Values, Leadership and Change by Dr Don Beck and Christopher Cowan For more information on the **“Values Approach”** this can be accessed on www.spiraldynamics.org or via Don Beck at drbeck@spiraldynamics.org

CD on Heritage Resources in Prince Albert, Western Cape – available if required

Western Cape Government: Draft Regulations Relating to Consultations on Heritage Resources 2017