



## **Decolonial strategies in heritage management: A case of the Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site.**

A Research Report submitted to the Department of History of Art and Heritage Studies, Wits School of Arts, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (in Heritage Studies) (by coursework and research report)

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**Declaration**

I declare that this is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of the Arts (Heritage Studies) (Coursework and Research Report) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Ethics protocol No: WSOA200304

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Revai Boterere

Date

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## **Abstract**

This study looks at the implications of a decolonial approach in heritage management, questioning how a decolonial thinking can shift the way the Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site is managed. Through a predominantly qualitative research paradigm in the form of a case study design, both primary and secondary data sources were examined to enable an analysis focusing on the decolonial discourse and management of Great Zimbabwe. The study was motivated by an existing body of theory widely criticising colonially informed systems of management that alienate the intangible concerns of indigenous populations, and for side-lining local communities and their indigenous knowledge on the periphery and thereafter prioritising Western management approaches. Indigenous populations value the stories that give meaning to cultural sites and not necessarily only their physical fabric. I argue that management of heritage should be all encompassing to cater for both tangible and intangible values, and how to conserve them through institutional and local communities' collaborations.

There are some possibilities, through the deployment of decolonial thinking to involve the community in the management of heritage. While efforts to include local communities have been made at Great Zimbabwe by the site's management, these were largely superficial, and the local communities are still largely side-lined in major decisions that affect the site. While it is possible to integrate Western and decolonial approaches in heritage management, it is a case of easier said than done as there are challenges to effectively involve the community. Therefore, the management of Great Zimbabwe will necessarily need to negotiate and mediate a number of conflicts at different levels: between the different local communities, national interest and local ownership, tourists and hosts, international and local priorities, different legislation and guidelines, tangible and intangible heritage, 'traditional', Western, colonial and decolonial approaches.

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## **Abbreviations**

|        |                                                                                                |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AHD    | Authorised Heritage Discourse                                                                  |
| ICCROM | International Centre for the study of the Preservation and Restoration<br>Of Cultural Property |
| ICOMOS | International Council on Monuments and Sites                                                   |
| ICH    | Intangible Cultural Heritage                                                                   |
| NMMZ   | National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe                                                     |
| RDCS   | Rural District Council                                                                         |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation                               |
| OUV    | Outstanding Universal Value                                                                    |
| ZTA    | Zimbabwe Tourism Authority                                                                     |

# Chapter One

## Situating the context of the study

### 1.1 Introduction

The concept of ‘heritage’ has proved to be complex and paradoxical (with seemingly competing characters of tangible and intangible) (Shepherd, 2008) – often implying that, what is inherited turns out to be problematic in practice and posing challenges to overseers of heritage sites. Heritage is a profoundly political issue, highly controversial and deeply contested, at the same time as its production is located within the discourses of knowledge and power. This concept is intrinsically linked to the reassurance of political, social, ethnic and national identities (Laely et al., 2018). Heritage management in the case of Zimbabwe, like it is with many other southern African countries, assumes the inherited western systems of management from the colonial period which are proving to be problematic particularly on the preservation of the intangible itineraries in the post colony. Colonial philosophies of cultural heritages valued physicality (monumentalism), collection and preservation of cultural objects for purposes of display and what Smith (2006) calls ‘authorized management’ of cultural resources. Such a philosophy is criticized for alienating the intangible concerns of indigenous populations, and for side-lining local communities and their indigenous knowledge on the periphery and thereafter prioritising scientific management approaches (Chipangura, 2018; Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999; Sinamai, 2017).

However, I argue that indigenous populations value the stories that give meaning to cultural sites and not necessarily only their physical fabric. According to Smith (2006), heritage is a complex cultural interaction between places, people and memory. It upholds and maintains community identity and cohesion (Chipangura, 2019). Therefore, management of heritage should be all encompassing by looking at both tangible and intangible values and how to conserve them through institutional and local communities’ collaborations (Chipangura, 2018). Community participation in heritage management is taken in view of the background that, before the advent of colonisation there were solid traditional systems that ensured the survival of sacred places intact and passing them on to succeeding generations. During the precolonial period, “taboos, restrictions, rituals and sustainable use in the past can be credited as having been some of the traditional management systems that were in place” (Chipangura, 2018:387). Thus, instead of abandoning indigenous knowledge systems that informed heritage

management in the past – there is need for synergies to ensure the conservation of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage (Chipangura et al., 2017); (Chipangura, 2018).

Post-independence cultural heritage management in Zimbabwe has primarily been concerned with preserving heritage sites from a technical point of view with little attention on the cultural significance of such heritages and value to local communities. As a result, post-independence Zimbabwe has been characterized by a myriad of heritage contestations related to use which have been attributed to the ills of the inherited colonially informed systems of management (Chipangura, 2018; Fontein, 2016; Katsamudanga, 2003; Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999a).

## **1.2 Background to the study**

In precolonial Zimbabwe, there were presumably ways of managing heritage across the country before its colonial occupation in 1890. There have always been ways of managing Great Zimbabwe monuments, ways which we can have some form of continuity that still speaks to the present communities. Sacred sites like Great Zimbabwe for example were protected through a series of restrictions and taboos as mentioned above (Chipangura, 2018; Ndoro, 2001). Thus, colonial rule did not mark a beginning to heritage management in the country. Neither did its end in 1980 earmark a break from the old ways of heritage management and what heritage meant to the local Zimbabweans who lived at and in the vicinity of Great Zimbabwe. Following the attainment of political independence, the new governing authorities continued with a colonially informed system of managing heritage as desired by colonial regimes - a scheme that is technical and run by experts (Ndoro, 2005). To further complicate the matter, cultural sites like Great Zimbabwe national shrine have been inscribed as World Heritage Sites for their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and are inclined to follow the dictates of the international conventions, a position which makes these sites also open not only to the insular community but to a broader public than the local people for educational, political, social and tourism purposes (Reyes, 2019). Consequently, the current managing authorities face the task of incorporating the local community and their indigenous knowledge<sup>1</sup> of engaging heritage sites into the prioritised international guidelines and frames of operations.

Great Zimbabwe monuments have intricate layers of history, and its past developments have created a complex and contested heritage landscape in terms of its management and use (Huffman, 1981; Tangri, 1990). It is managed by the National Museums and Monuments of

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<sup>1</sup> I have used the term referring to local systems of knowing that is, the traditional wisdom of the local people unique to ethnic groups in Zimbabwe which have been orally shared since pre-colonial period.

Zimbabwe (NMMZ) which has scientific power derived from its legal standpoint (Chipangura, 2018; Chipangura et al., 2017). The NMMZ however, has a complicated relationship with various stakeholders including government officials, political parties, visitors, international regulatory boards, academic institutions, and the local community. There are contestations that emanate from using the site. As the overseers of heritage in Zimbabwe - NMMZ has the ultimate authority endowed by law but within their authority there are other voices (local communities) demanding a stake in the site (Chipangura, 2018; Fontein, 2016, 2006; Katsamudanga, 2003; Ndoro, 2005, 2001; Sinamai, 2017). A fundamental question is how the community can be integrated into the management of the shrine, not just assimilating into the power discourse by just inviting on consultation basis, but rather allowing the local community to reflect on how the site was managed before the advent of colonial systems and presumably to consider how they might want to see the shrine in future. In this decolonial moment<sup>2</sup>, community collaborations and community participation are being actively advocated for by many scholars as alternative methodologies, (see; Chipangura, 2019, 2018; Mataga, 2018). Colonial systems of power have worked to dominate indigenous epistemologies and cultural systems in the name of modernity and development (Katsamudanga, 2003; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999). Decoloniality offers alternatives to the problems arising in the post-colonies left by the colonial dogma. Tlostanova and Mignolo (2009) posit that the problems that concern the decolonial option are those that have been set up by the modern/colonial matrix of power, and they are addressed through the shift in the geopolitics of knowledge that is embedded in decolonial thinking and knowing.

There are many ways managing authorities can allow people to use the site – ways that do not cause harm to the physical outlook, and yet still spiritually connect the people with their past. Locals should be able to access their site through active participation, through ritual use and other methods. The idea here is that through these intangible practices, communities can also actively use the place beyond just looking at and safeguarding the physical structure of the monument. Decoloniality has a potential to destabilize the current power relations at Great Zimbabwe. Decoloniality supports shared authority in terms of research design and management of the shrine (Chipangura, 2019). It proposes that the local communities contribute to ways in which heritage should be done vis-a-vis what professionals offer in management plans or strategies. Chipangura (2019:8), in his latest contribution towards

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<sup>2</sup> I use this term to refer to a time from when the colonial project has been opposed through different anti-colonial movements and decolonisation efforts and it is an on-going process.

decolonizing archaeology, stresses that “community engagements do not necessarily reject the tenets of scientific inquiry, but rather challenge the legacy of colonialism”. Knowledge production within decolonial initiatives is evenly distributed - it is produced collaboratively and not monolithically by experts (Chipangura, 2019). The current dominant system used at Great Zimbabwe is ‘authorised management’. Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD), as postulated by (Smith, 2006), involves setting up legislations, scientific management and subscribing the management of heritage sites to certain given Acts or bodies of law driven by experts (archaeologists, conservators, surveyors, professional heritage managers), world heritage conventions such as the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Centre for the study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), Burra Charter, and/or the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), which form the global discourse of the authorised set up (Ndoro, 2005). This study questions how decolonial thinking can shift the way the Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site is managed. The decolonial option works by recognising that communities can have equal voice in managing the shrine. In this case, equality in the decolonial moment is about making local communities speak together with the experts in designing how Great Zimbabwe shrine is supposed to be managed and used.

Local communities living around Great Zimbabwe (the Charumbiras, Mugabes, Murinyes and Nemamwas,) have arguably been involved at Great Zimbabwe, but what is important to ask is whether they have been involved on an equal footing, benefitted from the involvement or if it is just a question of mitigating conflicts. As shown by some critical social theorists (Maldonado-Torres, 2011; Mignolo, 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a; Tlostanova and Mignolo, 2009), decoloniality is a process of negotiating, and in this case negotiating the power imbalances that exist at Great Zimbabwe in the post-colonial Zimbabwe. It is evident that in post-independence some members of the local communities have been involved at the site and were allowed to set up a theme park<sup>3</sup>, the ‘Shona village’ – as an effort by experts to show the kind of possible way of life lived during Great Zimbabwe era (with traditional dances, a traditional healer, and artefacts which can be found in a traditional Shona village) - and a curio shop, however, that does not wholly fulfil the decolonial cause. This model of a ‘living

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<sup>3</sup> During my site visit, this was the kind of language used by the experts involved at the site to refer to these activities established at the site. The Shona village is an ethnographic depiction of continuing traditional lifestyles since the Great Zimbabwe period to present day.

museum’ is arguably driven by experts for an environmental, social and economic sustainability agenda to ‘improve livelihoods’. Decoloniality transcends giving people such superficial opportunities, rather it allows for increased chances of a less-hierarchical way of thinking through power relations and how people are empowered or take on agency - it speaks on shared knowledge production (Chipangura, 2019). Community involvement in decision making at Great Zimbabwe is still largely done on a consultative basis.



*Fig 1. The Shona Village, picture author's own.*

As much as local communities acknowledge the site as an important national resource for tourism, they still hold the place in high esteem because the place is still important in their spiritual livelihoods. It is a shrine, a place of worship, and is central to their religious and many other sacred activities. Local communities wish to continue to use the place for their traditional rituals, see insert below:

*Patakaziva kuti Great Zimbabwe yakatikoshera from a traditional perspective, tine a history yekuti tine vakuru vedu vanga varimo. Zvikaranga zvinoda kuti zviitwe apo neapo zvichi batsirawo kuti mvura yedu inaye. But since ichinzi haisi yedu zvakanyanya isu chete wemuno asi kuti ndeye nyika, ndoo panoti gozhei because pane zvinenge zvichida kuti zviitwe nesu vakachengetedza nekuti madzitateguru*

*vaaiwa vokutenderera, vaibva umu vachienda kune dzimwe nzvimbo wachidzoka and kuna wana masvikiro akadai. Asi hazvizoiti nekuti pane patino gumira nemutemo. But kazhinji zvazvo ndoo panenge paine chishuwiro kuti deno zvanga zvagona kuti batsira tateedzerawo chivanhu chedu chafamba zvakanaka. Asi nenyaya yekuti munozo nyanya kushata zve zvakare since muna ma visitors anozouya mozoonekazve mazara dzimwe hari vamwe micheka yasungirwa pamuchakata, vamwe vauya kuzo dai dai, but taingoti deno ivo madzishe ari local agona kuwana zuva rimwe chete rekuita chivanhu chavo. Ndoo pane chishuviro chedu kuti whether uri vokwa Nemamwa, uri vokwa Mugabe, vakava nezuva rimwechete rokuti vanoda kuita chivanhu chavo voitawo musi wakati then povonekwa kuti vanhu vese zvogarawo mumemory mavo kuti ku Great Zimbabwe vanoti.* [When we learnt that Great Zimbabwe is important from a traditional perspective, we have a history that says our elders have been here. Rituals must be conducted here, which also help with rain making. But since it is said that it is not solely ours that much as the locals that is where we have problems. Because there are some rituals which must be done by us the custodians. Also, our elders used to move around, they would go and come back and we have spirit mediums like that. But it is difficult because of the law. We are limited by the laws. But most often this is where our wish is, if it is possible to follow our culture and traditional ways of life. We understand that the problem maybe that, as a place tourists want to visit they may find cloths tied on trees, others having done their rituals but, what we are saying is if possible local chiefs can be afforded a day or so to perform their ritual ceremonies. That is our wish, be it from Nemamwa, Mugabe clans, if they can get a day for those who would want to perform their rituals be allowed to do so] (CM 1, 27 November 2019, Appendix 2)

These wishes can however only be completely realised when the local communities are entirely involved in decision making.

There is a common perception in the official discourses that problems which may arise on sites recognized to be of national or world heritage value can only be solved through ‘scientific methods’. However, in my view problems of various sorts in different cultural places were experienced and managed by local communities before colonization and even today locals can proffer solutions. At Great Zimbabwe, there are problems concerning heritage and so far, solutions have largely been expert-driven, yet the involvement of the locals, arguably

ceremonious, is however making great strides. The local communities are advocating for retuning to “taboos”, or restrictions when accessing places like the hill complex and *Mujejeje*, and other ritual uses as forms of indigenous knowledge (Senanayake, 2006: 87-98), which can be used to protect the site. These indigenous methodologies alluded to form part of the decolonial approaches.

Authorised management should not be taken as an objective or unbiased system, as it is known historically that it disadvantaged indigenous populations and epistemologies (Chirikure et al., 2016; Katsamudanga, 2003; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a; Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999a; Sinamai, 2017). The system needs to be decolonised; it needs to be reordered as it continues to marginalise the local communities even today. I am arguing for decolonial approaches on the premise that it allows us to destabilize the dominant system in existence of managing heritage sites and call it into question. Community collaborations and community participation are actively advocated for because they are giving local communities, previously marginalised, a voice in heritage management (Chipangura, 2018, 2019; Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008). After political independence, many theorists in the field of heritage are in agreement, criticizing the authorised heritage discourse of having contributed to marginalize the intangible concerns of communities who are the custodians of the heritage (see Katsamudanga, 2003; Ndoro, 2005, 2001; Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999). Experts tend to favour the dominant narrative of professional conservation and preservation of heritage which privileges the physical aspect of heritage. Whilst I am in agreement with the above mentioned scholars’ argument on the dominance of the local knowledge and alienation of the intangible concerns of communities who have a spiritual attachment to heritage sites, what is however missed; is what community collaborations and community participation as alternatives to solving these management problems would mean and how in this decolonial moment power relationships can shift. We require a system that understands and accept our own ways of knowing. Heritage sites like Great Zimbabwe because of their status have attracted a complex community with competing interests.

Great Zimbabwe is currently managed through a combination of authorised heritage management and proactive community involvement. The above statement suggests that now the existing management framework (policy document) is being adapted, at perhaps great risk to them (site management) because they are not following the policy but are producing results. I therefore argue for seeing more diversions that allow for a real shift in power in favour of the

decolonial theory to be realised at this site. I also determine that decolonial theory is in some ways already operational into the management of Great Zimbabwe, but it has some limitations.

### **1.3 Research Design and Methodology**

This study predominantly adopts a qualitative research paradigm in the form of a case study design to examine both primary and secondary data sources and provide an analysis focusing on the decolonial discourse and management of Great Zimbabwe. A case study is a form of a qualitative research approach (Hancock and Algozzine, 2006) which allows for an intensive analysis and description of a system bounded by space and time. The focus of this study was to investigate the current management system at Great Zimbabwe and to integrate a decolonial thinking shift to how the site is being managed. My choice of the design is that it would help me with a full investigation in the case of Great Zimbabwe and answer this study's research question(s) raised in the preceding statement. Qualitative case study designs enable exploration of phenomena within their context using a variety of data sources (Baxter and Jack, 2008). A qualitative paradigm, unlike quantitative approaches, helped me to answer questions about heritage management and its decolonial alternatives.

Cohen et al. (2011) posit that case studies recognise that there are many variables operating in a case, and to catch these variables it requires more than one tool for data collection and many sources of evidence. This study uses multiple methods of gathering data, including a review of related literature, interviews, focus group discussions with heritage experts and the local community as well as a thematic data analysis method to analyse the data generated. However, I was aware of the risk of perpetuating the same colonial ideologies in the process of this inquiry and the need to conform to decolonial strategies of gathering data. Consequently, caution was also placed on the methodology to test out different modes of inquiry. I grappled with theories of decoloniality and thought about the practical implications these would impose on the study and that shape how I developed my research methodology. In view of the factors alluded to, I had to be dynamic in responding to what I found at the site. The interviews and discussions were conducted in Shona and English as part of recognising the value of different languages spoken by respondents and the fact that interviewees may only be able to articulate their ideas and express certain sentiments in their primary language or dialect. The aforementioned languages are also reflected in reporting some of my findings as I employed the facets of the decolonial theory in terms of shifting power dynamics on who is producing the knowledge. As an effort of actioning the theory of undoing power, I interacted with everyone in a more or less the same way. Shona was the main language for discussions and

interviews, while I also recognised the hierarchies of age, distinctions and gender as an important gesture to be welcomed and be accepted by respondents.

The process of inquiry started with a review of related literature to familiarise myself with ongoing and current debates in the field of heritage from a global perspective, particularly on decoloniality, the concept of heritage and contemporary communities. Following this was a combination of both in-depth and structured interviews with heritage experts and heritage informers. As a prerequisite to conducting successful interviews, I identified key participants as posited by (Hancock and Algozzine, 2006), whose knowledge and opinions provided valuable insights regarding the study's research question. In this regard, I identified two former NMMZ staff and archaeologists now based in South Africa who gave insights on the institution's background and views concerning decolonial endeavours at the site, challenges faced and their view of the discourse. The interviews and discussions were audio recorded. Following these interviews, I had a site visit to Great Zimbabwe monuments to familiarise myself with the place in preparation for data collection.

On my second visit to Great Zimbabwe, the first day on the site started with security inspection and fulfilling one of the pre-requisites to acquire a permit through paying the required research fee of ZW\$110 and reporting to relevant authorities on site. This was followed by an interview with Expert 1 (E1), the current resident archaeologist at Great Zimbabwe. The interview was conducted using an interview guide with questions bearing insights into the study's fundamental research question. After the interview I took a tour around the monuments and the surrounding area to observe. In the process I also identified key members of the community and heard their views and interpretation of the place. About ten members of the community were identified and we agreed to meet the following day at the Shona village for a discussion. Data were collected on the second day through a discussion with Expert 4 (E4), responsible for exhibitions, and Expert 5 (E5), the ethnographer at Great Zimbabwe. This was later followed on the same day by a discussion with members of the community at the Shona village discussing their interpretation of the site and their views on the current management system as well as identifying indigenous ways of protecting the shrine.

On the third day we had a focus group discussion at Great Zimbabwe with six experts and six representatives of the local community management committee to discuss how the site is being managed. I also solicited their views on the decolonial discourse and how such thinking can shift the way the site is being managed, identifying challenges and prospects. On the same day,

I drove to Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) Mashava campus where I conducted two interviews with heritage experts who have also worked with Great Zimbabwe monuments in many ways, Expert 2 (E2) and Expert 3 (E3). The insights of these research participants to this enquiry were invaluable considering the amount of work done so far and their combined experience in the heritage fraternity and at Great Zimbabwe in particular.

### **1.3.1 Data Analysis**

Qualitative approaches usually generate huge amounts of data, and to avert this I employed a thematic data analysis approach. Nowell et al. (2017) raises an important issue of trustworthiness in qualitative research and posited that “data analysis conducted in a systematic approach can be transparently communicated to others”. Nowell et al. (2017) suggest six phases in thematic data analysis that is familiarising with the data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes; and finally producing the report. I identified important, popular aspects of the problem under study emerging from the conducted interviews and discussions, I then grouped these into sub sections of discussion that seeks to answer my research question. After data collection, I transcribed the audio recorded interviews and discussions and analysed the data. Following this was a process of coding the data into subgroups of themes that speak to a common idea.

### **1.3.2 Ethical Considerations**

Data were collected from experts and members of the community and confidentiality was guaranteed. I used pseudonyms of E for all experts involved in the study, whereas CM was the preferred reference for committee members and MC denoted other members of the community engaged in the study as participants. All this was done as a way of protecting them, regardless of such an effort, experts may still be identifiable.

### **1.3.3 Delimitations**

The study was restricted to examining the management of Great Zimbabwe site, focusing on efforts to decolonise the system of management and how the intangible heritage is being incorporated in the management of the shrine. The discussion drew on insights from Webber’s *Your monument Our shrine* (Ndoro, 2005); (Ndoro, 2001) critique of the current system of management of the shrine and investigated how managing authorities were responding to the decolonial discourse.

Great Zimbabwe has always been the centre piece of colonial endeavours in the country so much that during the colonial period there was a detachment of local communities from Great Zimbabwe. When expatriates first arrived at Great Zimbabwe they found chief Mugabe and his

people already settled on the hill complex (Fontein, 2006: 786). These people were later systematically removed and settled outside the monument. Unfortunately, post-independence, people expected to go back and occupy their ancestral lands, however, that did not happen. This is not unique to Great Zimbabwe - places like the Matopos (Ranger and Ranger, 1999), also witnessed contestations as people still want to go back, but this has not happened. To date, there is an outcry from the local communities, still yearning to be recognised as the rightful owners of Great Zimbabwe. They still want to be acknowledged as the lawful heirs of the ancestors who built Great Zimbabwe and continue with cultural processes that their forefathers used to perform in this enigmatic cultural landscape.

#### **1.4 Redefining Heritage at Great Zimbabwe**

Of course we have the physical monument which is represented by the conical tower, great enclosures, valley ruins, and the hill complex (Ndoro, 2005), however, the socio-cultural processes that led to the making of the site were not physical, but rather intangible. Smith (2006), as pointed out earlier, suggests all heritage is intangible. She suggests that the precursors to or ideas behind their establishments (all heritage) are the most important aspects before the manifestation of the physical stature. For Great Zimbabwe to be what it is now, there were some ideas and processes behind, and these are intangible - ritual processes which were undertaken and led to the construction of the site, and even up to today the site is still important for ritual processes. Based on the above, it is important to marry the physicality and the intangibility through community perceptions. What do the local communities say and think about the site? What do they use the site for? It is reasonable to note that intangibility is really about use, and that implies the ways in which people do their rituals, practice their skills, worship and pass on knowledge. The idea of use in my view is supposed to be contemporary, unlike freezing Great Zimbabwe in a timeless past (an archaeological past). Archaeology is known for the preservation of things of the past, through scientific methods - recovering material culture, preserving of material culture in museums and radiocarbon dating. This approach of archaeology in some way works along supporting the authorised heritage discourse. Lately there are other scholars who are trying to decolonize archaeology (Chipangura, 2019; Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008; Schmidt and Pikirayi, 2016).

Communities do not only prioritise the physical state of sites. For them it is more than just a physical site (the monument) (Ndoro, 2001). Monumentalism/physicality is about being aesthetically beautiful, showing enduring significance and what visitors can see. What is important to understand as well is that aesthetics is driven by intangible concerns, thus use. It

is important to note that there are many ways Great Zimbabwe site can be used, not necessarily for economic benefits but for the intangible social and cultural uses that connect them (local communities) with their past. This in itself also helps protect the physical as Sinamai (2020 :3) posits that, in our context, “the intangible preserves the tangible”.

### **1.5 The Community, Ancestors and the Shrine**

The concept of community is a complex matter, argued by Anderson (2006:49) as ‘imagined communities’ - imagined as “members of even a smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”. Communities are heterogeneous (Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008), and there are multi-layered communities at Great Zimbabwe and each and every community has its own forms of attachment, in economic, educational, social and spiritual ways. Most often, experts have problems with the spiritually connected community whose religious activities are viewed as a possible harm to the physical composition as well as the ‘complex’ nature of the ritual processes. The reason for this is as Sinamai (2020:3) argues an attribute of the global heritage template used that “fails to understand other ways of knowing”. Members of the local community I spoke to maintained that if they were involved in decision making in terms of how the site is used and are able to use the place for their rituals, they would have been endowed with the much-needed stake in how the shrine is protected, (see Appendix 2 for this conversation). Rituals and other local methodologies come with taboos and restrictions which also help protect the physical environment. This study subsequently shows that decolonisation can be achieved if communities that have spiritual attachment to the site are involved in decision making and constantly allowed to use the site, as I will show later in chapter two and three on the theories around decoloniality, especially what people believe is an important part of how they determine questions of agency, power and access.

Ancestors shape how people live today, and the people live with their ancestors (Sinamai, 2017). The local community still connect the site to their ancestral landscape. The ancestors still live and the site is a shrine, as (Ndoro, 2005, 2001) critiqued, using the metaphor ‘your monument our shrine’. The ancestors live in the shrine. I would interpret Ndoro’s work title *Your monument our shrine* as a metaphor where ‘your monument’ refers to NMMZ (experts) and the authorized heritage discourse, with ‘our shrine’ referring to the community and their indigenous epistemologies in preserving Great Zimbabwe cultural landscape. On ‘Your Monument’ Ndoro talks about the AHD and ‘our shrine’ talks about the intangibility. There is a possibility to connect the intangible ‘our shrine’ and the physical manifestation aspects of

‘your monument’, as later discussed in the ensuing discussion. The term monument gives the impression of and means the ‘grand’, the ‘the biggest’ something that is physically imposing - connoting an important thing that must be protected. However, within that monument there is a cultural significance (social, religious) which should not be overlooked as it is driven from the intangible values. A discussion with other members of the local community raised the same issues, as heralded in (Fontein, 2006), on their intangible concerns of the site. Great Zimbabwe is a shrine, a place of worship to the local people. The local community pointed to the fact that the hill complex and other places within Great Zimbabwe is home to the departed, their ancestors and their spirits live in the place, (see discussion inserts below):

*Dzimbabwe inoti koshera ndiyo mhiko yavanhu vatema. Ndoo nzvimbo yavakuru vedu. Ndoo mavai unganira vachiita matare avo, vachiita nheyo dzekuti zvinhu zvazvashata vamwe mirai makati vamwe makati. Musha muhombe wakabata mativi mana eDzimbabwe. Saka Dzimbabwe tinoikoshesa nekuti vakuru vedu isusu varimo muno, ndoo vachengeti. Ndoo patino gona kukumbira ani naani zvake anogona kukumbira maerano nenhongo dzokuti kwaita hugwere, paita hudyi, kana kuti hondo dzinoda kuti vinga dzisina nduramo. Asi hatigoni kutanga kungoenda tisina kukumbira. Tinokumbira kwavari tohwa tosimuka toita. Ndingati Dzimbabwe ndiro Zame guru rino tambidza mamwe maZame. [Great Zimbabwe is important to us African people (black people). It connects all the four corners of this country. This is our ancestors’ place. This is where they gathered finding solutions on problems that they faced. It is an important place that connects all the corners of the country. It is an important place because our elders lie in this place and they are our guardians. It is where we can come and seek answers to problems which may befall us such as illnesses, pests to crops, or wars that threaten our livelihoods. We can’t just do things, but we must consult with them first, get instructions and then do what we would have been instructed to do. So, I can say Zimbabwe is the most sacred place that connects with other sacred places], (ambuya MC2, 24 November 2019, Appendix 3).*

Sekuru MC1 attested to the above view and noted in the insert below, that

*Midzimu mikuru ivete pano pamapako pano ichi pakurira mativi mana ese enyika. Nzvimbo dzose dzinoera dzinonzi dzine zvitubu dzino pakurirwa kubva pano pa Dzimbabwe. Ndoo saka tichiri koshesa nekuti ndoo rakabata mativi mana. [Our*

ancestral spirits lie here in the caves. They connect all the four corners of the country. All sacred places with springs draw from the Great Zimbabwe. Therefore, we value it as it is the backbone of the nation.], (*sekuru* MC1, 24 November 2019, Appendix 3).

The Charumbira, Mugabe, Murinye and Nemamwa people hold Great Zimbabwe landscape in high esteem in their spiritual livelihoods. The local community regard the place as the abode of their ancestral spirits and they call it *Dzimbabwe, Zame vemamwe mazame*. They would want to be allowed to use the place for their ritual activities. The local community believes the place needs cleansing and all things set well. The place is vital for spiritual appeasing ceremonies and other traditional rituals to solve all the different challenges they face as a community.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Theoretical Framework and Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a review of related literature in which I unpack the decolonial discourse and the possibilities of addressing ills of the colonially informed system of managing heritage. The chapter maps the theoretical framework and the implications of decoloniality in the context of heritage management. It also analyses the secondary sources on the management of Great Zimbabwe to help identify the problems arising from the current system. The discussion looks at decoloniality and its usefulness in heritage management, against the backdrop of heritage values attached to the site by different stakeholders and the current position of the legislations on local communities.

#### **2.2 Decoloniality and its usefulness in heritage management**

The concept of ‘decoloniality’ among other critical social theories has become one popular theme in universities across all disciplines, particularly in humanities. Scholars in the region and other non-African countries across disciplines realise the importance of the need to decolonise knowledge as coloniality manifests in different spheres of life (see for example Mignolo, 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a; Tlostanova and Mignolo, 2009; Wa Thiong’o, 1992). The theory has multiple definitions, interpretations and possible implementations in various disciplines, and so is its interpretations and possible implementations. This study ideologically frames itself in the notion of ‘decoloniality’ particularly on its advocacy for challenging the power relations perpetuated by the universalisation of European modernity. It concurs with Mataga (2018) as it also calls for delinking from Eurocentric notions of knowledge through epistemic disobedience. Institutions of knowledge production are criticised by Tlostanova and Mignolo (2009, 2009); Wa Thiong’o (1992) to have traditionally worked to consolidate Western modernity and European imperialism.

According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2013a:5), arguing for the decolonization of the discourse of development through indigenisation of the concept - in conversation with other progressives and leading philosophers of the decolonial thought such as Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, Walter Mignolo, Nelson Maldonado Torres, to mention a few, “decoloniality seeks to unmask, unveil, and reveal coloniality as an underside of modernity that co-existed with the rhetoric of progress, equality, fraternity, and liberty”. It is important to rethink how knowledge is produced in our

society and systems that govern our heritage since these are a product of a colonial past which espoused cultural dominance.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a:4) views decoloniality as “both an epistemic and a political project seeking liberation and freedom for those people who experienced colonialism and who are today subsisting and living under the boulder of global coloniality”. According to Mignolo (2009), decoloniality is commonly understood in three frames, thus coloniality of power, coloniality of knowledge, and coloniality of being. For the purpose of this discussion I am interested in the concept of decoloniality of knowledge and being. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, one of Zimbabwe’s prominent authors, historian, and progressive decolonial theorist has warned, noting that:

What Africans must be vigilant against is the trap of ending up normalizing and universalizing coloniality as a natural state of the world. It must be unmasked, resisted, and destroyed because it produced a world order that can only be sustained through a combination of violence, deceit, hypocrisy and lies (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013b:10).

It is in line with the above standpoint that I engage in the same conversation, interested in the decolonial narrative in the management of heritage. To answer the question of the importance of decoloniality today, I argue here in concurrence with Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s view that “coloniality is still operative and active and needs to be decolonized”. Following the attainment of political independence by most African countries, one of the deceiving myths has been the assumption that having successfully eliminated colonial administration is equal to total decolonization. Removal of colonial governance has not been enough for the formerly colonized, and it did not amount to total decolonization as the inherited systems of managing heritage proves to be problematic in the present times. On the surface, looking at how heritage is managed, it seems there are no complaints, and stability, however, the inherited authorized management of heritage is contested as it works to alienate the intangible concerns of the communities from the people who are the custodians of these heritages.

Decolonization of knowledge can be an effective disruptive process which attempts to negotiate for ways to emancipate, empower, and involve, the previously culturally dominated populations (see for example Mignolo, 2009; Tlostanova and Mignolo, 2009; Wa Thiong’o, 1992). Mike Grimshaw’s view of the concept of ‘decoloniality’ in his blog is an interesting one. Grimshaw (2019) concurring with the aforementioned prominent critical social theorists, points to the fact that decoloniality is a way to think critically about the history of cultural

violence of colonialism - whose critique is all about the colonial world and its values viewed and questioned from the perspectives and experiences of the colonised. The violence of colonialism in many African countries including Zimbabwe has been that of forced relocations of indigenous populations from their ancestral lands and sites of worship. Pwiti and Ndoro (1999:143) attest to the view that because of colonialism African cultural values suffered and continue to agonise as the colonising powers forced Africans to abandon their religious beliefs, governmental systems and a host of other traditional ways of doing things.

African societies today are a product of an imposed western modernity, where the western knowledge systems are privileged and considered 'the knowledge' good for development. Chirikure et al. (2016) observing the same as Ndoro's view above, argued that, "the introduction of western-derived legislation on the protection of heritage sites has resulted in the total marginalization of local communities and their conservation values". In conversation with Makuwaza 2008, and Taruvinga and Varrison, 2013, Chirikure et al., 2016:166) comprehensively point out that:

Current heritage conservation systems employed in postcolonial Africa still suffer from colonial legacies, and sometimes from exogenous concepts that are not sympathetic to how heritage has been managed through indigenous knowledge systems over the centuries.

The authorized management system as referred to earlier is all about following the dictates of international laws and world heritage conventions; subscriptions of monuments on the world heritage committee; management of sites by regulatory boards through Acts; and the experts to have conservation plans, management plans et cetera. All of the above issues are technical and done by experts, in contrast with communities that have had their own ways of managing the sites mentioned earlier. There are many ways in which Great Zimbabwe has been managed before the advent of colonial legislations. Such a reflection is not intended to propose and depict a nostalgic view of prehistory in formal terms, rather I concern myself with the decolonial option to disrupt these vestiges of colonialism and realities of coloniality (inherited management systems which continue to dominate) set up by the colonial matrix of power. It is reasonable to consider ideas of collaborative management and use, thereby responding to the contemporary communities living around Great Zimbabwe. On the question whether the decolonial theory and thinking allows us to destabilize the existence of the inherited system of management, Tlostanova and Mignolo (2009) noted that the problems concerned with the decolonial option are a brainchild of the modern/colonial matrix of power.

### **2.3 Heritage value, Legislations and the local communities**

The National Museum and Monuments of Zimbabwe is the country's premier heritage organisation established under an act of parliament and has the legal mandate to manage heritage sites in Zimbabwe - with the mandate derived from the NMMZ Act (Chapter 25:11 of 2001) which obliges the organization to protect, preserve and present all national monuments in the country (Chipangura et al., 2017; Chipangura, 2018). The institution has assumed the use of inherited colonial systems of managing heritage in the country which has historically viewed the local communities as irrelevant in the management of the site (Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008; Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999a). Great Zimbabwe is governed under an Act that is just a replica of the 1972 National Museums and Monuments Act – legislation that was put in place when the country was still under colonial rule. Though there could have been some adjustments on the Act; the philosophy behind it is still colonial. During the colonial era there was a different mind-set on how such cultural resources were supposed to be managed, they were meant to be fenced, with no trespassing, and trespassing would result in prosecution. It was that kind of mentality which physically detached the original inhabitants from these places hence they came up with such legislations to demarcate Great Zimbabwe as ruins. About 720 hectares of land, a national monument, and no people could settle at the site, or could do rituals without permission from authorities, and even today such kinds of permissions cannot be granted.

I argue that communities should have agency over their heritage, they should be able to speak on what they would want their heritage to be whilst they can contribute to a sustainable development cause as advocated for by UNESCO. There has always been indigenous knowledge systems of managing sites which are part and parcel of the new decolonial narrative (Chipangura, 2019; Ndoro, 2005). Communities are supposed to have an equal voice in managing their heritage. This is because the community's view of heritage is usually different from that of the experts who dominate the narrative of scientific management of heritage (Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008).

It is a common perception to think of heritage as only things of the past bequeathed solely for memory, whereas recent heritage discourses show that heritage is more than a legacy, but that it is rather becoming a centre for development. Its immense contribution in the present day is so conspicuous - from tourism, education, to the recent use of rock art to study climate change (Chipangura, 2019; Ndoro, 2005). It is therefore pertinent to think through such dominant narratives of transforming how we think about heritage as a practice that can also help us to understand the present, especially local communities who are the custodians of these heritages

and how they can have agency over their heritage. Quite a growing body of contemporary postcolonial theory on African heritage has reasonably concerned itself on heritage management matters that can be attributed to the colonial dogma (Katsamudanga, 2003; Matenga, 2011; Ndoro, 2001; Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999). according to Ndoro (2005), the underlying problem to preserving such archaeological heritages originate from an incomplete understanding of the cultural significance and its value to local communities.

Heritage contestations in the region have largely been attributed to the disparity emanating from the marginalization of communities by authorized heritage management, (see Chipangura et al., 2017; Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008; Fontein, 2016, 2006; Katsamudanga, 2003; Sinamai, 2017). Yes, it can be appreciated that the authorized management of heritage has had its success stories (economic and academic) whilst on the other hand it is important to realise the need of not just accepting it as given as it is a consequence of colonial systems of management which cannot be assumed to be objective and unbiased systems as is known historically that the colonial systems have worked to disadvantage the indigenous populations. Pwiti and Ndoro (1999a) pointed to the fact that colonialism negatively impacted African relationships and perceptions of their past, coupled with alienating them from their heritage.

Broadly, legislation for heritage management in Zimbabwe is unfortunately marred by inconsistencies and it is in a discordant mode. The constitution which is the foundational legal framework is singing a different song to the Act governing monuments in Zimbabwe. The new constitution of Zimbabwe (2013, Section 282 Sub section 1, Part B) states that traditional leaders “should take measures to preserve the culture, traditions, history and heritage of their communities, including shrines”. It suggests that communities are empowered by how these places are being run. Looking at the legal instruments that govern heritage in Zimbabwe, there is still some lagging behind in transforming them to suit the new constitution. The point is we cannot have a constitution saying that management of heritage places is under the purview of the traditional leadership, yet the National Museums and Monuments Act is plying a different mode of administration. The Act is silent, cutting off the local communities from the sites.

Great Zimbabwe WHS is managed using a plan which stipulates how management of the site should be done. The plan recognises certain legislations and development related documents which were influential in its preparation (Great Zimbabwe management plan, 2012). Other legal instruments include the NMMZ Act (Chapter 25:11), Environmental Management Act (Chapter 20:27); Tourism Act (Chapter 14:20); RDCS Act (Chapter 29:13); and the Traditional

leaders Act (Chapter 29:17). All of the above legal instruments are very critical towards a sustainable management of resources in Zimbabwe. Even though clearly articulated in the plan, implementation of some of the provisions are partial, if not undermined. The RDCS and the Traditional Leadership Act of 1998 provide for the legal space of local communities and leadership in the country's cultural landscape. The traditional Leadership Act of 1998 provides:

1. For the chiefs to promote and uphold cultural values among members of the community;
2. 2. It also recognises the chiefs as legal custodians of traditional institutions and responsible for the conservation of both tangible, and intangible heritage in their respective areas; and
3. The chief has the responsibility to prevent any unauthorised settlement or use of any land.

Despite these provisions the voice of the traditional leadership living around Great Zimbabwe is still not fully recognised as seen in the following chapters which focusses on community involvement at Great Zimbabwe and the relationship with the current management.

## Chapter Three

### Community involvement at Great Zimbabwe and Decoloniality

#### 3.1 Introduction

The discussion in this segment centres on the current state of affairs at Great Zimbabwe and a reflection on the current system of management, speaking to community involvement at the site and the relationship with the current management. The chapter ends with an analysis on decoloniality, what the theory offers as well as what it would look like if implemented. The first section focusses on the stakeholder communities interested in Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site and demonstrated how the site is now surrounded by such a complex community, and how these diverse communities have competing interests which complicates the management of the site. It is an introductory section to the chapter articulating how the site is being managed and the efforts to involve the communities who have previously been side-lined in the management of the site. The section following discusses the level of community engagements and collaborations at Great Zimbabwe and what this means from a decolonial perspective. The third section of this chapter focusses on the incorporation of the intangible heritages in the management of Great Zimbabwe. The fourth section discusses what it entails to decolonise heritage management at Great Zimbabwe and demonstrates how the idea of decolonisation should start with the legislation, at national level and work down to the local level.

#### 3.2 Communities and the Great Zimbabwe Monuments

This section discusses the current management of Great Zimbabwe and I establish the complex tasks managing authorities are facing in their efforts towards incorporating the local community and contestations emanating due to the heterogeneous nature of the community. Great Zimbabwe monuments is a national asset listed on the world heritage list, it carries itself a national and international significance for social, political, economic, educational, historical, and tourism purposes. To start off, the nation derives its name and identity from the site. Zimbabwe is the only country in the world that is named after an ‘archaeological site’ and culture called Great Zimbabwe (*Zimba remabwe* or *Dzimba dza mabwe* is Shona<sup>4</sup>for House of stones) (Hall and Steffoff, 2006:17; Ndoro, 1994: 756; Pikirayi, 2006: 621). So, from this point of departure we can see that Great Zimbabwe wields tremendous significance to the nation,

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<sup>4</sup> Shona is one of the main indigenous languages in Zimbabwe. I used it in my discussion along with English as a way of actioning the decolonial theory. I am not extracting the knowledge – I am faithfully sharing their knowledge in the language that they use. I however am offering a translation for the benefit of the reader who might not be familiar with the language but not because I am hierarchising.

political parties, the state and various communities. Schools and institutions of higher learning for example value Great Zimbabwe as an important educational resource. Whilst local and inbound tourists value the site for leisure. The local communities are of the view that the site is a ritual space whilst the government values the site as a national resource and a World Heritage Site which generates revenue through tourism, significantly contributing to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country. Political parties also appropriate the site for political use.

Great Zimbabwe monuments have now been surrounded by a growing community comprising of people of different backgrounds, beliefs systems, roots, and reasons of settling in the province. Some have been out of government motivated relocations, some education, work, tourism and those who have always been in the rural communities. Yes, they all live in Masvingo, but their interpretation of the site based on the research fieldwork is not the same. To some, the site is a nice place they can go for leisure whilst others believe it helps generate revenue for the country and that is important to them. Some pointed out that at the monuments the hill complex is important for their religious practices. Those from the university value the place as an important historical resource, a place where archaeologists can practice their work. However, elders in the rural areas of the Charumbira, Mugabe, Murinye and Nemamwa clans value Great Zimbabwe as their home. Great Zimbabwe to them is more than the monuments, to them they already live in Great Zimbabwe. Their ancestors also lived and still live in the place and some were even buried in the hill complex. Their definition of Great Zimbabwe is different from other communities, as for them Great Zimbabwe refers to the whole cultural landscape and its spiritual value. This was drawn from the interviews and discussions conducted at Great Zimbabwe and surrounding areas (see excerpts below):

*“Kuma monuments toinda kunoona nzvimbo tichiudziwa zvaitika kare”.* [At the monuments we visit to view the place and learn history], (Rujeko resident, 26 November 2019, unstructured interview)

*Dzimbabwe ndoo bango romusha wedu isu sama Dzimbabwe kana kuti vana vedzimbabwe. Tinorikoshesa nokuti vakuru vedu isusu varimuno ndoo vatariri ndoo vachengeti.* [Great Zimbabwe is the pillar of our home to us as children of Dzimbabwe. It is important because our elders lie here, they are our guide and protectors], (MC 2, 24 November 2019, Appendix 3)

*Inini chandinoti ndoo chakanyanya kukosha ndechekuti ndoomuna madziteteguru, inhaka yedu ndoo pazamu renyika. Muno munoti dzidzisa zvechi nyakare kunyanya vana vechikoro vanouya kuzo dzidza muno. Vanoto dzidza magariro aiita vakuru vakare kunyangwe zvipfeko. Ndofunga wanoto dzidza zvakawanda kubudikidza nesuwo vanoita zvemitambo. Kana nesuwo zvizhinji zvata dzidzawo mukurarama tiri muchinyakare. Tinofanirwa kuri chengetedza nekuti muno inzvimbo inoera.* [I hold as important is that this is the place where our ancestors lie, it is the breast of the nation. This place teaches us our traditional ways of life especially school pupils who come to learn here. They learn of how our elders lived even dressing. I believe they learn a lot from us performers. Even ourselves we have learnt a lot in life in this traditional way of life. We must protect it because it a sacred place, (MC 7, 24 November 2019, Appendix 3)

I am a student and I believe my fellow History, Archaeology and Heritage students value the place as a rich historical and heritage resource, archaeologists can practice their work there, so yeah it is important, (student at Great Zimbabwe University, 27 November 2019)

*Ndoona nzvimbo ye Great Zimbabwe yakakosha, dotarira madzimai vari apo vanotengesa zvivezwa, machira nezvimwe vanotowana mari pavanotengesera matourists anouya kunoona nzvimbo yedu iyi plus vanoto bhadhara pagedhe rekuseri uko riya. Tsvimbo yako yawa tenga iyi watosiya mari handiti unozviona. Saka vanhu vanoto rarama ipapa.* [I see Great Zimbabwe as important, look at the ladies selling their sculptures, cloths and other items, they get some money when they sell to tourists and them (tourists) also pay to enter at the gate on the other side. The walking stick that you have bought has brought some money can you see. That means, people can earn a leaving], (Nemanwa resident, personal conversation, 27 November 2019 [field notes])

Great Zimbabwe is managed by NMMZ, which is the government's representative at the site. Answering the question on how they are managing the Great Zimbabwe, one expert in a discussion explained that they are a team of specialists falling under different departments: conservation, exhibitions and survey. To manage the site, they use instruments such as the NMMZ Act and a Management Plan guided by international conventions since Great Zimbabwe has been declared World Heritage Site. According to three experts interviewed at

Great Zimbabwe, the management plan provides guidelines on how they manage the site for example, how research should be done and how to deal with Great Zimbabwe and its accessories. Since it is a World Heritage Site, experts at Great Zimbabwe are also guided by international conventions which feeds into Great Zimbabwe management plan. The plan is reviewed after every five years. One of the experts explained that it is a UNESCO requirement for every WHS to have a management plan.

There are however new developments in the current management of the Great Zimbabwe, and these are anchored around involving the local communities in the management of the site as one expert explained in an interview (see excerpt below):

“We are at the moment using more of a mixed method, where we are putting an effort to use an all-inclusive strategy”, (E4, 27 November 2019. Appendix 2).

At Great Zimbabwe they are in a process of negotiating inclusive strategies in their management of the site. The reason according to the experts was that UNESCO is advocating for the involvement of communities who are the custodians of these heritages, which as specialists, they are helping to protect and preserve. Such a response in the above interview shows the level of influence of these international institutions to sites like Great Zimbabwe and whose voice the authorities would prioritise. Great Zimbabwe is contested with local communities claiming a stake. One expert also pointed to the fact that these laws governing their work are very important as it is not every member of the community who understands the value of such resources. The point was raised because there are other sites within the communities just outside Great Zimbabwe of similar nature with dry-stone walling. Most often when experts go in such places to do condition surveys, they are met with contestations amongst communities themselves where some section of the community are taking the stones to build their houses and the other groups of people saying it is important for tourism, culture and heritage and they should not be tampered with, (E4, 27 November 2019, Appendix 4). However, these contestations are not only amongst the local people themselves and other interested stakeholders and they are a result of the different values attached to the site.

Looking at communities around Great Zimbabwe it is a common perception to view these as homogeneous – where everyone looks at the site from the same points of view, however, that is not true. Local communities at Great Zimbabwe, even amongst themselves, have competing interests. During a focus group discussion with the local community committee I could pick up competing interests among the representatives from the three chiefs in terms of ritual activities,

who is the actual owner of the site, and whose ways should be followed. In a conversation expert 3 also pointed to the same problem citing a case he experienced during a consultative meeting in 2014 for the management plan which he said ended in a heated debate between Chief Mugabe, Chief Murinye and Headman Nemamwa. A representative from headman Nemamwa is said to have stood up saying the other groups came in at the Great Zimbabwe whilst they were already there, he claimed that the site belonged to them. I also got somewhat varying narratives about the site when I talked to some members of the community. However, the local community members agree on the fact that a solution to this is for the three leaders to meet and reach a consensus. Two experts however pointed to the fact that the reason for this contestation between the three chiefs could be because they are anticipating monetary gains - in the sense that if they claim that it is their site, they may get it and then they get a share. However, locals argue that this is cultural, *chivanhu hachingodi kutanangirwa chinokudzokera* and by this, they meant African Traditional Religion (ATR) and its ritual processes bear adverse consequences when not done properly. There are dos and don'ts when it comes to traditional places of worship, or ritual shrines. As much as the view of anticipation to the economic gains holds water, the spiritual aspect transcends material gains hence it cannot be overlooked.

The hill complex has graves and there are certain rituals that can only be conducted by those of the same lineage. Based on the histories attached to the hill with caves at Great Zimbabwe, many different people would want to conduct various rituals that are different from the common ones as discussed earlier in the study. Rain making ceremonies in Zimbabwe have specific processes which are conducted secretly *kwakaradzikwa mhondoro dzenzvimbo*, [where the elders are laid to rest] and commonly in Zimbabwe, elders are normally buried in the caves found on the hills. Such places are protected by taboos and myths, as they are believed to have some spiritual powers and significance which attracts different people in need of the power to turn fortunes or solve spiritual problems. Humans are spirit beings and this spirituality requires certain specific spiritual processes. I have learnt that some apostolic denominations also come with intent to use the hill complex and the local traditional groups are contesting this. Considering that, there is a contestation of interests relating to ritual use at Great Zimbabwe. Among the contesting people are those that claim to have graves of their elders in the hill complex, contesting outsiders performing their rituals and those from the churches. Information gathered from the focus group discussion, and conversations with other members of the community however, suggest that there is a possibility to ask for the traditional leaders to sit

down with contesting parties to pave a new path that also speaks to their past as well as the present.



*Fig 2 Chikomo: [The hill complex] picture author's own*

There is a clash of values at Great Zimbabwe. We have a case of people with different values that are competing and some of these values seemingly cannot co-exist and this is posing a challenge for the managing authorities to find a consensus. Scientists, archaeologists, historians, see that it is good for some education, since they get some useful information from the site. Whilst the NMMZ sees the site as its cash cow, that gives them money. Whereas tourists, both local and inbound, looking at Great Zimbabwe tend to value the site for its aesthetics which they would want to visit for leisure, and for the local communities the place is sacred. What does this mean in this decolonial moment? It is all about finding a compromise, catering for everyone and at the same time not compromising the integrity of the site.

### **3.3 Community Engagement, Collaboration and Decoloniality**

In this section and based on the findings of this study, I argue that community engagement at Great Zimbabwe is very partial and ceremonial, so much so that it does not fully meet the demands of decolonial theory. In an effort towards redressing the ills of the system of managing heritage and embracing the UNESCO advocacy on community engagement, the management

team at Great Zimbabwe have called upon the chiefs around the Great Zimbabwe to find ways so that they can work together. They established what they call the Great Zimbabwe Local Community Management Committee (GZLCMC) which is made up of two representatives from each of the three chiefs around Great Zimbabwe (Mugabe, Murinye and Nemamwa). Such a committee is still found in the southern region only, in terms of the NMMZ administrative regions. Initially the committee is set to meet monthly to discuss issues to do with management of Great Zimbabwe, but this has not taken place due to several challenges. The GZLCMC is a platform where communities through their representatives can raise pertinent issues, they may be having with managing authorities concerning their heritage. It is again the same round table which managing authorities also utilise to raise matters they may want to bring to the attention of the community. This committee has opened another avenue for managing authorities to visit communities when they want to speak to larger groups of the local people with specific concerns in the communal area. The experts at Great Zimbabwe acknowledge the hard work and efforts made so far by the committee in reducing the problems of veld fires, stray cattle and vandalism at the site. However, the above efforts to involve the community falls short of completely matching the decolonial theory. Although, the above efforts have thus far produced results identified below, NMMZ still retains more power than the other players and remains ‘the authority’ at Great Zimbabwe.

The committee has so far managed to accomplish several milestones working with managing authorities. The committee acknowledged that cases of veld fires have significantly been reduced.

*“Muno tanga tisingaiti two years musina kutsva moto muno nzvimbo yose, kana maiona pa TV kuti shoko dzaiwa dzimwe mhuka dzichifa, midziyo ichipadzwa. [we could not spend two years without having veld fires, if you could watch on television monkeys fell, other animals died, destroying property], (CM1, 27 November 2019, Appendix 2).*

A committee member representing Chief Mugabe acknowledged that the authorities did well, and he viewed that as a sign of realising the need to work together with the community. The problem was that the experts worked on their own without involving the community. In such a situation, the community did not see the urgent need to help as they felt side-lined and did not have any benefits from the place. Some even caused the fires to signal their despondency, as one way to register their protest with the authorities as shown in the interview excerpt below:

*“Previously panga paina varungu zvanga zvisiko, isu taingoti ndezvavo – ukatoona moto uchipfuta taito wedzera kuti uwedzere speed uchienda Masvingo,* [Previously, when the whites were in charge such an initiative did not exist, we did not care – when we saw fires we could burn more so that it quickly gets to Great Zimbabwe], (CM3, 27 November 2019, Appendix 2)

Currently the committee has set up in each village some people who have volunteered to stand in whenever there are cases of stray fires and these people mobilise other villagers to help put out the fires. Ever since working together, they have conducted awareness campaigns in communities around Great Zimbabwe informing the community of the developments and what the people could benefit from the shrine. They now have intense campaigns teaching the importance of heritage resources to the local people and the nation at large, and such efforts seem to be paying dividends to the set goal. As expressed in conversation I had with other local community members at Great Zimbabwe, they acknowledged placing value on how they view the site. However, the committee still has some ideas they think are not being implemented which could be useful traditional ways of managing Great Zimbabwe. These ways alluded to are important in preserving the intangible value of the place which is invaluable to the community and the nation at large. Their argument is that because the place is sacred it can only best be protected through their indigenous ways as suggested in the discussion excerpt below:

*“Mumakomo edu nemapako murere vakuru vedu, hamunga chengetedzwe nenzira dzeva pambe pfumi”* aired sekuru CM2, [in our hills and caves lies our ancestors and they cannot be protected through the oppressor’s ways], (CM2, 27 November 2019, Appendix 2).

There is a general understanding that as much as Great Zimbabwe is a national site, the monument carries an important value that speaks directly to the local people and can best be overseen by them failure which has consequences for the locals. Like many elders from the local community I spoke to, the committee also blames some of the challenges that they are facing as a community as being a direct result of the absence of the traditional ways in the management of the site since it bears some cultural significance. Traditionally, ancestors have their own ways of communicating to the living, some of these are mysterious signs, and misfortunes which can best be interpreted by those who understands the culture. With understanding of the challenges, the community is direly pushing for authorities to understand

the issues at the national level. The efforts to engage the local community are slowly taking place but the working relations at Great Zimbabwe are improving. As a result of working together with the committee, there have been other initiatives to mend relations with the local community. It was realised that there are elders who live around Great Zimbabwe and some who are grey haired, old and who could still not view their site because they cannot afford the entrance fee. In view of the above issue the authorities decided to set aside Monday to Friday and invite the elderly who could not afford to pay entrance fees to come through and view their site for free. This was one benefit of working together because the community has always contested why they were supposed to pay to view a resource that they were rightful heirs to and are still the custodians of the heritage site. However, it is still expert driven, they are the ones to decide and give conditions of these visits and the committee is contesting this.

NMMZ is now giving back to the community through paying school fees for learners. The committee helps to identify the learners from the community and make recommendations to the responsible authorities. In terms of the geographies of power, here the power still rests in the hands of the experts. The experts have the prerogative to decide who gets the fund and who does not get it. They still wield authority although decoloniality entails a process of negotiating these power imbalances to a point where authority is shared equally. The fund has so far managed to benefit a couple of less privileged learners up to form four. According to the ethnographer at Great Zimbabwe, their wish is to have a fund that will cover many school learners; however, they have not done that so far because they do not have adequate funding. Local community members are now being employed to cut the grass. After cutting the long grass, authorities allow them to take the same grass to use for thatching their houses or for other domestic purposes. The committee sees this as a form of security because the locals see no need to cause fires because this will cause them to lose this part time grass cutting jobs and the grass which is important for thatching their houses and other domestic uses. Both the community and the managing authorities acknowledge these efforts have benefitted improved relationships.

As much as the above are positive initiatives, I however noted as a researcher that there was a moment in which it was clear that there was some underlying tension and it was important for me to follow that up. So curiously I asked how the team worked:

*“Munombo Shanda sei as a committee? [How do you work as a committee?]*

According to the secretary of the committee, *“Tichitanga takabvumirana kuti*

*tosangana kupera kwemwedzi woga woga. Nenyaya yema challenges atakazo sangana nawo se transport nezvimwe pasinazve zvinhu zviru urgent tikazo adjuster to three months kuti tionesane zvinenge zviripo*” [Initially we had agreed to meet every month, but because of some challenges we face of transport et cetera with no agent matters to attend to, we then adjusted to three months to discuss whatever matters that would need our attention], (CM2, 27 November 2019, Appendix 2).

The education officer added to the response saying:

*“What he is saying is vanga vaka sheedzera misangano yavo every month pakaita machallenges ndobva vazoti three months. But if there is need vanodanwa”,* [what he is saying is that they had called their meetings every month then there were some challenges and they agreed to meet after every three months. But when there is a need they are called in] (E6, 27 November 2019, Appendix 2).

However, sekuru CM1 had a different view:

*“Pamuvhunzo wavhunzwa nemurume uyu ndamboti kuda kuchembera, ndoona sekuti hapana chadanidzirwa nekuti wavhunza kuti imi munombo Shanda sei? Tikati vhunzai secretary. Takatenderana mwedzi zvika kona, tika tenderana three months saka hamungangoti kana tangovadana. Hatisi kusangana asi kuti kana imi mongoda committee moti chiuyai. Asi zvitenderano zvedu hazvina kuteedzwa. Togona kuita five months tisina kusangana. Hanzi maimbo shanda sei, imi murikuti kana tavadana. Taka tenderana kuti one-month tikati tozvinetserei hedu. Chitenderano chataka tenderana hachisi kushandiswa”. [On the question asked by this man, I thought maybe it’s because of my old age but I do not think he was answered well because he asked that how we have been working together. Then we said ask the secretary. Initially we agreed to meet every month so you cannot just say when you want the committee then you say come. He asked how you have been working together. We agreed every month then we decided that we should not stress ourselves because what we agreed on was not being followed], (CM2, 27 November 2019, Appendix2).*

The elder was using idiomatic language to suggest that things are not as flawless as it would look like. This point is further illustrated in the following discussion on the intangible heritage at Great Zimbabwe.

Looking at the GZLCC and their accomplishments so far, it looks flawless, however, from the focus group discussion held at Great Zimbabwe the committee still has some challenges, some of them are beyond their control at local level and needs attention if they are to be resolved. The major challenges are basically on the management of the intangible heritages. Connecting with what later came up in the discussion the above statement raised earlier by sekuru CM1 in my analysis was a complaint that the level of engagement is largely on consultative basis barely when the experts wish to and not fully involving them. The committee desires to be fully involved so that members can contribute meaningfully on the management of their intangible heritages at Great Zimbabwe.

### **3.4 Intangible Heritage at Great Zimbabwe**

As pointed out earlier in the discussion, Laurajane Smith (2006:53) in the book *Uses of Heritage*, recognizes the subjectivities of heritage, the commonly assumed idea of its physicality (objectivity) and establishes the idea of heritage as more than just an object. Smith (2006:56) further argues that “if heritage is a mentality, a way of knowing and seeing, then all heritage becomes, in a sense ‘intangible’”. In that regard, Smith defies the commonly held view of looking at ‘heritage’ and ‘intangible heritage’ as separate concepts and redefines all heritage as intangible, further arguing that what is actually the subject of management, preservation or conservation and what visitors engage with at heritage sites are values and meanings that are symbolized or represented by these sites. Considering the above, Smith recognizes the value of the intangibility of heritage (values, practices and meanings attached) being that which amounts to what can be called heritage.

A somewhat complex but inclusive definition was proposed at the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and states that intangible cultural heritage means “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities, groups, and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage”, (UNESCO, 2003). Interestingly, commonalities in the two standpoints are the ideas of meanings and values ascribed by ‘people’ in a heritage product - and these manifest in a practice of some sort, performed and experienced by a people, be it the custodians of the cultural product and or visitors.

Intangible heritage in this study refers to the non-tangible aspects of cultural heritage, viewed as living heritage to the people of Great Zimbabwe that is the values, practices, skills, music, and the voices of the ancestors heard at the site and meaning attached to the (physical) tangible

cultural heritage. Using Smith's proposition, I also argue that Great Zimbabwe monumentality alone is not enough to understand its heritage without the inclusion of its history, values ascribed, community traditional practices on the site, and meaning attached on the site. Chipangura (2008:379) also supports the above notion acknowledging the importance of the intangible value of Great Zimbabwe, pointing to the fact that, though its inscription on the world heritage list was based on its tangible heritage, intangible aspects of this heritage are of prime importance to Zimbabweans since some local communities still use the site to conduct rain making ceremonies.

During the colonial period most of the intangible elements associated with Great Zimbabwe were suppressed whereas the site was being developed particularly for tourism and a lot of developments were to try to 'improve' the site as the colonial master would describe it. Some of the intangible heritage to do with Great Zimbabwe express themselves in the tangible for example the *Mujejeje* and *Chisikana* spring (Matenga, 2011). The *Chisikana* spring is found within Great Zimbabwe, just outside the great enclosure. According to information gathered during this study, it was a perennial spring and tradition has it that even if there was a drought you would find water at the spring. Unfortunately, during the colonial period as the site was being developed water logging was a big challenge for those who were making developments like the golf course which was at some point constructed within Great Zimbabwe and the spring was closed with concrete.

I also learnt that another small stream that passed through the western side of the hill complex was closed, the Eucalyptus trees along the stream were planted to contain the water. Springs are very important in our society as they are a sustenance of life. As pointed out by E1 in a conversation, I was informed that anywhere water originates is deemed a very important place and one cannot be seen defiling such important resources. In the Shona culture springs carry important traditional values and their closure pose an adverse impact upon the local community. About five decades later there were efforts to re-open the spring by Dr Matenga during his tenure as the director. According to information provided during my visit to Great Zimbabwe there was a ceremony held involving the local community and representatives from the chiefs to re-open the spring. Some members of the community and even experts who have had some experience at the site however feels that even though the spring was re-opened in the 2000s it is no longer the old *Chisikana* spring of the past.

Another important intangible element is the *Mujejeje* which is a sacred entrance to Great Zimbabwe. Geologically *Mujejeje* is a quartz vein on a *dwala* (*ruware*: Shona). What used to

happen when people got to *Mujejeje* was that a person was supposed to pick a pebble and tap from the left side of the line and leave the pebble to the other end. According to CM1 who is probably the eldest of the Great Zimbabwe local community management committee members, *Mujejeje* was a form of security:

*Mujejeje waisava vekuverenga vanhu, [Mujejeje was not for counting visitors]. Nhau ye security yemuno yaingovapo kubva kare mapurisa chaivo kusina. Kune nzvimbo yedu yekuti kana uchibva kwaanaMurinye nekuZaka uko, ukango karuka vayambuka svimujejeje sviya unenge wongofamba usingachazii zvaunoita. Ndoo yainzi mishonga yavakuru iyoyo inongo bata chero ipapo [the issue of security in Great Zimbabwe has been there before our current security guards/police. We have our place which you come across when coming from the Murinye side coming from Zaka, if ever you could just cross the line you would get confused if you had not followed procedures or had not done things right], (CM2, 27 November 2019, Appendix 2).*

*“Ndoo panga paine dumwa kana kuti mishonga yekuromba chaiko chaiko nekuti kwamambo hakungosvikwi. Yaitova entrance yekuti kana uchipinda uine nyaya yekupandukira mambo, wapinda zvaiku mukira kuno. Saka chinhu icho hachisi chekungomirira kuverenga vanhu chete. Chaitova chinhu chekuti, kana mukatora madzishe, kana ukazvinyora pasi kuti pane mudhara wakanga achitaura. Chaitotyisa kuna mambo Mugabe, chaitotyisa kuna mambo Nemamwa, chaitoziikanwa”. (Ibid)*

The concept is however not unique to Great Zimbabwe as attested by one expert in an interview, the former place of king Moshoeshoe in Lesotho also had the sacred ritual which is done on entering the site. There are many other pre-colonial sites in African countries which had various traditions that are done on entering the sites which are peculiar to those sites. According to E1 *Mujejeje* is one of the intangible aspects at Great Zimbabwe which they are not practising anymore. Experts would argue it as one of those traditions that have died a natural death, though it is arguably another colonial inducement to destroying the culture. One of the experts at Great Zimbabwe, acknowledged that they do know about the tangible evidence of these intangible heritages but in terms of expressing it, it is one of the things that they have left to die. However, there are efforts to recognise other traditional knowledge in the protection of the physical fabric of the site.



*Fig 3 Members of the community and experts during restoration at Great Zimbabwe: picture author's own.*

The local people are the ones who do restorations at Great Zimbabwe. They are permanently employed under conservation as stone masons. According to the ethnographer, the idea of engaging stone masons from the local people is one way of working together with the community and tapping into indigenous knowledge, (tacit knowledge) the traditional skill in restoring the dry-stone walls (E5, Appendix 4, 27 November 2019).

There are a lot of other activities related to intangible heritages at Great Zimbabwe which experts believe can still best be practiced by local communities. One of these activities is *Kutsvaira mapa* which is done specifically at a certain time of the year. This is not practiced now, however from a focus group discussion the local community expressed interest to practice them though it is somewhat contested as to which chief should do this. Experts at Great Zimbabwe acknowledged that there is indeed some backsliding when it comes to the bringing on board of such intangible heritages. Their standpoint (experts) is that such practices require that they identify who to entrust as the real owner of Great Zimbabwe. According to the ethnographer and the resident archaeologist at Great Zimbabwe as much as they are willing to have the above-mentioned activities continue, there is however a contestation on which of the chiefs should conduct the *kutsvaira mapa* ritual. What the experts identified in the case of Great

Zimbabwe as the main challenge was that around Great Zimbabwe there are four different groups from the following chiefs Charumbira, Mugabe, Murinye and Nemamwa and all claim ownership of the site. The authorities have been asking the question, “who do we give *chiremera chacho*”, “who do we listen to”, because when they listen to one chief, others will come and contest. *Kutsvaira mapa* is one among other rituals the local community would want to practice. If we look closely, we may find that some of these rituals take historical precedence, however, as expressed by some experts at Great Zimbabwe, the challenge again is that probably because of the nationalisation of the site and it being inscribed as a World Heritage Site, experts tend to overlook some of the critical local rituals.

The above matter stems from a contestation between the site’s national significance versus the local values. Explained by experts in a conversation “imagine someone somewhere in Harare might not be concerned about *kutsvaira mapa* at Great Zimbabwe but only the bigger issues that speak to the national agenda”. However, the locals would argue that “*musha haunga garika usina kuchenewa*” [a home cannot be habitable without cleansing]. Because of such a contestation one expert said, “At national level, because we would want to avoid inconveniences and conflicts, we say let’s just put a stop to everything until further notice”. This does not shift anything, and it is a colonial approach. From a decolonial perspective the above view is a problem, and it needs to be addressed. It is a colonial ideology to observe that people cannot manage these places, and that experts must just manage for them. Decoloniality suggests that the committee negotiates for way(s) so that such activities should be practiced.

According to the ethnographer E5, another challenge they face as experts is that Zimbabwe at large is a community and some people come from outside Masvingo to do their own rituals as well. Besides it being a World Heritage Site, places like the hill complex have widely been used for different ritual purposes across the country. In the case where these so called ‘outsiders’ come to do their rituals, the locals come gun blazing to experts asking why these outsiders are conducting their rituals in their sacred place. It appears that the managing authorities have this national community to also consider. Decoloniality suggests authority to be shared and so should be the responsibility. Had it been that authority is equally shared, a clear communication from a common understanding would be made to the broader national community restricting use of the site and making the nation understand this value.

Asking one expert at Great Zimbabwe on the prevalence of contestations with the local community requiring using the site, what do they say they want to use it for? “They don’t come

saying they are going to Great Zimbabwe, they are already in Great Zimbabwe, *vanongoti tauya toda kuenda kuchikomo*”, [they simply say we have come; we want to go to the hill]. It is in the hill complex they would want to conduct their rituals. Sharing his view in this regard E1 noted that this does not mean that rituals are not happening in the community, they are sometimes invited to attend some of these. He believes that it is not surprising to even find that there are other places that are of significant sacredness than the hill complex. Some would criticise that the hill is not as sacred anymore as they have other places believed to wield more power than the hill complex. Experts suggest these as some of the reasons there is a desire to redefine what we call heritage. E1 questioned the idea of authorities fencing over *Chisikana* spring to demarcate the place, what sense is there in demarcating it? His argument was that “it does not mean that the dry-stone wall structures are only in the core zone, we do have others that are outside, those that are identified and share similar historical precedence with Great Zimbabwe”. He further pointed to the fact that there are also metal working sites of Great Zimbabwe town, and these are located outside the boundaries of the monuments. In view of that, decolonisation of practice needs to also consider those heritage resources too.

### **3.5 Decolonising Heritage Management**

In terms of management systems as far as heritage sites are concerned in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular, I notice that the current management system where heritage sites are managed by heritage agents and particular government institutions, is deeply rooted in the colonial era. Precolonial times, taboos and myths were used to manage sites. In the Ndoro (2001) in Zimbabwe and Jupela in Botswana lament the fact that the current management system has alienated the local communities in the day to day running of sites and that the system is also alien to Africans. They suggest a scenario where people should revert to traditional management systems. Currently as the results of this study are also showing, heritage sites are still largely in the hands of scientists. However, there is a theory that advocates for negotiating new ways that will locate indigenous knowledge working together with scientific ways of managing resources (decoloniality). For quite some time people have been talking about incorporating the local communities within the formal management system. Yes, there are a lot of positive gains that come with involving local communities as was presented earlier, but the major challenge to this is the disjuncture in the instruments that are currently being used in the management of sites as demonstrated in the ensuing statement.

Discussing with four experts who have so far had some experience working with heritage places E1, E2, E3 and E7 acknowledged the need to decolonise heritage management.

However, when it comes specifically to a decolonial thinking, there are quite a lot of things that should be done. Indeed, political independence did not mean total decolonisation. A critical reflection on post 1980, what simply happened after independence, for example, we had mostly expatriates who had trained in archaeology manning the sites like Great Zimbabwe, and what simply happened was a change of people who came in now trained, black Zimbabweans, getting into positions of power, and this happened gradually. NMMZ itself; these are institutions that amalgamated in 1972, with the union legislated by an Act of parliament - the National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia Act [Chapter 313, 1976] (Matenga, 2011: 26). Initially, National Museums of Rhodesia and Historical Monuments Commission were separate entities responsible for managing heritage in Rhodesia, and these were put together, (ibid). In the first years after Independence what really transpired is that those at the helm of National Museums and Monuments were whites and were responsible for training the personnel who eventually took over from them, to manage these sites. As a result, what it means is that it became a continuity of things that were happening during the colonial era.

Many scholars so far have been lamenting that very little has changed in terms of how the managing of heritage sites in Zimbabwe is done. Most of the heritage informers I spoke to all attested to the point that one of the major reasons why it is very difficult to decolonise practice in heritage management in Zimbabwe is the persistent reliance on the 1972 Act which has not changed. Looking closely at the Act, what has happened were just cosmetic changes: where we had the National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia, the Rhodesia was replaced with Zimbabwe. Nowhere in that Act is articulation of the involvement of communities, recognising the values that communities place in heritage sites. What this means is that anything NMMZ is doing, they are doing outside the parameters that are set within the Act that they are currently using. We are using a piece of legislation that is outdated and coming from a colonial era and this becomes a challenge to decolonise. During the process of this inquiry I learnt that there is a new proposed legislation, the National Heritage Act of Zimbabwe, which was drafted three years ago and is awaiting parliamentary approval. Hopefully the new Act will be a 'decolonised' effort and a revision of NMMZ Chapter 25:11.

According to E3 in our conversation at Great Zimbabwe University, there are real challenges in how heritage is being managed. Not, until a time when Zimbabwe has a new legislation, perhaps the National Heritage Act as mentioned above, which awaits adoption, to cater for issues that matter to the local communities, issues that matter to Zimbabweans in particular. His argument was that since nowhere in that piece of legislation (NMMZ Act) there is reference

to Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and the management of ICH. The efforts so far by NMMZ towards incorporating communities and their ICH is out of goodwill of the authorities otherwise they do not have any obligation to involve the community. However, what is surprising is that if one is to look at the national constitution (2013) there is a section which deals with roles of traditional leaders in the management of heritage within their areas of jurisdiction, but nowhere else in the same constitution do we find the role of NMMZ. All the experts I spoke to agree that this is a mismatch between what the constitution articulates and what the current Act is pointing at. One expert lamented that, “maybe eventually when we have the new legislation, we would not want to say revised, because there is nothing to revise in that old piece of legislation that is when we may be able to decolonise”. All experts agreed, all stating that if anything was to change or decolonise, we should decolonise the Act.

One other obligation is that it is mandatory for every World Heritage Site to have a management plan and managing authorities should report to the World Heritage Centre (WHC). However, that management plan is supposed to be endorsed by the community. As established earlier, the WHC is very particular about communities – what they call the 5<sup>th</sup> C which is about the role of the communities in the management of the WHS and Great Zimbabwe is one of them. Attributed to the above, managing authorities are forced by the WHC to show evidence that they have involved the communities; the sticking question is on how authorities involve these communities. The current situation appears like lip service where they set the plan to follow in the next 5 years and they choose to endorse it or make consultations over what is to be done, especially what sort of things should be prioritised? It is reasonable to posit that managing authorities should engage communities so that they can give their input. It is a rational thing that at Great Zimbabwe they have the local community management committee, but their role in the management of the site and how their voice are being taken up by authorities is still unanswered.

Based on the focus group discussions, it is reasonable to say that listening to the local voice by experts is still partial. One expert (E2), who spend substantial time working with the committee, attested to the point made above and he held that participation by the local community is just ceremonial. According to his involvement in the discussions for five years, their endeavours looked more of acknowledging that they are present, without meaningfully contributing to the key discussion points. Even when they tried to contribute, experts would appeal to some overriding ICCOMOS causes, according to the World Heritage Convention in order to keep the communities at bay. What that implies is that sometimes the community’s interests are

taken note of, but they are not fully embraced based on the above-mentioned reasons. I asked E3 what his view was on the partial heeding to the local community's voice, and in his response, he indicated the existence of some challenges. He also narrated one of the incidents witnessed in 2014 as they were reviewing the management plan at Great Zimbabwe, which is still under review now. He attended the consultative meeting and communities were called in and one of the community leaders, Chief X complained that he only received the document a day before in the evening and the following morning he was asked to endorse that particular document so that it would be taken to the WHC. His complaint was based on the practicality of going through the whole document and be able to make critical contributions to the document before submission to the WHC. However, sadly when the managing authorities report for the WHC they would say all the chiefs were present. Considering this, in terms of substantial matters regarding what should take place at the site, the traditional leadership is still widely alienated. The local community itself is also complaining on the nature of the involvement contesting ownership between the managing authorities and their case.

According to E3 chief Murinye further complained that, whenever the managing authorities are talking to them, one of the things that they do not tell us is the exact information, stating verbatim, "*hamutiudzi kuti kuseri kwe sadza kune chii, kune nyama here or kune nyama yakawanda sei*, you simply say we want to involve you and we don't know how much in terms of money you guys are making at Great Zimbabwe" [one of the things you don't tell us is what is behind the sadza, is it meat and how much is it...]. So, the argument is that the authorities just want to involve them when they feel the local community should rubberstamp their decisions. In real terms they do not want them to know when it comes to figures on revenue generated, because Great Zimbabwe is viewed as a cash cow for NMMZ. Widely acknowledged in materials written about Great Zimbabwe in the domain of tourism, it is 'the' site for NMMZ. It would be reasonable to say that after Victoria Falls, probably Great Zimbabwe is the second most popular international tourists' destination. The chief claimed that they also needed to have a chunk when it comes to money that is coming from Great Zimbabwe. However, this debate is complex, because experts would argue that this is a national resource and its management is controlled at national level with clearly laid out guidelines. This however, needs to be addressed as it is still a colonial ideology that communities should not be involved in such matters. Decolonial thinking would mean allowing the local community at a negotiated level to also know what their cultural resource is generating and how they would directly benefit from this.

### **3.6 Decolonising practice**

Another factor to consider in the decolonisation of management of these cultural resources is decolonising practice by experts in their fields of speciality, archaeologists, conservationists, tour guides among others. In the process of negotiating, listening to locals and listening to scientists there is a clash of values and ideas which are also a challenge to decolonising management. There are however, a couple of ideas which can inform archaeologists to do things differently and how they can involve communities at different levels (see Chipangura, 2019; Schmidt and Pikirayi, 2016). Experts usually pay little attention to involving communities, for example when doing restorations. The level of involvement of local communities at Great Zimbabwe needs attention. According to one archaeologist, experts would quickly say yes, we have involved them because they have stone masons from the community employed by NMMZ. A question is who would be part of the team with experts during restorations? However, asking traditional leaders, they will say that the walls are not supposed to be restored following traditional ways. Traditionally they would not allow people to restore the walls because that collapse is regarded as the voice of the ancestors communicating displeasure on certain issues. However, scientists say they are supposed to be restored. What scientists value is the aesthetics whilst the locals esteem the voice or the warnings coming with the falling off the walls. Decoloniality offers an opportunity for the two entities to come together and speak with one voice, find ways which speaks to the contemporary society and not freezing the place in an archaeological past.

Tour guides, in terms of the interpretation of Great Zimbabwe, bear some influence on how visitors value and view the site. In terms of the interpretation of the site, the dominant model used by tour guides at Great Zimbabwe is that of Thomas Huffman. Personal observation of three tours at Great Zimbabwe has shown me that the use of space which was given by Huffman is the one that is being used; the notion of the Doma culture, the initiation ceremony, the activities that was done at the great enclosure, the notion that the king had many wives. Tour guides find some of these stories humorous, for example talking about sexuality amongst school children. Thus, the Huffman narrative becomes interesting one, but there is new research work available with new evidence for example that of scholars like, Chirikure, Pikirayi, Ndoro, Sagiya, Sinamai among others contrary to that of Huffman. The new literature, perhaps decolonial, remain in the hands of academics and not synthesised down to the interpreters. This is a problem and it needs to be addressed. The education department which is the one that synthesises and give information to school children in in a simpler way, need to consider new

research. Tour guides need to streamline between facts and funders and still managing to amuse tourists to get tips as they so wish.

### **3.7 Challenges of implementing different management strategies**

Ndoro and Wijesuriya (2015) have reflected on heritage management in Africa and Asia particularly on how heritage was managed from the pre-colonial times into the colonial and the post-colonial era. One of the major challenges has been the belief that heritage management is a concept that was brought to Africa by Europeans. It is probably true to some extent in that Europeans brought certain forms of heritage management or a certain philosophy foreign to Africa, which derived from their background in Europe and their Western philosophy of understanding heritage. As Africans we had our own systems of managing heritage places. One of the things Ndoro and Wijesuriya also reflected on is that heritage sites like Great Zimbabwe, Khami, Matopos and many others, are important places in the day-to-day lives of the people. The above means that Great Zimbabwe was not meant to be maintained and fenced off, where people were not allowed to move freely as they wished or to go and carry out their rituals. Further, these were not places where a heritage management authority is supposed to control activities. Locals had their ways of managing their cultural resources which also protected their natural resources. This aptly shows how heritage management has evolved from precolonial times into the post-colonial era and there remain possibilities of further developments.

Unfortunately, in the post-colonial period nothing substantial has been done to try and go back to what was utilised before colonialism in Africa. One of the greatest tragedies is that the post-colonial heritage managers continue with the colonial philosophies of heritage management which are also perpetuated by other international institutions such as the World Heritage Centre (WHC) and ICOMOS among others, particularly for the WHSs. These institutions still largely perpetuate the Western philosophical understanding of heritage management, making it difficult for managers in heritage places like Great Zimbabwe which are inscribed as World Heritage sites, to continue with struggle in trying to go back to indigenous value systems on how they can manage the sites. Rather, it complicates how managing authorities define or perceive heritage and how they then manage what is defined as heritage. The people in the communities are rich with unique local knowledge that can be brought into management of cultural spaces. I argue that it is possible today to have local knowledges be incorporated into the current system of management. One may argue against taboos and restrictions at Great Zimbabwe, but I have learnt that there are other places where the involvement of the local community has changed how things were done to a point where tourists now have restricted

access to some places because they are valuable to the local community, as discussed in the excerpt below;

*Varungu vakangwara, ikozvino mukaenda, ndoda kumbatora Ayers Rock iri ku Australia for example. Vakatora ma indigenous people vakataura navo kusvika vazoisa mutemo wokuti dombo iroro harichaonerwi pamusoro and kuUNESCO vaakutozviziva kuti kana uchishanyira Ayers Rock haukwiri pamusoro pedombo asi vanga vagara vachimbokwira. Asi vakataura ne local community ikaudzwa kuti isu sama Aborigines tine zvakati zvatinokoshesa saka kuti vanhu vakwire pamusoro pedombo hati tenderi, asi havarambidzi kuti vanhu vaone. Pane zvavano rambidzawo zvinoenderana nechivanhu chavo chema Aborigines cheku Australia. Saka isuwo ngati tangeiwo tadzoka pachivanhu chedu tomira. Kana tamira ipapo tochitaura ne NMMZ kuti tamira isu tamirirawo kuti imi muonewo patakamira kuti tofamba sei tichienda kumberi. [Whites are clever, now if you are to go, let me take Ayers Rock in Australia for example. They sat with local communities until they agreed on a new policy that people can no longer view the rock from above standing on it and UNESCO now knows that if you visit Ayers Rock you are no longer allowed to stand on it although it was allowed before. However, they consulted the community and they were told that as Aborigines we have this and that which we value, so, for people to climb on the rock we cannot allow it, but they still allow people to view the rock. There are some things that they do not allow according to the culture of the Aborigines in Australia. So even us we must know and identify that which is our culture and stand with that. When we know that what is important to us and have identified it, we then talk to NMMZ and remind them of what we need to protect our traditions or traditional ways of managing the site and show them our position. If we do that, we then negotiate the way forward], (E6, 27 November 2019, Appendix 2)*

The above standpoint shows the possibilities of influencing new ways of managing heritage in ways that are acceptable to the international cultural institutions like UNESCO. It shows there is a possibility to go back to ways that matter to the local communities with their local knowledges incorporated into the scientific strategies. UNESCO is advocating for the involvement of the local communities and the above case proves a possibility of decolonising heritage management at sites like Great Zimbabwe.

Another invaluable finding of this research is on the issue of the definition of heritage itself. Looking at the NMMZ Act, there is no mention of heritage in the Act. It identifies monuments, relics, fossils et cetera, but it is silent on what we call heritage and its all-encompassing nature, be it cultural or natural. This is another dilemma to us as a country particularly looking after heritage places such as Great Zimbabwe. Great Zimbabwe is still largely viewed as a monument rather than a heritage place or landscape. The above matter leads to the fact that, as a country, we need to broadly re-imagine ourselves at the highest level in terms of legislation on how we define what we call heritage. Now it is difficult to decolonise heritage management at local level when at the highest level (national) still holds the conceptualisation of heritage only as monuments, relics and artefacts. Nations of the world have a guiding framework (legislation), for example South Africa has its National Heritage Resource Act (NHRA) of 1999, (Shepherd, 2008:121) and it clearly articulates what is viewed as South Africa's heritage. Such a clear articulation of issues is missing when we look at NMMZ Act. It is in my view that, as a departure point, in Zimbabwe as a country we need to ask ourselves what is it that we define as heritage and in the case of Great Zimbabwe, we need to define why the place is of national significance to us as citizens hence it is important to re-look at our guiding principles and the key values.

What is significant about this study is that it has identified that the definition of heritage itself is lacking within the Act meant to inform how heritage should be managed. As a result of this, not only do we need to define what heritage means but identify what is important in view of the decolonial theory because the move alluded to will allow us to have a more comprehensive understanding of who constitute the stakeholders. The process of defining heritage also needs to include all relevant stakeholders from the grassroots up. It avails an opportunity that transcends government policy formulation to define the term; rather this is an open window for communities, as part of the consultation process, to develop a working definition of what heritage is for them and to subsequently inform how policy is written.

One expert acknowledged in an interview that Great Zimbabwe is more than just a grand place with those massive free-standing structures which were constructed without mortar, the great enclosure, and the presence of the conical tower. The place bears a religious significance, probably where the *Masvikiro enyika* (spirit mediums of the land) rest. However, looking from the perspective of the NMMZ Act, what is important about Great Zimbabwe is probably the architectural significance in the structures that we see. The dry mason architecture has earned Great Zimbabwe world heritage status and the aesthetics hold esteemed significance at an

international level. The aesthetics and grandeur seem more prioritised at the expense of the local religious significance. The guiding principle which is the Act does not have room for anything about religious value of the site. We do not have legislation that protects all the landscape, what is protected are the monuments.

Based on the research field work the chapter articulated the current state of affairs at Great Zimbabwe national shrine and the level of community engagement. It established that Great Zimbabwe is surrounded by a complex community with varying interests and this is complicating management of the cultural landscape. Interpretation of Great Zimbabwe by these various communities is not the same. Great Zimbabwe is a contested landscape with the local community claiming a stake. There are however efforts by the managing authority (NMMZ), negotiating inclusive strategies in the management of this national shrine and one of these has been the establishment of the GZLCMC. However, community engagement at the Great Zimbabwe is partial and does not fully meet the demands of the decolonial theory. There is still challenges in the management of the intangible cultural heritages. Challenges identified emanates from failing to adequately define heritage and decolonial thinking offers an opportunity to also allow us to have a more comprehensive understanding of who constitute the stakeholders.

## Chapter Four

### Recommendations and Conclusions

This section offers concluding remarks to the study as I reflect on the discussion in the preceding sections under the spotlight of the decolonial theory. The discussion considers the possibilities of decoloniality and some of the areas that needs attention in the management of heritage sites like Great Zimbabwe. I have argued in this study that there are possibilities, especially through the deployment of decolonial thinking to involve the community in the management of the site. However, the process of decolonisation is easier said in theory than done in practice as there are challenges to effectively involve the community as the current management system falls within what Sinamai (2020) identifies as the western knowledge template that marginalises others' knowing. Finally, I suggest that the operations of real power at Great Zimbabwe still rest in the hands of the experts who control and dictate programmes at the site. Based on the discussions undertaken, there is need for an ongoing dialogue to negotiate alternative methods. Great Zimbabwe is an iconic monument with outstanding universal values which afforded the monument the status of a World Heritage Site. The values alluded to include aesthetic, cultural, economic, historical, religious, social, and its monumentality. However, the management of the site by NMMZ and its use by different stakeholders also entails conflicting expectations from the various interest groups. NMMZ has a legal mandate to manage the site, a seemingly flawless position as they have curators, conservators, tour guides, and site managers among other professionals all working within their ambit.

The current management system was crafted and nurtured during the colonial era and it is still intact. This is a problem and there is need to decolonise practice at Great Zimbabwe. This study has shown that decolonisation is possible and decolonial initiatives such as community collaborations and participation are being advocated for as they give a voice to the local communities who have been marginalised in the management of heritage places. Decoloniality offers a possibility to disrupt power relations at sites like Great Zimbabwe. Decolonisation comes with a lot of positive gains and probably that it is the correct thing to do now. The study shows that it is possible, however some challenges necessitate that it should be an ongoing process of negotiating the power imbalances in the management of heritage sites like Great Zimbabwe. One other expert questioned whether we can rule out formal management systems that are there now, that are largely driven by heritage institutions? However, this study establishes that decoloniality is a process of negotiating, unveiling and disrupting the ills of coloniality, and therefore there is need to continue negotiating new ways and new ideas that

speak to the current communities and how they would want to see their heritage in future. Decoloniality does not necessarily rule out the tenets of the scientific approaches (Chipangura 2019).

Great strides have been made theoretically in decolonisation but what is also required is a pragmatic thrust in decolonisation. It is important that the people's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) be protected and performed in ways deemed valuable by those who understand it. This is practicable when we recognise the traditional leadership and the institutions that are central in some of the continued cultural practices. As I see it, the issue here is that we have a traditional leadership system and the national arms of the state (thus judiciary, executive and the legislature), and those at the helm of this nation state would want to maintain authority over traditional leaders. It is challenging to make traditional leadership institutions and the modern nation state coexist. In the same vein we have a management system that is colonially derived, and we have a traditional management system which has also been simultaneously running. The crux of the decolonisation question is on power sharing: how will traditional leadership oversee the heritage and what will the position of NMMZ be.

Criticism of the current setup is that the relationship is based on NMMZ just needing the endorsements of the local community when they are going international as part and parcel of the things that are in the operational guidelines and conventions. Operational guidelines stipulate the involvement of the community and experts would want to report that they have involved the communities whilst prioritising the world heritage status which accrues financial returns. World heritage status is a brand and tourists are very particular that they would want to visit these World Heritage Sites. Importantly, the convention comes with funding, for example the Africa World Heritage Fund, in the case of a disaster, will pour in foreign currency into the affected WHSs. Consequently, what it means is that it is a plus for any country to have their site(s) on the world heritage list because there are benefits that accrue on the account of member states. What is not clear though is whether the revenue directly benefits the local community or not, but it is a fact that managing authorities strive to fulfil the international operational guidelines. However, there are obviously principles introduced by the formal management system which are good and can be considered and there are also good things that we can appreciate from the traditional system. I should admit, the process of decolonisation comes with challenges as there is bound to be some resistance to change for fear of the unknown by the various interested stakeholders. Many people would want to remain in their positions, no one is prepared to accommodate change.

Great Zimbabwe is a contested cultural landscape, where there is a clash of values, as alluded to in the discussion. In this decolonial moment it is all about finding a compromise, catering for everyone and at the same time not compromising the integrity of the site. Great Zimbabwe is an important national cultural resource for tourism, culture, education, history, development and many other good things. In the current discourse of conflict resolutions, conflicts are not won rather they are negotiated so that the opposing sides all go home with happy frames of mind. What it then means in the case of Great Zimbabwe is that there is a need to find a point where everyone's various needs are met, where NMMZ is able to fulfil its mandate, the local community feels their needs are addressed and are fully involved in the management of their heritage, also that the WHC is satisfied with the compliance of regulations, tourists have a conducive leisure space, and school children can still safely access the space. It is important to recognise traditional institutions and their spiritual values in Great Zimbabwe cultural landscape. Policy and its implementation need to meet these various needs. Experts and the local community can work together, it is possible. The process of decolonisation, I argue, should be an ongoing process, where we should be in dialogue that recognises all stakeholders. What this study underscored is that all (experts and local community) are willing to work together. The sentiments I got were that at the local level they are willing to work together, and there are efforts already through for example the establishment of GZLCMC even though one of the challenges so far also is the invisible power at play from the government and politicians influencing policy and activities at the site.

Everyone is interested in Great Zimbabwe for various reasons. Great Zimbabwe means quite a lot for the state, it has long been appropriated by politicians from various areas. The fact that Zimbabwe was named after Great Zimbabwe tells us a story about the interest borne by the political elite. The fact that people would appropriate the site, use it for purposes of claiming legitimacy or mending national identity, it is a source of inspiration where as a people we can rally around Great Zimbabwe as a source of inspiration, and it means that everyone would like to exploit the political capital that comes with the site, others trying to appropriate it as theirs. This goes to show that when we look at heritage sites like Great Zimbabwe, they attract various communities with different motives and competing interest and decoloniality offers the opportunity to negotiate new ways to satisfy the various interests.

This study has demonstrated that opportunities for decolonising are immense. Decolonising heritage management gives us an occasion to reflect our legislation, particularly how we define heritage. Countries like South Africa, for example as one expert also attested, have gone

beyond the nature-culture divide. In Zimbabwe for example the NMMZ Act and the Wildlife Management Act are separate pieces of legislation with different structures. It leaves no opportunities for nature culture linkages and yet, if we reflect on the pre-colonial times there was no distinction between nature and culture. The cultural lived in the natural and so was the natural existing within the cultural realm. How can we talk about a national park just outside the boundaries of Great Zimbabwe for example yet Great Zimbabwe itself is located within that same landscape? In the above case, we differentiate the two, yet these are interlinked. Great Zimbabwe has its own natural qualities. It is probably the natural qualities that drove the people of Great Zimbabwe to come and settle, the natural granite formations which they could exploit for constructing the dry-stone structures. Thus, at national level we also need to decolonise what we define as heritage. Places like Great Zimbabwe also have significance at the local level. The chiefs and the local communities respect Great Zimbabwe landscape because they understand the significance of the place, especially at the local level and the ways of protecting the cultural landscape. One of the challenges of managing heritage identified earlier has been failure to adequately define heritage and this needs to be addressed. Now that there is no definition of heritage it is a great opportunity in this decolonial moment to shift how it is currently being defined and the question is who does the defining of heritage. The country (all stakeholders included) needs to define heritage and Smith's (2006) definition of heritage is important to consider.

At the moment, decoloniality has become a fuzzy buzzword, "problematic in itself", and La Salle (2010:416), holds that it is more of a rhetoric. Thinking through the geographies of power, as much as it is thought that decolonial initiatives such as community collaborations and participation are the panacea, there is still a hidden operation of expertise of power that affects these community initiatives. Collaborations aim to "redress the power imbalances" between in this case the managing authorities and the local community "by ensuring equality in the relationship" (La Salle, 2010:406). Collaborations should be meaningful and it must be seen to it that it does not counter "the very empowerment that it is meant to engender" (Boast, 2011:57). This study shows that communities are merely consulted and not really collaborated with. La Salle (2010:143) emphasizes that collaborations mean more than consultation or simply working together. Currently, managing authorities at Great Zimbabwe are working within the conservation philosophy and with legislations that are created outside the cultural framework that birthed Great Zimbabwe cultural heritage (Sinamai, 2020:3). An alternative approach is suggested by La Salle (2010:143) in that perhaps collaborations should be anarchic

to emancipate and create new space in order to reify the inequality collaborations seeks to undo. It is recommended that there be a continuous dialogue to come up with an alternative, or alternatives that do not replicate the manipulative character deeply embedded in the colonial philosophy. As La Salle (2010:416) suggests that, “if we truly are committed to ‘decolonisation’, we need to be prepared to go beyond collaboration, beyond sharing” to relinquish control over management of these cultural resources. I will conclude by warning that decoloniality is not just a buzz word, fancy rhetoric or mere lip service, but it should be treated as a necessary redressing of past biases in order to move to a more equal and representative future.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1 Interview transcript**

#### **Interview with (Expert 1)**

Revai Boterere (**RB**): greetings again Doc, thank you for this opportunity to have a conversation with you. As I mentioned when I introduced myself earlier, I am conducting a study seeking to answer the question on how a decolonial thinking can shift the way the Great Zimbabwe WHS is being managed. Fairly argued in theory so far is the idea that heritage management in Zimbabwe as it is with other African countries follows a colonially informed system of management criticised of having worked to alienating the intangible concerns of the local communities and side-lining the communities from the management of these heritage sites. So, before we engage in this conversation would you mind first introducing yourself?

**E1**: My name is Tawanda Mukwende PhD, and I am the resident Archaeologist here at Great Zimbabwe. I joined Great Zimbabwe in 2018 moving from Khami WHS which also falls under NMMZ, so it was a lateral transfer from one site to the other. Most of the work I do here at Great Zimbabwe are into research on the archaeology of Great Zimbabwe. We also do work on the conservation of the site, managing the site together with communities, working with other stakeholders who are also involved in the management of the cultural and natural elements of Great Zimbabwe.

**RB**: What is your take on community involvement in the management and use of the site? I would also want to hear your position on the critics by some scholars on how heritage is being managed.

**E1**: Probably as a background I will take you to the article by Webber Ndoro and Wijesuriya on Heritage management in Africa and Asia. One of the things that they were trying to do was trying to reflect on how heritage was managed from the pre-colonial period into the colonial and into the post-colonial period. One of the major challenges that we have, much to believe is that heritage is a concept that was brought into Africa by Europeans. Probably that is true to some extent in that the Europeans brought certain forms of heritage management system or certain philosophy of theirs which was part of or which derived from their background in European and their Western philosophy of understanding heritage but we also had our own system of managing sites/heritage places. If you go into the article by Ndoro and Wijesuriya, one of the things that is reflected is that heritage sites such as Great Zimbabwe, Khami,

Matopos and many others, they were important places in the day to day lives of the people. So Great Zimbabwe was not meant to be maintained to be fenced off, where people were not allowed to move in freely as they want to go carrying out their daily rituals etc, where a heritage management authority is supposed to control, controlling whatever or how people move in or move out. So, to me it shows how heritage management has evolved from pre-colonial period. Unfortunately, in the past colonial period nothing much has been done to try and go back to what was obtaining before colonialism in Africa, that is actually being one of the greatest tragedy is that the post-colonial heritage managers continued with the colonial philosophies of heritage management which are also perpetuated by other international institutions such as the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS etc. These guys still maintain the western philosophical understanding of heritage management making it very difficult for us to continue or rather to go back to our own value system in terms of how we manage heritage or rather how define or perceive heritage and then how we then manage that which we define as heritage. The other issue is on the definition of heritage itself. What is heritage? If you go to our NMMZ Act, what is actually interesting is that there is no heritage in the NMMZ Act. There are monuments, relics, fossils etc., but there is nothing that you call heritage which is all encompassing be it cultural or natural. So, that is also the other dilemma to have as a country particularly looking after site such as Great Zimbabwe, we still view it as a monument rather than as a heritage place. So, we still have a lot of levels that in my personal opinion we need to sort ourselves from the highest level in terms of legislation, how do we define what we call heritage, because as it is you can't talk about decolonizing heritage management at the local level when at the highest level (national) we are still stuck in conceptualisations of heritage as monuments, as relics and artefacts.

**RB.** Meaning largely management of sites is guided by Acts?

**E1.** Yes, I think pretty much all nations they have a guiding framework, legislation for example South Africa, they have their National Heritage Resources Act of 1999. So, for instance you take the NHR Act of 1999, they do define what heritage is. If you come to our NMMZ Act and you look at what heritage is, in fact there is no definition of heritage in our NMMZ Act. So that is where in the first instance as a departure point, that is probably that we need to go and say what is it that we define as heritage. Why is GZ of national significance to us? What are the guiding principles? What are the guiding values? What is it that makes GZ so important to us? Is it just because it is a grand place with massive structures, with free standing structures which were constructed without any binding mortar, is that what is important to us, or is it that the

presence of the great enclosure, the presence of the conical tower, the engineering, the architecture et cetera. Is that so important to us or is it the religious significance of the place, probably that is where the *masvikiro enyika ndoopanogara*. What is it that make our GZ so important to us? So, if you go to NMMZ Act what is more important about GZ is probably the architectural significance, the structures that we see at the site, that is probably what is more significant. Even if you look at it from the World Heritage perspective, GZ was considered significant because of the dry-stone mason architecture, which is what is more significant about GZ at the international level, but what about the local religious significance of the site. Who takes care of that now? There is no one because our guiding principle which is the Act does not have any room for anything about religious significance or religious value of the site. So, you go to Matopos world heritage landscape which is 3000 square kilometres but there is nowhere within our national legislation where that is protected. According to the world heritage, it is these 3000 square kilometres which is the Matopos WH landscape, but as a country we do not have any legislation that protect all these 3000 square kilometres because what we protect are monuments. So, you go to Watugi we protect, you go to Bhambata we protect, you go to Pomongwe we protect, the National Park we protect, you go to another rock art site we protect, this dry stone wall site we make a national monument we protect but don't protect the wholesome because what is important is the landscape within these sites/monuments are located not these individual sites.

**RB.** So, from your experience at GZ and these other places you have been to, what is your position on the idea of decolonisation, what possibilities do we have or challenges and success stories so far if any.

**E1.** I think the opportunities of decolonising are quite immense, first and foremost it gives us an opportunity to reflect on our legislation how we define heritage. Some countries such as SA have actually gone beyond the nature culture divide. Here in Zimbabwe NMMZ specifically cultural heritage, Zimbabwe wildlife management Act is a separate piece of legislation on its own with its own structures. There are no opportunities for nature culture linkages. Yet if you reflect back to the precolonial period there was no distinction between nature and culture. The cultural lived in the natural and the natural also lived in the cultural. It is one and the same thing. You can talk about a national park just outside the boundaries of GZ yet GZ itself is located within that same landscape. So, why then differentiate that, to say this is cultural on its own and the natural on its own. Doesn't GZ has its natural qualities? It is probably the natural qualities that drove the people to actually come and settle at this place. The natural granite

formations which they could exploit for constructing these dry-stone structures etc. So, there is, at a national level, we need to decolonise what we define as heritage. Let's take a cue from one, I will just reflect on the NHR Act of SA which defines heritage as anything that we have in SA. What then distinguishes one heritage from another is its significance. One of it is that a national level, the other one is at a provincial level, the other one at a district level and going to the lowest level that you can think of. So, some places have significance at the local level. It is probably the chief and his community who have got respect for that heritage because it is them who understands at their local level the significance of the place. But there are other places such as Mapungubwe, it is national in terms of its significance, so I think this decolonial thinking gives us an opportunity to reflect back to say how exactly do we define our heritage. Can we go back to our legislation and take a look and redefine heritage so that we can better manage that heritage. Because one of the challenges that we have in terms of managing is that we fail to define adequately our heritage hence we fail to manage it properly.

**RB.** So, take me through the idea of decoloniality, as an archaeologist. Have there been efforts at Great Zimbabwe of involving the community, working with the community, working together as in managing the site, allowing them to also use the site? Have there been efforts to hear how the community interpret the site? What does the site mean to them and as experts how do you work with the community at the site?

**E1.** As a background, you know GZ, when the country was colonised. It was also one of the machinations of the colonialists. You will find that as early as the 1890s, you are having these pseudo-archaeologists who are coming into the country excavating the site, trying to find as much information as possible that they could about the site. Although with an inclination to try to leave the site with phonation origins. So GZ has always been the centre piece of colonial endeavours in the country so much that during the colonial period there was that detachment of local communities with GZ. I think you might have read that when the likes of Carl Mauch and other guys arrived here there were Mugabe and some of his people who had already settled in GZ itself what we now call the national monument. These are later on systematically removed and settled outside the monument. But unfortunately come now the post-colonial period with independence people thought that they were going to be taken back to their ancestral lands, not only at GZ, even at Matopos. If you read voices from the rock by Terrence Ranger. There are still those contestations, people still want to go back into the national park, but this was not to be. So, there is still this cry from the local communities that we still want to be recognised as the rightful owners of GZ, we still want to be recognised as the rightful heirs

of the ancestors who built GZ. But at theoretical level, it is a bit debatable, the locals argue that we are the rightful heirs of GZ, but then we also get at a national some people who argue that all of us as Zimbabweans we are rightful heirs of GZ. It is a site that has national significance. So if u claim that as Mugabe people we are the rightful heirs, you are trying to limit the significance of GZ to a local level, yet GZ is much more than that, even people from other parts of the country they also identify with the site even some from outside the borders also recognise with GZ because of this national significance that it has across the length and breadth of the country particularly if we are to look at it from a religious perspective that people come from many parts of the country even outside the borders of the country to come to GZ for religious purposes, for rituals etc. So contestations between the locals who argue that we are supposed to be here at GZ, we are supposed to be the ones controlling what happens at GZ yet at national level we have these voices saying why don't you open up the site to everybody, we are also children of Zimbabwe we are supposed to be utilising also GZ as an important resource. So, you do have these debates in the public sphere over to what extent people should be actually engaging with GZ. But probably just at local level as NMMZ we do engage with local communities, the three rather four chiefs that are surrounding GZ. We have Chief Mugabe, chief Nemanwa though yet to be appointed, he is headman, chief Charumbira though he is not in close proximity with the site. He is also considered when we do consultations or when we talk about GZ with the local chieftaincy.

**RB.** How are the chiefs connected to the site, is it about proximity or else?

**E1.** The other contestations which are there particularly to do with chieftainships over which chief who owns or under whose jurisdiction GZ falls, that's an issue that is yet to be agreed on. I think that's an issue for the chiefs themselves to decide on and other quarters to decide on, in terms of jurisdiction. Under whose land the GZ is falling, Of course a lot of other scholars have said different things, some argue that the Mugabe people settled here, then Nemanwa has got his own story, and Murinye also has his own stories. So in terms of chiefs and their jurisdiction, that one is a bit of a hot potato for us, but I think over the past years it has been agreed between NMMZ and the chiefs that we work together with the Murinye people, the Mugabe, the Nemanwa and the Charumbiras. When we are dealing with issues to do with GZ, we do have to inform these chiefs in any of the discussions which have to do with the local communities.

**RB.** How has been the involvement of the community so far?

**E1.** We have what we call Local Community Management Committee which is made up of two representatives coming from these four chiefs. So, these representatives are representing the four chiefs. We do meetings, I am sure you can confirm with *mai* Maduro in terms of the frequency of the meetings. But we are supposed to do meetings on regular basis to discuss issues to do with management of the site. So whatever issues the community might have with us, those are raised in that meeting. Whatever issues that we want to bring to the attention of the community we raise within those meetings. We can also take time to visit the communities outside these meetings for instance when we want to meet larger groups of local people with specific issues that we want to talk about, we can also go into the communal areas and talk to communities but this forum is to raise all the issues to do with the management of GZ across any issues. We discuss any issues in those meetings.

**RB.** How has the intangible aspect of the heritage been incorporated in the management of the GZ?

**TM.** Of course, GZ is not only about the physical aspect, there is the intangible elements. Of course during the colonial period most of the intangible elements associated with Great Zimbabwe were very much suppressed whilst the site was being developed particularly for tourism and also a lot of developments were taking place to try to...the site and some of the intangible element to do with the site, some of them of course do express themselves in the tangible like for instance we have the Chisikana Spring, I think if you have read from Matenga's PhD thesis, he talked about one or two things about Chisikana spring. The spring was closed sometime in 1950s, it was a perennial spring. Tradition has it that even if there was a drought you would still find water at the spring. The spring is within GZ just outside the great enclosure. So unfortunately during the colonial period as the site was now being developed, water logging was a very big challenge for that were developing the site, remember at some point a golf course was constructed within GZ and one of the challenges that they were facing was water logging. So, the Chisikana spring, and there was also another small stream which passed through this western side of the Hill complex, this side where we see the eucalyptus. They were planted to contain water. It was a stream which was also closed and remember there is this tar which was also constructed to the dam wall. Remember springs are very important in our society, they are the sustenance of life. Anywhere water originates it is a very important place in society. You can't be seen defiling or playing around with such a place remember there are also a lot of stories about traditions, stories associated with springs, *nyaya dzema njuzu* [stories of mermaids] etc. So, it is one of those places which were highly venerated

at GZ and unfortunately in the 1950s they closed it with concrete. So, ever since the closing of Chisikana spring it is now dry. Matenga attempted to open up the spring sometime, in fact he opened it up in the 2000s when he became director, but it is no longer the old Chisikana spring of the past. I think there was actually a ceremony that was done involving the local communities who came. The four chiefs were represented. There was a ceremony to reopen Chisikana spring. So, these are some of the intangible aspects associated with GZ. Then the other second is to do with the entrance to GZ, there is what is known as the Mujejeje, the ritual entrance to GZ. Mujejeje is just, in geological terms it's on a Dwala. It is just a quartz vein *paruware*, so *pakangotsemuka*. Then it's considered as a sacred entrance to GZ. So, what happens when people get to the site and to the Mujejeje they pick a pebble from the left and side and then they tap on the whole length of the Mujejeje and leave the pebble on the other end and then they enter the site? After, on leaving the site they also do the ritual, now tapping from the right. I will refer to a documentary by this American guy, He had Dr Matenga as his resource person and mbuya Zarira one of the local svikiros. So, you can actually see the dramatization of the entrance to the *Mujejeje*. So that one area, but one of the things that we have also noted of late is that the Mujejeje, we don't only have it here at GZ, we also have them. I am sure if you also talk to mai Maduro our ethnographer, she will give you more insights. We also have more *Mujejejes* in other places across the GZ cultural landscape outside the boundaries of GZ. So, there are other places where actually you find *Mujejeje*. People were not only entering the cultural landscape from one point. There are other points where people were actually entering GZ. One of the things that we have also noted from just reading is that this concept is not only peculiar to GZ only. This former palace of the king Moshoeshoe in Lesotho also had these sacred rituals which is done on entering the site. We also noted on other precolonial sites in other African countries that there are various traditions that are done on entering such sites which are peculiar to those sites. So *Mujejeje* is one of the intangible aspects of GZ but unfortunately, we are not taking into account at the present moment. It is one of those traditions that have died a natural death. We do know the physical evidence, the tangible evidence, we do know about it but in terms of expressing it it's one of those things that we have left to die unfortunately. Those are probably two of the intangible elements we can think about but I believe the local community should have more on other intangible elements associated with GZ. There are also a lot of other activities such as *kutsvaira mapa*, they do so at some certain time of the year. The local community would want to practice them; they are not being practiced at the moment. In terms of practicing these there is a certain section of the community who would want to practice them. We haven't had a very strong voice from the chiefs in support

of some of these activities. Some of the activities it's the *svikiros* that come and instruct on some activities to be done. Down the line you see another *svikiro kune zvakati zvinoda kugadzirwa*. Of course, some of them if you look around you might find some historical precedence but one of the challenges is that I think because of the nationalism of GZ we tend to overlook some of these little local rituals. Someone somewhere might not be concerned with *kutsaira mapa* at GZ but when it comes to big events, those that affect or speak to the nation. However, the local guys would argue *kuti mushaka haunga garika usina kucheneswa*. So that's where we have contestations between the national significance of the site and the local significance of the site. But what then of course nationally because of the law, *tisu tinawo mutemo wacho, tisu tiri ku controller* and because you want to avoid, locally also we have differences in terms of how things are supposed to be done. Like we were saying we have four chiefs, even *machiefs acho ari four masvikiro anosiyana*. So, at national level to avoid inconveniences and conflicts we say let's just put a stop to everything and until further notice you get that kind of action. It is not a documented rule *zvekuti kana kuzvitsvaga kuti iye akaita kuti zvisaitwa zvakanyorwa papi hatina*.

**RB.** When the local community members come and say they want to use the site, the religious interested community, where do they actually say is more valuable to them?

**E1.** Muchikomo, the Hill complex

**RB.** Why chikomo specifically

**E1.** Ndoo pane connection *dzacho nevakuru vavo*, ma ancestors.

**RB.** So, when they come to you experts and say they want to use the GZ, they don't want to use the whole place.

**E1.** Ndoo pamwe pane issue when defining GZ, for them they are in GZ already *wanongoti tauya toda kuenda kugomo*. This does not mean ceremonies/rituals are not happening in the community, *tinitombo kokwawo*. You might find kuti there are other places that are much more sacred than the hill complex. It is debatable some people might say *chikomo chenyu ichi hachisisina basa ichi kune kumwe kwatisingato sviki*, which is why we would have to go back and redefine heritage kuti isusu we want to say toisa fence nepamusoro pechisikana spring what sense is there in demarcating it. It does not necessarily mean that ma dry-stone wall structures they are only within this core zone. We do have others that are outside those that identify with the same time period with the GZ, just 1-2km away we do find them. So *kuti tizoti*

*aya ndoo ma* boundaries e GZ what did we have in mind. We do have many metal working sites dze GZ town they are all located outside the boundaries of the monuments now.

**RB.** So how do you relate with that which is outside the boundaries.

**E1.** That's the thing that *thina* our focus is more on protecting that which we have, because one of the other issues is that because of the nature and way we manage heritage is by expropriation, if it is our land, we remove u.

**RB.** So, could we be having more resources which are of heritage value not expert managed?

**E1.** Of course, within the GZ there is quite a lot of heritage that we know. That probably has not been accorded national significance. That we just identify as local sites.

**RB.** So if we are to identify such resources and we are still using the same instruments, it means we are still going to perpetuate the same problem of alienating the local community because expropriation is saying this is now ours you can't be close to it, it has to be protected?

**E1.** So the best idea is to say how do we come up with a strategy where whoever they are we identify that there something that is of significance, how do we work with them in terms of managing something which is similar to what is obtaining with the National Resources Act of SA. Heritage is just something we can't talk about managing without the community.

**RB.** What makes a cultural resource something of national significance?

**E1.** It is basically about values, but probably the big question is who is looking at these values. For us to have gotten to a point of saying GZ is of national significance is it the people of GZ who are saying it is of national significance or else it is the experts who are saying GZ receives a lot of visitors. It is the voice of experts that is accorded in determining resources of national significance.

**RB.** In Zimbabwe what do you say about the incorporation of the intangible heritage?

**E1.** Part of the issues that I referred to the efforts made by Matenga particularly with Chisikana spring, to try to reopen it. Of course, it was reopened but, unfortunately you can't, of course the impact of the closure from the 1950s – around 2000 probably we will live with it for the rest of our life, we can't have that perennial Chisikana spring just jotting water every season be it in the dry season. Certainly, Chisikana will never be the same again but those efforts are there to try and have those intangible aspects incorporated in the management of sites. The other interesting thing is of our Shona village, that's one area where the idea was to develop a

theme park which would, besides providing entertainment to tourist, it would try to give an idea of sort of a living museum, what exactly a traditional Shona homestead would actually look like. So, you do have a Shona theme park as a re-enactment of life at GZ and this is made up of locals working with our researchers.

## **Appendix 2 Focus group discussion transcript**

**Expert 1:** Greetings elders.

**Committee Members (CMs):** We are well, how are you as well.

**E1:** We thank you for coming, although it was a short notice. Eeh, we have just a small matter that we have gathered for. We have a visitor, who is doing his research focussing on the management of heritage places like the Great Zimbabwe. So, on the research participants he proposed to engage with, he found it important to discuss with the Local Committee since you are the link between NMMZ and the local community. He has found it important that in the process of his inquiry to have a focus group discussion that involves you. The research is for his studies that he is doing. His name is called Revai Boterere. He is a Zimbabwean. He is the one seated on my left. So, Revai these are the members of the Great Zimbabwe Local Community Management Committee. I think you can introduce yourself to them. Do you think you can start by introducing them (committee) to him mai Maduro.

**E5:** I think the chair of the committee can introduce his colleagues.

**RB:** So, should I go first or them?

**E5:** You can go first then they will come after you, rather they know you first.

**RB:** (clapping hands), *Ndadzoka ndaita wasu, so my hands are so loud. My name is Revai Boterere. Ini ndiri muzukuru waMakoni, wekwaMakoni kwa Rusape. Ndiri muzukuru waBoterere, wa Ndapfunya, wa Nyakurukwa, wa Ruredzo kusvika kunana Chikumbirike, Muswere, Gunguwo wa Chiriri, dzinde ari Chindira Chopinduka wabvakure we humambo munyika ya mambo Makoni kwa Makoni kwa Rusape kunyangwe wana sekuru wakazo tamira kwa Honde.* [I am a descendant of Boterere, Ndapfunya, Nyakurukwa, Ruredzo, going upto Chikumbirike, Muswere, Gunguwo of Chiriri, the root being Chindira Chopinduka (from far places). I am of the Makoni chieftaincy, from Makoni in Rusape although our grandfather moved and settled in Honde valley]. So, I am also son of the soil and currently I am doing my Masters studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg South Africa. I am

doing a Master of the Arts in Heritage studies. Reading through works of some of our own fellow Zimbabweans like Webber Ndoro, Chirikure, Pikirai and many others, they have discussed how heritage is being managed in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular, as you all know that at some point our country was colonised, until we got independence in 1980, and the colonial masters had their ways of managing heritage. After attaining independence, we continued as a country with the colonially informed systems of management. These scholars have criticised the system of having worked to alienate the local community in the management of heritage who are the custodians of the heritage. The system also alienated indigenous knowing and processes especially on the intangible heritages because what was important to them was the tangible aspects of heritage. But when we look at Great Zimbabwe it is more than that for example our skills, culture, music, craft and others. The system uses legislations. There is a theory that is being advocated for as a system that helps solve problems created by this colonial dogma. So, through this inquiry I am asking how a decolonial thinking can shift how the shrine is being managed. I want to know how Great Zimbabwe is being managed, what are the challenges, and see what the decolonial theory offers. I would want to find out how the community is involved.

**E1:** Thank you Mr Boterere, I'm sure we all head him, now chairman you can also introduce your team and then you can be the first contributor for the discussion.

**CM1:** My name is Shangwa, I am the chairman representing the three Chiefs, Nemamwa, Mugabe and Murinye. The one writing is the secretary of our committee, his name is Bothwell and his vice is Noget. Others are the committee members, we have Mr Makusha and Mr Gwembe

**RB:** I am pleased to meet you all.

**CMs:** Ware also pleased to meet you.

**RB:** Now to the experts, you can help introduce me to your team Doc.

**E1:** We have Mr Mashamaire, I am sure you have meet him before, we have sekuru vangu Mhofu, I am Mukwende, we have Mr Magadzike, we have Gono our education officer who deals with school leaners who visit here, and mai Maduro. So, I will leave it to him, since he is the one who brought us together here today to lead the discussion and direct the way he wants the conversation to be. I am sure we have all understood what the focus of his study is. So, we are here as a committee to help each other and contribute to this enquiry.

**RB:** Thank you Doc, so, how is Great Zimbabwe managed?

**CM 1:** Now things seems to have been taking shape. Local community has been contributing in some ways for example seeing that trees are not being cut, there are nor veld fires, no stray cattle in the monuments so that our heritage is not destroyed. Before things were not like this, now there are some improvements. This is because local community is now being involved and contributing as there is now common understanding that it is our heritage too. NMMZ realised that lets go back to the village heads, to say let's work together and your children will benefit work opportunities, school fees and the local community is also realising these benefits hence coming in to help protect. Yes, mischievous behaviours from some is inevitable here and there but now there have been positive changes.

**RB:** Now as experts how have you been managing Great Zimbabwe? Maybe you can come in Doc then pass it to your colleagues.

**E1:** Basically, we have experts falling under management authority NMMZ responsible for places like Great Zimbabwe. We work on the protection of the site on a day to day basis. But as have been said by the chairman, we do not work alone, we also work with the community. We have a fully-fledged committee. They are our link to the community. They are the ones we discuss with when issues arise so that we help each other or have a common understanding with the community. This because our understanding is that *nzvimbo ino haisi yedu asi inzvimbo inavaridzi vayo*, [this place is not ours, but it has owners]. So, the committee comes in representing the traditional leadership (madzishe aka komberedza nzvimbo ino) in which GZ is found. So, this is what I can in brief is how we work as NMMZ working with the community committee.

**RB:** Any contributions from the team?

**E4.** True, that's how we work here but at the same time we have guidelines that we follow ari mu management plan. Our management plan was made up mapping out how we must work with the community, *kuti tinodyidzana kubva papi kusvika papi*. And that is where the idea of community engagement is coming from. The other thing is that, since we are a World Heritage site, we have other guidelines we inclined to follow from UNESCO. Especially UNESCO is the one advocating for engaging the community in what we do. UNESCO is of the understanding that, yes, you are managing these sites, but they have owners. Another instrument that we have besides management plan is the Act, and it is clearly stated in the Act

on how we should engage with the community. So, our job is to apply that which is stated in the Act.

**RB:** As community how do you see Great Zimbabwe, what does it mean to you and what you use the site for?

**CM 1:** When we learnt that Great Zimbabwe is important from a traditional perspective, we have a history that says our elders have been here. Rituals must be conducted here, which also help with rain making. But since it is said that it is not solely ours that much as the locals that is where we have problems. Because there are some rituals which must be done by us the custodians. Also, our elders used to move around, they would go and come back and we have spirit mediums like that. But it is difficult because of the law. We have limits with the laws. But most often this is where our wish is, if it is possible to follow our culture and traditional ways of life. We understand that the problem maybe that since it is a place tourist want to visit they may find clothes tied on trees, others having done their rituals but what we are saying is if possible local chiefs can be afforded a day or so to perform their ritual ceremonies. That is our wish, be it from Nemanwa, Mugabe clans if they can get a day that those who would want to perform their rituals then they can be allowed to do so.

**RB:** Where would you want to do your rituals, I see Great Zimbabwe is bigger than I imagined.

**CM 3:** Firstly, when we speak of traditional rules and customs. It can't be right that I can be seen conducting my rituals in the Wasu area. You will see that such kind of rituals will be lost. When I am appeasing my father, I do that where he is laid to rest. I can't say when I am appeasing my father and do that on the grave of Murewa. So, we are faced with a big challenge because rituals, perhaps because of colonialism which affected us before and as we are trying to decolonise what the whites did, let's consider those who have their graves at the place we want to do the rituals, to lead, so that we can be heard by our ancestors. When we talk of traditional rules and customs we are talking about where *dzinza rako*, your clan came from. That is how you can know where you can conduct *chikaranga chako* your tradition or custom (ritual), and avoid the situation were one can come from as far as Chivi, I am Masunda I want to conduct my ritual in Great Zimbabwe. When you come to Great Zimbabwe *uri kuudza ani* who are you communicating to. You will do the wrong ritual which resultantly desecrate the place. This is my view that yes, we value Great Zimbabwe but those who come from authorities they simply say this and that is what is supposed to be done. We thank the NMMZ staff who are working here who realised that it is better they work with the local community. But us

having to know *rudzi* the clan, which is supposed *kupira ipapo* to conduct their ritual, so that we can be heard.

**RB:** So, are you saying you have some rituals that needs to be conducted by a specific clan and when?

**CM 3:** We have always known that when someone wants to do their ritual, they must go *pane makuva ake* where there are their graves, *pane mapa ake*. Those who are in here knows. If I remember very well, we ones had a function here madzishe vachinetsana, until VaMugabe said *aiwazve* chiefs who are here, go do your research. We have researchers like Adam Rendas who came in 1865, Carl Mauch who came in 1872 up to the likes of James Jones, who have pictures with evidence which is direct (clear). So now we have a situation where that is not being followed. The white man came he did not change anything. They only followed what they found in place. Maybe they changed boundaries, but me, when looking at what was written by Carl Mauch correctly, and if we follow it through the National Archives it has its historical value. When fires used to be put off, we had a chief who gathered people that, come let us put off this way and if we look at some graves *arimo* they have some writings in bottles. So, we are no longer following our customs we now following the modern ways which may result in our place problematic. To even say today let's do our rituals to get rains, we can't get it anymore. Or else we are going to end up, the whole place turned into a location (residential area) when we look at council and others. All these birds we say are found at Great Zimbabwe we are going to get to a point where we cannot see them anymore. They were found in and around Great Zimbabwe, we ones had a debate with the University people. Where the University was starting from, otherwise 500m from the Hill complex is stretching to where it is today. We will attract locations, ending up with students coming from Botswana, from Malawi, from all over and our tradition and accustoms will be dying because their dressing is not from Zimbabwe, some they come wearing trousers, tights only etc.

**RB:** Where do you conduct your rituals then? And now that we are all agreeing that it is important to many people, how do we get to a point where we will say yes, we are benefiting economically and that which defines us as a people we are still in touch with it?

**CM 3:** I know it being conducted in the Hill complex that is where we have the graves that I know of.

**CM 4:** Now that we are talking of decolonisation, *magariro aimboita vanhu* mu Great Zimbabwe before the white man came and the setup of GZ in my knowledge is that at the Great

enclosure is where probably the *vahosi* stayed, at the Hill complex was the chief's place but where they used to gather for socialisation, *pavai tandarira* was at the valley ruins. So, in my view where they used to socialise is at the valley ruins it was not in the Great enclosure. I can imagine that the elderly, the Hill complex would be difficult to climb and attend a ceremony or event. But I am not denying the idea that ceremonies were held in the Hill complex.

**E5:** I would also want to agree with those who contributed earlier that in the Hill complex since when they are having some rituals it is done by a few in private then when it is supposed to have some dance it is then done here as was pointed before. I think where we might want to look critically is that when we talk of rituals they are conducted in different ways and few are the ones who communicate with the elders (ancestors). Even *mumba baba* is the one who goes *kuchikuva* and communicate *navakuru*, they the rest when is to be done in public it was done.

**RB:** Through you Doc, as experts do you see any of these being allowed to happen here considering you guidelines, Act, conventions, plan etc.

**CM2:** Allow me to contribute before experts say something. I wanted to say, I think the problem was that, people travelled as far as Guruswa, Tanzania for different reasons for example diseases. It should be looked at find out *kuti* who did they come and consult. I am sure evidence is there, that in the case of these problems who did they consult and how they did it. Because beer was brew at Great Zimbabwe even those in Guruswa they would know even those in India *kana kwabikwa chikaranga* (tradition/custom) ku Great Zimbabwe. Sometimes experts may not know who was consulted and who was further consulted to have it done that's another issue. Because it was orally passed on, it was not written down so they may take it for granted and choose to ignore it because they might argue *kuti zvakanyorwa papi* [where is it written].

**E1.** The opportunity as NMMZ we believe is there for such activities to happen. I am sure when we started I once said that for us to build such a relationship with the community like this through the formation of this Local Community Management Committee it is one of the aims to find out what we can do together with the local community to make our Great Zimbabwe to develop both from our view point as the managing authority with NMMZ Act, constitution of the country and also from the point of view of the community. So that the local community they also share their views as well. It not only about calling forward the community just to say *huyai tikuudzei nyaya iri pano*, it is also to say come let us put our heads together and discuss to see if there are ways we can have or develop on protecting our place. So, we

believe that as we dialogue, we must get to a point where we will be able to do such *mukunzwisana kwatinenge tichiita ne community*.

**E9:** I in my view I believe this can happen it's possible. It is something good through the committee that we have here with representatives of the chiefs. I think it is one of their wishes that this happens in here, but it is also the committee's wish that there is control on those who come going *ku mapa avo*. I think things just need *kuwandudzwa* a little kuti marituals must happen but dare *irori rinofanira kutseketudza* those who are supposed to come *chinangwa chavo*. I am sure when this was stopped the issue was on the aim. Plus, there is a bit of some controversy when it comes to *zvikaranga zvacho*. Some come wherever and say it is the place they would want. So, that controversy is the one which this committee should seat and be reported to deliberate because as it stands it is not like it is not allowed, *pari kunzi pane ma* procedures which must be followed and adhered to have that approval. What I think might be missing is that is the involvement of this committee in the procedures (process). We are saying there is the president's office, there is PC etc who are vetting people who would want to do *chikaranga chake*. I think if the request is from the Mugabes, Nemanwas, Murinyes or Charumbiras, if the committee is also involved in the vetting they can speed up the process since they will be knowing why this is important to them which will be a different case to a Janga mission person who want to say I also want permission. So, I think it's just small things *zvingada kuti wandudzwei but mukana ndowawo wakazara*.

**RB:** So, will I be right to interpret this to say yes, committee we have it, but it does not have power when it comes to controlling how things are being done at Great Zimbabwe?

**E4:** We cannot say the committee does not have power, but rather there are challenges. If we are to give a clear picture, we will be talking about who is supposed to do what. When go back to what has been said before that this committee is there so that we dialogue on what is supposed to be done and who is supposed to do it. So, they have power but only that we have not yet gotten to a point where it is that effective. This is because what maybe an issue between the managing authority of GZ and local community is to agree on what should be done and the way forward. Now what I think the situation is we do not have what is clear yet.

**E6:** I would want to take people back a little, on the question which was asked on whether when you are doing your rituals do you do them at the Great enclosure, valley ruins or else with others saying what they said. The problem comes with those coming not from the chief. They are the ones who you will see sometimes for example at the museum pasiwa *hari*, one

day at the Great enclosure *pasiwa mazi fodya*, sometimes at the cave they have left cloths, showing that these people though with the committee *tisati tati gejegeje*, but are we saying these people are seeing NMMZ ma experts as ma managing authorities who authorise or else are they seeing the community vachi authoriser. Meaning that if they as they seat here the three chiefs know the place. Meaning we would not find all these things anywhere. And this will also help NMMZ. What it means is that NMMZ is not informed by these people. Either they do it at night, then committee is not involved. This another problem that we have that *chikaranga che* Great Zimbabwe is not being done after consulting the NMMZ people. My understanding is that when some people come saying they want to conduct their rituals they are first asked whether they would have seen the committee and they are referred to them. But others are not waiting to consult the committee, they rather prefer to do it at night. So that is another issue that needs to be looked at. There was also mention of the peace guys, President's office, *tato tenderwa*, so on that there is need of being sorted out to see if the president's office knows that we have a committee which also have power they are asking for to enforce those with genuine problems to help the country and find where this can be done and not anywhere.

**RB:** As was pointed earlier that *masango* long ago they have been protected because of the traditional rules and regulations.

**CM1:** *Semunhu wati chemberei muno, kuda ndichangotaurawo semunhu wachembera.* Because when someone is old some things *musanyanya kuzviteerera* but other you must note them because that's is where history is. If you have noticed even the rains we had in this place of ours, thank you Gono. I can speak on the issue of this Masvingo area of ours, we cannot speak to Mutare issues because we don't go there. In this Dzimbabwe even the way we now receive rainfall now it is different from before. We are sometimes receiving just heavy blowing winds with no rain or even very little rain not as we would expect but we have chiefs. For it to lose value and it just being a place the problem starts from top level, it is like it has been signed down that we can't oppose the stamp from the president that Dr Matya even if it is supposed to be done this way it won't happen. So, we will in that case just watch as chiefs scratching our heads saying *aah* if it has come from the elders (national) us, the district what say do we have. Because those who come and do their rituals in their ways that are not known they would have paid at the gate, so, my committee when they meet these, they are told that we do not just come in. Then our power as chiefs, ancestors and *masvikiro* would have been devalued. Because someone just comes from as far as Chipinge and say I am PA so I have a letter. So, it's only them who are heard. Maybe it would be their instructions from church so that they gain spiritual

power as the place has spiritual power. The place is contested as was highlighted before by Gono [chidawo: totem] to say we have real power but let me just share as well. As you have heard him say it must be done at the ground, and others saying pa *Pere remarinda*. For this thing to have its power, those who are protecting this hill the three chiefs, Chief Nemanwa, chief Mugabe, chief Murinye, if there can be a way that this committee that it meets and initiate a proper meeting for the managing authorities and the chiefs themselves and remind each other that when we say Mujejeje what do we mean, when you say pfuko yakuvanji what does it mean *zvisingabve mupenzera* but coming from our heads and our memories of our past. If the three Chiefs come together even if they disagree on some issues at the end of the day they will come up with something. If they don't allow that to happen *haamboiti* value *masvingo edu iwaya*. *Apa ndazonya hangu kubuda pachena semunhu wati kurei*. If they work together these three chiefs this is when the words of this man and mine standing in the shoes of chief Murinye, and the other standing for chief Nemanwa because they are the owners of this hill. They would not fail to find a place for their customs as they are the custodians. So, if it is coming from, where did you say you are coming from with your work, I want to tell you a story that I have.

**RB:** From a university in South Africa.

**CM1:** It is the same as someone who has come from England, when your papers are now written text they almost become as the rules or 'the ways' to be followed but our soil does not agree with that. You must come behind us and *makonamombe edu oenda mberi kana mazoita mochingozoitawo henyu zvema* paper izvi. So, this shows where the power is lacking. What has happened? That power of our traditions and customs is not there anymore, the place where they should do their rituals freely is not there anymore because *penzera ndoo dzaamberi*.

**CM3:** I think I still remember very well that, in a home if the kraal has three bulls *hamugarike*. I want to give for example a story at the DA offices when there was the case of the birds with Chief Mugabe he was there. It became a difficult case. But if I look at the birds if I am not wrong, I had that the bird was taken in 1891, and we know who the chief was in 1891. That person is the one who the birds was taken from. But when the bird was returned it came back politically *ikaitwa zvayakaitwa* it did not get back in the hands. Like it happens with an avenging spirit, even if the fine is given to a very young person like this the spirit will be appeased. Now if say something has been taken from someone and you know the person but when it is being returned then you give it to a different person, meaning even history we will be teaching our children a wrong history. We would have lost track. That's why you heard I

said the point that who will do the ritual because there is no one ritual, which is conducted by three different people, even a bull if u keep confusing it will end up attacking people.

**RB:** So, going back to 1891 which chief was there during that time?

**CM3:** What I know is Adam Renders writing 1865 that Chief Mugabe is the one who was there, Carl Mauch also writing also wrote the same. Jones even have pictures available, I think even the resident minister who was there in 2013, when chief Murinye and Chief Mugabe *vachinetsana* [disagreed]. The letter everybody has it. Because even the three of us we will get to a point we quarrel and disagreeing that with our custom *tofanirwa kuisa maoko kana tasvika panzvimbo oiswa kunaani*. But if I look when we are at Chief Mugabe, in the area this will be kraal head, kraal head, kraal head, during a funeral when we finish burying the deceased. When people give memorial testimonies the last to speak is the area's kraal head. You will not hear people say a kraal head from Charumbira is the one supposed to practice *mahakurimwi pamusha pemumwe munhu*. *Tiri kutemesa mahakurimwi pamusha pemumwe munhu iye aripo, uyu anongo nyarara kunyange ivava vakazo para mhosva zuva remahakurimwi ndivavo vanhu vachasakura zuva ramahakurumwi*. I think this is one of the challenges that we are facing when it comes to our customs. Us the living who are here we are not practicing the correct customs which was done by our ancestors.

**E4:** I just wanted to say that I think when I contributed earlier, I'm sure if we look at what was said by the committee it seemed a laughing matter when we said it is a challenge to us when it comes to management, like that of who is who. Then another challenge which overrides both committee and us I think it is political power. Even all of us who have had this discussion like this we do not have power. We will also end up following suit. At the end of the day we will meet again like this pointing fingers that it's you who have allowed because when they came in doing what they want we were looking up to you believing you are responsible for the management of the site but someone came from Murehwa or from very faraway places. So, at the end of the day we keep meeting and continue disagreeing. Therefore, I was saying it a process to engage the community in the management of the Great Zimbabwe with the management staff. It is a process we expect that in a continued engagement together we will one day solve the problem. We will reach an agreement, consensus but for the time being we do not have something tangible.

**E9:** I want to go back to the statement by the gentleman that if the three chiefs meet on a round table, they will certainly have a consensus. I do not want to crush what others are saying that

1891 the bird was taken during when chief Mugabe was the chief, I am also not saying 1891 should be the benchmark. There is another one whose elephant horn was taken from him, the elephant horn had two branches, probably 1400AD that cannot give us a destination to say that person is the owner of Great Zimbabwe but if the three chiefs meet a resolution can be.

**RB:** I recognise you mother; you can contribute as well. As you contribute, I would want to hear your view on what traditional ways you also think needs to be considered by NMMZ in the management of Great Zimbabwe. As was said earlier, the idea of engaging the local community is to also get local knowledges and ideas from the community.

**CM4:** Before she contributes, may I remind elders that when we wake up in the morning, normally, the mother wakes up to sweeping the yard whilst the father inspects the kraal. When visitors come, they are welcomed to a home. I'm sure when people visited Great Zimbabwe they came from different places. There were people to receive them who would guide them on how things were done in the land. So, if the managing authorities leaves outsiders to do what they want is that good. Like they have called in the committee it is one way we can help each other to protect our place. Our eyes don't see the same. Also, there should be openness with each other. NMMZ should be open to criticism as well. It should also not be the case of say how can I approach this old man to tell him that his cattle have eaten this other's crops fearing that he will struck me with lightning.

**RB:** mother says she will contribute after you, you can go ahead.

**CM3:** I think these church people who come and put up their cloths are a problem. This place has been owned by the dead and their bible says the dead *havana mugove panyika*. What do they want on the property of the dead? Why do they want to come and do *zvikaranga* in here? Because it must be for traditional rituals. You see them come in and tie their cloths. The government should help us on this *kuti vanhu ava ngavarege kupinda*. As you have heard it that they just come in with letters from the high offices saying I have been permitted to do this. So, we will be saying you have been permitted by so and so but traditionally *tiri vanhu venyama* it will affect us because you would have done a wrong thing. I remember one day we had a white visitor who disappeared *kwa Barahanga ndege dzikamhanya mudenga* [plans were flown] looking for the visitor meaning something wrong would happen. Something would have not been done wright. When you see *muchembere* disappearing something is wrong. The problem is that we are now mixing church and tradition at the wrong place. Church people

should go in their sheds, they must conduct their services in their churches and leave us here with our customs.

**RB:** I had a conversation with some elders two days ago and they were saying the issue here is that *chivanhu chamunoona* don't think chinopera. *Vasharukwa vanongo furatira* [elders just give their backs] but they have a time they show signs. They don't normally show it there and then. Some of the signs is disappearing of people, drying of springs. It sometimes takes time but one day they will allow for very difficult situations. That is when you will start to wake up and run around for solutions, but you will be in troubles by then. These things affect us in many ways. *Hanzi Dzimbabwe iri ramunoona ndi Zame.*

**CM1:** Every year we know there are visitors who visit to view the Great Zimbabwe. Manging authorities should at some point sit down and organise a thanksgiving ceremony just to thank the owners of the place just to appreciate them that this year something was received. They will have to brew beer and slaughter a beast to appreciate the chiefs of the area who will be their guides. When people hear from wherever they will be they will know that they will have to exercise caution in the hill because the hill will be sacred.

**CM2:** Just to contribute, addin on to what has just been said by Gono and Shumba (totems) *eehe ndizvo hazvo*. What I am think in my head *semunhu wati chembere* [someone of old age] is that we have the NMMZ staff working here, we have people like you (researchers) willing to share ideas as well. The point raised by Puta that when the owners meet, they will certainly have a solution. The issue of security in Great Zimbabwe has been there before our current security guards/police. We have our place which you come across when coming from the Murinye side coming from Zaka, if ever you could just cross the line you would get confused if you had not followed procedures or had not done things right. This means security we had it since a long time only that this was desecrated when the whites came in and disrespected our ways and brought theirs. They started asking people to pay to view the place. The old government made us to just accept and they reduced the Chiefs' powers. Drums used to be played here and this happened when our country was still ok. We used to hear sounds of cows and their calves in the hill and sounds of people milking but this has stopped. As was raised by Gono, though he did not fully unpack it to say when did this stop and whether it is possible to have these back again. *Zvikadzoka kuvaridzi vacho vechi vanhu hapana chisinga muki*. That's why you see sometimes we have gold *richiputika*, when the whites where here why didn't it happen like it is sometimes happening. This means that there are ways we are using that

ancestors are not happy with and they will be showing signs. Then I will also go back to the point that authorities, on the revenue they are making here when the year ends there should buy *mamera* and invite Chiefs because they are the ones who know how it is done, they should have ritual ceremonies to appreciate the owners. *Saka taikumbira kuti mugonyora kuti vanhu veku Great Zimbabwe vanoti tibatsireiwo tishandise mamw masimba edu imi mungozo tsikisa zvidhindo kuti izvi hazviitwi ku Great Zimbabwe asi izvi zvakati zvinofanirwa.*

**E6:** *Ndoda kuti taurei zvishoma*, it might be some experience of the Great Zimbabwe. They raised the issue of the sounds of cows *nemidziyo*, tomatoes in the hill. Of course, we want to decolonise. By then the whites were here running Great Zimbabwe, I want to tell you that they have things they valued and respected *zviri zva vanhu* and on the other hand us as the people we fail to respect what is ours, for example if I am to ask that when did the sounds and voices from the hill stopped. Where they the whites who stopped them or else even when they were still here sounds were heard, tomatoes could still grow in the hill, we could still receive good rains. There is this white guy from Kariba who plans to form a tour operating company for tourism but has a prazor in Bindura. He calls himself Mabhande the name he was given in Bindura at his farm. He says when the Fast Track Land Reform happened, because he has always been conducting *zvikaranga* so that his farm will not be taken from him, he went and called the locals to do their usual rituals upto today he still has his farm. The problem is that us the owners of these *zvikaranga* we are now suspended. We can't feet anymore to the old ways and we can't as well feet to the modern. Whites are clever, now if you are to go, let me take Ayers Rock in Australia for example. They sat with local communities until they agreed on a new policy that people can no longer view the rock from above standing on it and UNESCO now knows that if you visit Ayers Rock you are no longer allowed to stand on it although it was allowed before. However, they consulted the community and they were told that as Aborigines we have this and that which we value, so, for people to climb on the rock we cannot allow it, but they still allow people to view the rock. There are some things that they do not allow according to the culture of the Aborigines in Australia. So even us we must know and identify that which is our culture and stand with that. When we know that what is important to us and have identified it, we then talk to NMMZ and remind them of what we need to protect our traditions or traditional ways of managing the site and show them our position. If we do that, we then negotiate the way forward.

**CM4:** So, when we are to deny the church people access, I wanted to know what would we say is the reason for stopping them? I am sure at some point I also attended church. Sometimes its

prophets who advise them. We say the church people should not access because they know there is spiritual power in this place. So, they would want to half this power and take it to their churches. The other thing I am thinking of is the entrance into Dzimbabwe, the Mujejeje which was mentioned by this gentleman. I'm sure Mujejeje was the entrance into Great Zimbabwe. That one, the whites refused it and put up their own. The only entrance into Great Zimbabwe was supposed to be through Mujejeje. The visitor will be faced by the houses in Great Zimbabwe when they come in. Mujejeje would veto the visitors coming in. *Vaipinda vakasenga zvisizvo zvaito shaiwa simba pamujeje paya* [If you have carried unacceptable things these would become harmless (will be weakened) at Mujejeje]. Now we are now coming in through the back of the yard. Now we are coming through the back yemusha because back then they used to stay facing the east, *vanhu vaigara vakatarira kumabvazuva*. So. that was the set-up of this home that Mujejeje was the entrance. Because of the pebbles at Mujejeje they could also see tell on the numbers of their visitors also and vise versa. It was also important to guard the visitors.

**RB:** Sekuru, it is said that knowledge comes with age. If we are to resuscitate Mujejeje today do you see it possible?

**CM2:** Yes, it is possible. It is only viewed as useless from the whites who will come but from our African perspective, our faith and that we know the value of our place and *ndoo chivanhu chedu, ndozvinoita mvura inaye, ndizvinoita tiite maguta*. It will not only be for the Mugabe people or Nemamwa people but the country as a whole *inobva yasimuka*. What I know also is that Great Zimbabwe is not only for the Nemamwa people only, it is not for the Mugabes alone. In some ways all the ethnic groups in Zimbabwe they are connected in various ways. *Saka muera Mhofu, muera chii anochokuita ipapa. Saka chingakona kuti munhu arereke musoro wake apa chii, apa hatisi kutaura zvoushe tiri kutaura patiri linked*. I said before security has always been there here in the Great Zimbabwe which could just arrest. *Ndooyainzi mishonga yavakuru iyoyo, inongo bata chero ipapo munhu oshaya kuziva kuti ndodii*. It is difficult now because we have adopted in many ways, foreign ways of life which maybe our ancestors have accepted these new ways of life. *Taiva namapurisa echinyakare akaita saana Mujejeje hapana aipindapo aita sokuti ndinokumbira, achiita soku bhadhariswa kana koroni nekuti taigona kurarama naizvozvo*. Looking back, during such traditional ceremonies the watch you are wearing was not allowed when we conducted these rituals, even the modern belts. You could only wear your trousers with money and these outside the sacred places when the ceremony is finished. With this modern life, to now say let's go back to the Mujejeje culture here it may be

viewed otherwise by some of our people as well, it might be possible for those walking on foot but what of other modes of transport, imagine someone from Harare taking a flight can they drop that side and walk all round the place on foot coming to Mujejeje. This new life I believe it has been accepted even by our ancestors and the chiefs, because they have accepted that this place has resources that can enrich our country and our area *ndoo saka vakangozo tenda kuti seenzesai nekure kure zvakadai*. Look even at that house's roof of zinc such kind of building materials were not allowed close to shrines. So, on the issue of going back to Mujejeje I can't tell now because I am just a messenger, but I also concur with others saying when the three chiefs meet, they will certainly have a resolution on these issues. They will not be that foolish to fight over *zvoushe* at the expense of their ancestors, *vana vomunhu mumwe*. If they look for number 1 then it means the rituals will not happen.

**RB.** Let's go look at Mujejeje more. Was it meant only to be where it is now on that dwala alone or else it is a culture?

**CM2** Thank you, I shall respond as a servant. Since we were not born by then even our fathers. What I can say is places were raided. When they raided from other places from as far as Mutare coming in with their spears to raid place lead by Chiefs. Whenever they passed through Mujejeje *vaibakwa*. So, to say there is another side I don't know from Chief Nemamwa or Chief Mugabe if there are other Mujejejes in other places around.

**E5:** There were many Mujejejes, there is one in Bingura

**CM2:** I thought he is asking in this important place of ours.

**CM3:** Let me just add on to what I was saying, I think before the whites came for example, they (forefathers) would instruct children and say cook sadza when the shadow is at this point you will know that it's one o'clock. I think Mujejeje was put up because they could not count. So, they put up Mujejeje and they would estimate the amount of people who would have entered by looking at the amount of the pebbles on either side. If the amount of pebbles on the left was more, they would know that not many people had gone in, if they were more on the right, they would see that many people are in. *Tinga reverana nhema, izvi zvaitirwa hudofu vakuru vedu vanga vasina kudzidza* (with a laughter).

**CM2:** If this was meant only for counting *chero vanhu vekwaana Charumbira vekoko vachida kuona gomo pamwe vaisato zivaka kuti kunei. Ndoopanga paine dumwa kana kuti mishonga yekuromba chaiko chaiko nekuti kwamambo hakungosvikwi*. It was not only meant for counting

*nekuti benzi rakanga risingango nongi, bhinya risinga zivi ranga risinga nongi. Magedhi eku church chaiwo. Yaitova entrance yekuti kana uchipinda uine nyaya yekupandukira mambo, wapinda zvaiku mukira kuno. Saka chinhu icho hachisi chekungomirira kuverenga vanhu chete. Chaitova chinhu chekuti, kana mukatora madzishe, kana ukazvinyora pasi kuti pane mudhara wakanga achitaura. Chaitotyisa kuna mambo Mugabe, chaitotyisa kuna mambo Nemamwa, chaitoziikanwa. If you wanted to capture our chief coming from this side with knives and guns, they would go mad. Raitova kurombera. It is very sacred; this thing is not only meant for counting how many people have come in or out. Chaiva chinhu chaito romberwa.*

**E6:** I want to ask our ethnographer mai Maduro, how many Mujejejes do you know of.

**E5:** I am not sure in terms of numbers, but I know of the one in Bingura, Boroma and the one at Mapanzura.

**E6:** So, we would have to look at the Great Zimbabwe landscape and its entrances and from them we can now argue on the value of Mujejeje. What we would have to show is that there are things that were done by elders that we are now assimilating. That is why before I said if we have a position as local community and approach museums (NMMZ) with our position that will help, and say now let's work with this, this is what we have with our traditions/customs. I have given some examples of other sites, if we do that, we will have something workable. Our research also or our knowledge as a people who want to manage Great Zimbabwe, I will take NMMZ for example we must precisely know the correct thing so that when they call us we will do the right thing. When they approach us as owners we must be able to present with them the correct thing. And these one who are the owners because they have always been here, *isu tiri vaui*, and as workers, they must present to us the correct thing. That will help to manage Great Zimbabwe. I will take for example what was mentioned by M\*\*\*\*\* zvinhu zvati kwesere. To some extent information is sometimes changing so kuzoti kwesere hazvizopindi kuti kwesere. There were some people who came from the University of Pretoria who wanted to do landscaping who went and checked behind, after ancient city. If we are to look for where exactly what we call the city of Great Zimbabwe was and *yaipinda sei*, we look at where the walls are. Maybe that's where for example in the case of the church, where the Holly of Hollies, where people entered holding a bell. If it is so and that is what we want to adopt, if we know that then that this serves that, and we hold on to it. But if others then say households at Great Zimbabwe were scattered all around the place, and people could get into Great Zimbabwe

before even reaching the enclosures. If we know that, then, that will help us on how we can manage the Great Zimbabwe, and we will have a commonly shared knowledge. But if we say this group, they have theirs while these other ones have theirs then we will have challenges in managing the place. Because NMMZ will say we know this whilst the local community is saying we know this. Then you the local people if you come with different versions of your information then we will have another problem. I will give for example Tokwe Mukosi dam was built when almost everybody was there, and some incidents happened I'm sure some of you may know this. Maybe some of us we know them because we talkative, that before someone who said *apira* but still Graders disappeared. This is an important issue; these ones have lost their graders but they thought they have involved local community and *wapira* but there was still something else to be observed. As museums (NMMZ) we must also do our research to see if what we are presented with by the local community should be done. So, *mai* Maduro because you are the one who work closely with the local community can you find out how many *mujejejes* do we have and that it connected which paths and the important paths into the Great Zimbabwe. *Huye Great Zimbabwe yacho yanga yakatarwa sei panheyo dzayo dzekutanga*. Of course, there are those people who came in and settled and later moved to other places; and those who say last settled. I once had a discussion with my colleagues, and they were saying so it means we are all foreigners because they were talking about rock art which is said to recording BC. *Isu tichiti* we are the Bantu migrators from East and Central Africa. This means that we are not the owners of the Southern Africa, we are foreigners. The white man would argue. So, first thing lets gather all the necessary information and build a solid foundation of our position for *vemidzimu*. *Nekuti tikaumba nhema futi vanonoramba vatirkuda kupa vacho vanoti ndivo vane simba rekupedzisira tigobaiwa nekuti magiredha aenda asi taita zvataita*.

**CM4:** I want to add on the *Mujejeje* in Bingura. That one does not face Great Zimbabwe. It is for *chikaranga cheku* Bingura. People used it going for gatherings *dzeku* Bingura so it served Bungura. That is why I am saying it had its particular purpose.

**RB** So *Mujejeje* had its purpose

**E6:** When I asked they had mention the one in Morgnester. When I first went to Mogenster there was no *Mujejeje*. This means some cults and customs maybe the local community are getting new information or instructions from the *mamsvikiros* that do this or prophets as was pointed earlier. Maybe it was dreamt as was said, and it happened that it was not made public

and it started serving a purpose. The Mapanzura one has been there since I was a child. So, there are some cults and traditions that have been there since long time ago and those that are developing now. So, that which existed before we would want to know the purpose it served. Coming back to the one mentioned by her, the one in Bingura was meant for the people *waienda kudoro mu* Bingura. If it was made for people coming into Bingura for doro when was it made? When people were still in Great Zimbabwe, did they use to go to Bingura or it now has some time as we have been discussing asking where our village should be paged? Should we get to BC or 19<sup>th</sup> Century? So, on these things we should know the demarcations and time frame when these happened and its purpose. If we just consider many years and mix them, we will end up not coming up with a solution that helps us solve the management of Great Zimbabwe.

**E5:** Ndoda kungo tsinhira on the Bingura one, I think the one written about is that of around 1890.

**CM4:** Talking of this we made it look like this is the only Mujejeje. But now we are hearing that there is more that has been in existence. If we look at the Great Zimbabwe landscape and to then say this side is where the road into Great Zimbabwe was considering the set-up of things, it might not reflect the truth. Maybe if we are speaking in the case of those who walked on foot that would make sense in that case.

**CM2:** Talking of the most popular places here in Masvingo, this place is the most important. *Imwe ava masimba amadzishe namatare avo*, the Mujejeje that is most spoken about by the whole country even overseas and widely written about that we know is this one here coming into Great Zimbabwe. But if we are saying maybe as Mambo Murinye that *uyu waiendavo kwangu, waitoendao havo ikoko*. In here we had one entrance because people walked on foot, there were no many gates. They would know that they use one entrance. I thought we would have a question that where did they come from, let me say it myself. People new, they did not take pebbles which were already at Mujejeje. When almost approaching Mujejeje you would pick your pebble *woti dododo wokanda uko*. On your way back you would pick another one *wotizve dododo* going the other direction *kuti usununguke*. This was not Mujejeje *weku* Bingura or Boroma it was Mujejeje *wemusha uno watigere nhasi*. So, it was the way in because there was no motor bikes or bicycles *dzaiva shoka*. So, we must not mix these to say now because its many of them this served what purpose. If we have that of Chiefs going to Boroma, yes, but this one was used to come into this Great Zimbabwe coming to Chief in the Hill.

**E1:** Mine was just a question that was it everybody who used Mujejeje coming into Great Zimbabwe or some visitors had some place that they used?

**CM2:** You see, when one gets into sacred places unknowingly, they are not usually affected but those who came in with a hidden agenda they would disappear or going mad because these were traditionally made to serve as security. This Mujejeje tradition was practiced by those who knew about it. Imagine say for example you come all the way from Mutare, and you want to secretly attack our chief you would not wait and perform the Mujejeje, isn't it that you would just pass. *Uya Mujejeje waito rapirwa navaridzi venzvimbo saka ndati kare kwaitonzi kuromba ikoko, haupa pindi apa.* What might take us to 1 o'clock or four o'clock is that, you had the previous speaker saying some of the things the owners. There are no owners who do it wrong, but imomu mupenzera, we have writings by our own children who have gone to school and you who are also going to school, you go to learn and come back as officers and your writings are now taken as power to say this date in the bottle there are names that of Mr Musvisvi and that of Chief Mugabe or Chief Murinye. That is why I said before these people who wrote they did not know the truth also because they were told by a person. The actual owners they have somethings they did not expose, *zvimwe zvinhu vaiva vatsveterwa navarungu vakangozoti apa panoera* that is why *zvakangozoita sekungo nyorwa nyorwa kudai.* That is why you have seen many people going mad after coming in here and misbehaving. So, our African way of life, that's why you here that there are goblins but if we say show us you will not find it, but it would be here. If you manage to have these three chiefs here together, they will surely have a consensus. They will not fail to find out about their ancestors. We read about many things, but do we know who was there, some of the things our elders did not know as well. *Vaingoti pana ndira pakamwa mukadzi asi hapana zvimwe zvainyorwa.* So, this Mujejeje has no other person who has its interpretation except the chiefs they know better what theirs is. We just speak as messengers of the chiefs otherwise we can get up to four o'clock or six in the evening trying to figure out things, saying it is written. They did not have things that were written down. This is why we send you to school to research on what you have written with the whites and find out that when they wrote which chief was there.

**E6:** What is important about these debates and such conversations is that the information shared gets to be written down or archived. If they do not write about it today, we will again have a problem, we will not know how things would have transpired or how Great Zimbabwe was managed in 20<sup>th</sup> century, is that not so. Meaning it would not have been written down. The pen is good if it is used right, similarly if alcohol is consumed responsibly it is not a bad thing.

However, when consumed irresponsibly it becomes a bad thing. So, the pen is not bad if it writes the truth. I did not want to debate much on Mujejeje because Mujejeje maybe was done, I have given you an example that if you go to the dam down here there is rock art but white people say these were the people who first settled in Southern Africa. But, this Mujejeje maybe as was said by the previous speaker that the chief who was found staying in Great Zimbabwe is so and so, maybe when it was built, he was not there because they reoccupied. Maybe he does not even know its value, or else he knows but did not value it the same way. Or it may be that there were no people who would use it the traditional way as it was initially meant to serve by those who built Mujejeje. So, I wanted us to leave the issue of Mujejeje because even us curators in here they have not yet told us when it was built like you did with Great Zimbabwe which has estimates, plus or minus, but Mujejeje does not have estimates. So what I would encourage us to do on the research we are doing and what in a way would be useful to his research is to talk about how we are managing Great Zimbabwe identifying ways that were brought by the colonisers that dominated and disadvantaged the locals and as well identify the good they (colonialists) brought with. I have asked before that when did the sounds heard in the hill stopped. I think since you are the elders here, if you had responded and say 1980 that would mean that the white men have maintained. You used to say if we come in wearing animal skins, there is a case of the twins who were arrested after walking in Harare CBD with the authorities saying no, you are now doing wrong. But that is part of our culture and that does not mean the modern clothes are bad, we should do away with them and take animal skins. We wear them in the right way. So, on the management of Great Zimbabwe when you look at it, I was kindly asking for the sake of him that as we are discussing we identify exactly that which we are saying are ways you feel today should be used to manage Great Zimbabwe which should be incorporated with the ways currently being used. NMMZ they are experts, but you are locals. What do the locals want us to incorporate in the management of Great Zimbabwe then NMMZ what are they saying we should do when collaborate with the local community to manage Great Zimbabwe, doing away with that which was inherited from the colonial authorities. This is because even us when we came in, even when you look at the constitution, we have some colonial aspects, the Act that we talk about has some colonial aspects that the colonisers put in place which is still in that Act. If there are aspects, we say these are affecting the management of Great Zimbabwe and we think should be removed. Meaning that NMMZ when they look at the Act and the constitution will simply say this and that they are using does not work for us in the management of Great Zimbabwe. This is what we are saying if we raise these we would have produced something of value, and the writing they are doing and when they give it to us

we will say this we have once asked for to have it removed because it does not work well with our traditional ways of managing Great Zimbabwe. What do you want us to do as ma locals? Because if we don't talk about these today and not have them written down, we may die having not spoken out and people would not know what ways. This is the reason why our elders ended up dying having not told us some folktales. Have they told us, would it not have been easy for us today?

**RB** So, lets I identify these ways you think should be incorporated in the management of Great Zimbabwe.

**CM4:** Commenting on the voices and constant supply of tomatoes on the hill and when they stopped. On the case of whites, for me there is nothing they did write about our heritage, rather they have hurt us.

**E6:** You have not answered me yet.

**CM5:** Which year?

**E6:** Because if these sounds could still be heard in 1980, it was now us ruling.

**CM2:** These sounds, tomatoes etc have long been silenced. In my view looking at the management of Great Zimbabwe, I say what the NMMZ staff did right was to invite the chiefs to work with them. I want to appreciate the move by experts of realising the value in working with local community. We could not spend two years without having veld fires, if you could watch on television monkeys fell, other animals died, destroying property. This was because it was the museums (NMMZ) working on their own and community on their own so, even if it burnt the people living around did not benefit from it. What I think is worthy appreciating also is that they realised that we have elders who are grey haired, old and still could not afford the entrance fee. So, they decided to set aside Monday to Friday and call all the elders who cannot afford. That is one way of managing well which is worth noting, now property is not being burnt. Since the establishment of the committee, which was put up by the chiefs, we started working together they (NMMZ staff) are now doing better. So, we can say these have been some of the contributions in the management by this committee so far. Thirdly, I think to keep saying this problem was caused by whites or by Africans (blacks) may lead us nowhere, but it is important to also realise that for the place to have gotten to today it was long being protected. I suggest that, looking at the current community set up it might be necessary to have a wire. Sorry there is something I have left out. They are saying before people could just enter. Before

there were no people living around like it is now *saka pakanga pasina need yekuti vanhu vatsvake rumhanda nerutope. Kuto sunga, dzaigobvepi mombe, kwaana Charumbira here kana seri kwa Nemamwa kwanga kuri kure*. So, there are now many people living around, like now one other way to protect is fencing this place *yobata*. When its secure then we see how they will enter through a six-strand wire. We have once suggested this, now that you also came, we will raise it again. If something is fenced that is one other way of starting to protect the place there will be no more many gates.

**CM4:** In addition to that, the awareness campaigns which we have been conducting needs to continue being done telling people why Great Zimbabwe is important, why veld fires are bad, working with the people and hear their concerns as well. Therefore, I said management of the monuments should be open for criticism.

**CM5:** There are many positive things that the staff has done so far worth appreciating as well. Our people are realising a good relationship with NMMZ for example when they want to cut long grass, they employ the local community and they allow the local people to take the grass for thatching. This is a way of helping with the security of the place because people will be afraid that if I cause fire where will I go for the grass for thatching. This is another positive relationship with the community built by NMMZ. The other thing is allowing local people to come in and view the place for free. But we also have other ways that we are kindly requesting NMMZ to consider as you can see our place seems to be losing its spiritual value. This is because tourists would have come from far places and would have paid to view, people find it difficult to tell visitors not to engage in some other activities. Before we knew that when you go up on the hill, there were those old cameras, now that there are now smart phones, they now take pictures anywhere even in sacred places where such activities are not allowed traditionally. Maybe it might be difficult to ban such because someone would have paid to climb up on the hill. They would want to do what they want but these are some of the things which are desecrating our place and our culture because visitors will climb up the hill take pictures and selfies *vakabatana zvavaka batana kana kuti vakadini*. The hill is supposed to be respected. One other thing that I would want to acknowledge is, after sitting down with the NMMZ staff we agreed on another security enforcement tact. We agreed on a fine for those found loitering in Great Zimbabwe and this has reduced security challenges we had. However, this is working when it comes to guarding against the local people but guarding against outsiders is still a problem.

**CM3** Mine is not only ending on the local committee, In the villages we already have individuals standing in for veld fires only. We have more like beaters (fire fighters) about three or four per village, that in the case of veld fires each village can coordinate using tree brunches to put off these fires. Previously, when the whites were in charge such an initiative did not exist, we did not care – when we saw fires, we could burn more so that it quickly gets to Great Zimbabwe. But now with the establishment of the local community committee, getting into the community teaching them, they now know that Great Zimbabwe is our place and it is important, stray fires are not good they destroy in our ruins, destroys animals, trees etc. So, museums (NMMZ) organised that we talk to people in the community to help each other in cases of stray fires in the ruins. Again, that we should not just let our cattle unguarded they destroy the stone walls and restoring the walls is expensive. What I will keep repeating and emphasising is the issue of our tradition/customs, I think this is where we are lagging. We must come together and find ways of solving this.

**RB:** I also think that these traditional ways can work to protect the place as well as be an opportunity to recreate.

**CM2:** Still on the traditional ways, *ndiri kutaura nenyaya dzamadoro*, I you want to do *chikaranga*, your letter of application sometimes takes long without responds from the authorities. When you would have written your letter having thought of doing *zvikaranga zvedu* at such a time and such a time of the year. We know *zviraanga zvinoita* and *kuti zvinoitirwei* then we are told that *hazvichaitwi*. But you would have written the letter in July, but you get the responds otherwise I don't know. So, now that time of doing our rituals we will not be heard. *Ndiri kuona museums (NMMZ) pazvi karanaga zvemadoro zvishoma. Ingadai achiitwa madoro iwaya vanhu vachidzana nekuti ndoo chivanhu chedu. Ndonga isu toziva kuti gore roga roga mambo oga oga anoita vutovo vanhu votoita zviyo, voita mutovo vorara vachidzana vachinwa.* This is what shows that we still know our roots that even our ancestors they can still guard us from many evils. Back then we all know that when you wanted to go to work in the city, *paito togwa fodya pasi kopigwa kwotaugwa navakuru*, even if you go and stay for ten years, *kusvika uko vakanotora fodya vaka taura unoona nhamo zvekuti mangwana unofuma kubata bhazi uchiuya. Chaiva chivanhu ichocho.* That is the spiritual powers of our traditions. Also supporting what has been said by Gono, the challenge we have is on the issue of permission, the issue of letters in application to conduct our rituals. This thing of the Chief having to apply when we want to do our things and wait until for a decision from Harare

meaning that we are nothing here. What power do we have in that case? Sometimes we are failing to have these ceremonies done because our request has not been responded to yet.

**RB:** So, what is place of the Committee here if that is the case?

**CM2.** *Ipapo manje tinobva tati mazi dumwa aya ramambo Mugabe na Nemamwa kana yaakuti yombo pindugwa yangu here, mumusha mangu here. Saka tinenge taakuhwa kuti tombomira hedu izvo. Saka pavanozo pindura tototi aah zvino zviya zvakatozo nonoka vanhu vakatorya, zvaka bikwa ndari.* If you look at the issue of politics and the law of the country, there are some things that we talk about which are not written down. So, if we say, NMMZ, Chief Mugabe says he wants to do *bira repfiga mwedzi kuti vape vanopa simba renyika yavo, moti mirai tombohwa kumusoro, kunzwa kuti kumusoro wapindura here. Doro iroro harichatoiti kuti ritobikwa.* We do not know anymore who should be asked for permission is it the councillor or the kraal head.

**E6:** I wanted to respond on the issue of letters of request, and you being told to stop; and coming to the speaker who mentioned the president's office. Everything that we do in this country, I am sure it is known by everybody, *pane ziso rehurumende, pane ziso re state security.* State security usually, I remember last time we went to town nava \*\*\*\*\* we were called neve peace and they asked that there were some people *vakapinda mu* Great Zimbabwe, and it looks like these people were Chinese who looked like this and this. We want you to tell us what they were looking for. So, we are saying some of the things we can say maybe someone comes and say I want to do *zvikananga zvangu*, or say at the end of the year I want to do this and that in here and we say her/him go ahead and do what you want to do. The next day we should answer several questions not from museums management but from the state security. So, on that issue, I want us all to know that we have some levels were even NMMZ is also managed by systems above it, even though we would want to try at local level working together with the local community committee to agree on some issues, there are at times where we cannot.

**E9:** We have some truth that we are not being open enough to each other here, which is that all of us here staff and committee we do not have power now to approve any activity here without permission from high offices. As staff we are just facilitators which why even if applications come to the director here, he/she cannot also just give a go ahead. Even if it is sent to the committee, it will still need to go to the high authorities, the reason being that at government level they value this as a national asset. So, the plea we should have must be between committee and NMMZ that they all be involved in the verting of those who would want to come in.

Because as was said before that this place belongs to the chiefs but to the president of the country, he would say it is his place as well. He would argue also that though can we have people saying they would want to cleanse the country when me the leader of the country don't even know that there are things that needs *zvikananga kuti zvigadzirwe*. So, that conflict is the one that I was saying needs to be wisely managed in ways that would leave the situation where committee blaming the staff or museum; and museums not blaming the committee. We must be united on this issue to ask how we can we be involved. For example, on applications, because I have once witnessed the process. These letters go to different stakeholders, even hospitals, health department they will be involved, signing as well. So, on these applications, committee needs to also understand that this is how it works. This is inscribed World Heritage Site; it is also managed by the president's office. Papers that are required in applying to enter are many, and they pass through many people and that takes long. Those who you see coming in and those that end up being denied access would have gone through the same process. So, this collaboration should exist in good spirit, all agreeing that we need a stake, so that we are recognised that chiefs must be involved in deciding that this one is coming from there and want to do this why. Their point now, of saying that you want to go and do *zvikananga zvako* on my grandfather's grave why? Denying them now because you now have the authority to do so. This is the stake that as committee you should have. I think it would help.

**CM2:** I have heard Mr M\*\*\*\*\* saying "they say" in here we say, 'we say', we are one, we are a team. What pains us chiefs is that *wemadzibaba* we don't hereof their vetting, we only hear them suddenly singing then you wonder would their applications been responded to already, in that short space of time already and they put up their cloths, but ours the custodians requires applications to go upto the highest authorities. Even those who come and sing in here, like the day I arrested that person, what is his name? I came from this direction going to borrow a sickle mine was broken, and suddenly I saw a group with red garments. Then I said to them I am security you are under arrest, and they said here is our permit we have been given permission to do this. Where would they have gotten that permit from?

**E5:** If they showed you a letter that letter was fake. We have not permitted these church people before. They hide. Sometimes they come in as normal visitors not putting on their attire and pay at the gate with their garments hidden in their bags. When they get inside then they wear their garments. So, we will not be aware, they hide.

**CM6:** To respond on the issue of applications. I want to say the challenge we have is that if you look at the constitution it also have some colonial elements, some of us as well we studied in their systems, using their language, and we are using the same language to write that which we would want to be ours. Look at that part of the constitution which says if you are to gather you must ask for permission from stakeholders explaining why you would want to gather giving reasons. I remember there was a gala that was held here at some point and it raised a lot of questions, I was not here though, others contesting why it was held here in the monuments, maybe it was the local leadership complaining. Now let's say they want to do *madoro rekuridza ngoma*, where there is sounds of traditional drums is different from the one who has gotten in secretly. Remember we mentioned that we sometimes wake up to stuffs left in here, *zvikananga zvinotioitwa*, but these are done *nenzira dzisiri pamutemo*. So if we say we want to do *zvikananga* in this way, we will be lying to ourselves. They do it but it is not the ways you want. *Nzira yamunoda imi ndeyekuti zviitwe pajekerere*, [The way you want is when it is done openly], If it starts in the morning and happens to end the following morning openly. But still when we take it at national level, the laws of the country do not allow people to gather without authorisation from the departments mentioned earlier. The problem now is that we do not have an office for all these stakeholders here at Great Zimbabwe. When we send these applications to head office, we will be assuming maybe the president's office is there at the head office. So, when we talk of the president's office, what happens is that the president of the country is supposed to know that this is what is happening at Great Zimbabwe. Maybe so that it does not affect their politics.

**CM 6:** I wanted to also go back to the request raised that, you would want museums (NMMZ) to resuscitate *chikaranga chedu*. Looking at our visitors who visit and go to the hill complex, maybe some take pictures, some doing this and that, be it dressing. I think one other is in the management of Great Zimbabwe we have other stakeholders in different government departments. When we look at this place we value it as a sacred place for our rituals but, for Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) they view this place as a place which must be marketed, open to people to come and visit, sometimes using even that modern technology to communicate with their families and friends in other countries that they are at Great Zimbabwe since it is a World Heritage site. So, on the issue they raised that *zvikananga* needs to be reagitated, we don't deny that it is a good thing, but I think it is a process like it was mentioned by the previous speaker in the case of the Aborigines in Australia on the Ayers Rock. People used to climb but they are restricted now. It is a process which requires that in our engagement

with the committee that we also consider what we would use the place for and that which is recommended or valued by other stakeholders like UNESCO, ZTA and see what we can change so that we continue *nezvikaranga zvedu*. Which means the conversation would mean also inviting ZTA as another major stakeholder.

**CM1:** I wanted to say that we have other challenges. We forget nyika mamiriro ayo. Traditional Act has a provision for the traditional leadership (chiefs, headman, kraal heads), on their position and their powers, but to see where it really works, *unodotozohwa kuti sanator ndoo wataura wakamirira madzishe asi madzishe ari pasi ose ava haana basa. Vanongova nebumbiro chete rinotaura mutemo kuti Ishe unodai, sabhuku unodai. Ndoopoga panokanganisika ipapo* [...You will only get to hear that the sanator has spoken on behalf of the chiefs but the chiefs themselves mean nothing. They only have a constitution which provides that the chief is responsible for this, the kraalhead is responsible for this]. That is where we miss it. All government officials even the president's office when they campaign, they come down to the kraalheads but when they get in offices those people don't matter anymore. Now I am saying that we are the ones who look after Great Zimbabwe and they are not here. To say *toda kuti ngoma irire chete* if we are to gather. Vanosara vobata the NMMZ staff asking *kuti vakaungana ndivanaani, vakaitei*. But we have the power vested in us as traditional leadership that we are supposed to manage our intangible heritages. This is where we are saying there should a day(s) of the year which should be known that the custodians would want to do *zvikananga zvavo*, and we have that diarised or put on calendar, and not requiring letters anymore. Us when we do our ritual ceremonies, we do not do politics *zvekuti president vanobviswa*, we will be communicating with our ancestors. So that is also where, you have had that at local level the committee and the staff we have were we work together well but we have again where when we say we want to do this it becomes difficult but when they face some challenges they would want to call the traditional leadership.

**CM3:** In my view, you see I always emphasise tradition because you would find that someone comes all the way from Murehwa saying they came to do *zvikananga zvake* here in Great Zimbabwe. You will see that it is different with me who knows that my great grandfather was buried here. When I do *chikananga* change, I go there where they are buried and it is not like I will do that every week, I may do that maybe once a year. But I fail to do that because of this permit thing, because the committee will not be there when they vet, but we will be the ones to conduct the ceremonies even if we are to inform the NMMZ staff they will say the law says this. *Kureva kuti chivanhu ndatochi rasha kureva kuti ndato fanana nemunhu wemadzibaba*.

Because that place where I would want to do chikarangaka is managed by the state, but let's differentiate that person who only wants to do chikaranga may they would want to do it *mumbare umu*, or at the Village, or at the great enclosure yet, I want to do mine in the Hill complex where my grandfather lies, I want to go *kuMapa tinoita chivanhu chedu, vanhu vachibvisa shangu, tosenga hari dzedu* and we go *kuya tonoridza ngoma dzedu nekuti tine zvatinoda ikoko, tinenge takasungwa*. That why we are say they should also consider us with our ways of life, we are all human beings, engaging sharing ideas that for our country to go forward we do this and this. You also have your grandfathers, makazvagwa, yourselves when you do such ceremonies for your grandfathers, don't you go to their graves where they are buried. Ndoo chinonzi chivanhuzve.

**RB:** So, are we suggesting or recommending a conversation which should include NMMZ, Chiefs, ZTA, and other government departments so that we map out a new decolonised strategy to manage Great Zimbabwe?

**E4:** At which level? Because when we look at how we operate and manage our places at national level. When we are talking about issues of Great Zimbabwe we are talking about a particular region, operating in the southern region. So, will this be at Provincial level? Because when we are talking about issues that involve stakeholders like the president's office etc we will be doing it at provincial level. Are we saying they should be part of this initiative at Great Zimbabwe like this one? Or else at national level because authority *zhinzi yatirikuita sekuti masimba edu tinongovavo vanhu vakagadzwa ariko kumusoro* kunational. So, I wanted to know the recommendation touches to which level.

**E9:** Set up of this region is different from other regions that this initiative of having a committee like ours is only found here at Great Zimbabwe. In other places they do not have. So, the way they manage these sites are different from here. So, the recommendations we will make should be unique to Great Zimbabwe only which is not national but regional. What I meant to explain here is that this committee I we look it is only here at Great Zimbabwe and most of the challenges discussed in this study are particular to Great Zimbabwe. So, when it comes to issues of decision making and the issue raised that we find some people's applications have been approved and others not responded to is happening at national level where we have the executive director maybe through ministry and other government departments that we spoke about like the president's office etc, that's where authority is. So that's why I was asking that

maybe you recommend for the intensification of this committee at Great Zimbabwe, but we will be intensifying at what level.

**RB:** The question on how the committee can be empowered here, something that will be approved from the national level to help solve these challenges identified.

**E4:** What is important to look at is whether this is practicable. Because when we do matare kafanana neaya, and do it here you would find that of course in the reports it may be known at the head office that this is what is happening but with other government departments they don't know that there is a drop in the NMMZ regions with such concerns. It will be delt with when the executive director give reports of inter-ministerial meetings. They will be reporting speaking on NMMZ at large. But when it comes to particular regional issues that when I was asking who should be involved.

**CM4:** I think what NNMZ should do is to give a time frame from the national authority that if people want to do zvikaranga zvavo they should give at least for example three months before in a formal way. So that they stay informed that if we want to do madoro edu mu Great Zimbabwe in August we apply three months before. So that we are guaranteed that if we are to apply three months before we know it will happen.

**RB:** Now the other question on this idea is that will this fulfil the decolonial theory. Is authority being shared or it remains only with the governing authorities. How can we decolonise the way we are operating?

**E6:** What I think is NMMZ at large do not have such committees yet in other regions which was spoken about, it is only here at Great Zimbabwe. It may only be at Great Zimbabwe where these issues *yevikaranga* that how can we go about them. So, what I was thinking is that NMMZ of course it knows other stakeholders which it is supposed to approach like the ministry to request that we have a local community management committee that we are working with which we think considering its positive contributions so far we are kindly requesting that the committee be given some powers but still working together. In the case that they are given even if it happens to be only here in the southern region because in other regions they do not have. Nationalising it might not be fit. They can decide to focus only in places of concern not every region. Then another issue I think we must discuss with the committee, we have in some cases, when we see for NMMZ, maybe it might be a problem, that is, numbers when you are to conduct *zvikaranga*. How big will be the gatherings? We usually see ana mbuya Mazarira sometimes being allowed to have *doro ravo, vakatakura hari dzavo voenda kuMapa*. Maybe

*huwandu ndoo hungada kuti hukumbirwe, huri huwandu hunogona kuti ngoma dzirire mumusoro we Great Zimbabwe, kana kuti muma monuments zvoitwa sei? I think that is another thing that we need to look at. This is because if I still remember well, they normally come, mbuya Mazarira, she usually goes up with people about ten. One ather request kuti ngoma dzirire. Unlike the case of those who were found vachinamata vachiimba. Kuda ava vanongosvika vachiita zvikaranga zvavo ndisingazivi kuti point yambotaugwa namai Maduro kuti kune kumwe kwekuti nhangwe dai mukada kuita ngoma kunonzi hakuitwi ngoma, even kare kacho kwaingoenda vavhu vaiinda vonoviga zvinhu zvavo vodzoka asi kwazvino farigwa kuri kumwe. So, when we draw this, we should clarify whether what we want ndezvekuti here kuridzwe ngoma or else we are saying only those vanopira. If you go to places like Kumabweadziva, there are places where only particular persons go, hakuridzwi ngoma, unosvika wogwadama wopihwa information ikoko. So, we can be a pilot project here of mangining monuments that we have. So what we are going to produce here if it comes out well will help those who would wish to do chivanhu without a committee set up like this one, with no voice or power will copy from Great Zimbabwe.*

**E5:** We have a place, an example, inogara ichiitika gore ne gore ndofunga vanopira katatu ku Ntabazikamambo. Vane time yeku kumbira mvura, three times a year. It is happening so, I think in this region we have a challenge that we must know *kuti unopira ndiani* ku side recommittee *kuti achipirei*.

**E6:** Imi mai Maduro, can you go do some research so that we can see how they do it. So that when we write up our proposal we come up with a document *rinokumbira* authority ne power that we will odaine to the committee well informed on how they also do it. Such that we also give as reference of what we know of, how it is done, and we craft something unique to Great Zimbabwe.

**E9:** I think the question *yekuti unopira ndiyani* should be left for some other time. We want to start pave the way forward and sort out the immediate challenges. Is your research focussed on only on Great Zimbabwe or else?

**RB:** Yes, on Great Zimbabwe.

**E9:** So, it is easy. I think our focus should be on Great Zimbabwe.

**E4:** I think we need to help each other going forward is to look at the questions posed by the researcher. I think ma issues ekupira, they are inhouse. But one critical question we have

ndewekuti committee yedu yatinayo iyi yowana simba sei, so that chayataura chero Dr Mahachi vanogona kungouya voti tozviziva because we have talked about it already. Pave nemunhu ane simba rakafanana nera executive director. Why I was asking about national or regional was because at national level if we look at it, you will find, because what government did, they have the Ministry of Home Affairs. Before there was a ministry yanga iina development chakadaro, offwhich right at the top vanga vachiti a committee like the one we have is rooting from chiefs and the president of chiefs at the top. The president of chiefs at the top would make decisions on behalf of chiefs achibatsirana neanenge ari kumusoro weku department ratinaro. Of which at national level they would say we are covered because they would argue that we have a voice through the president of the chiefs. So, I was asking that when we are here, toda kuti awa wave nema powers at regional level or at national level because at national we will be told that they have a representation through the president of chiefs. If we are to have someone to represent the local community, that person would be at par with president of chiefs because these people are coming from the same roots of chiefs. So, at national level it is a tricky one even if we are to recommend that. It is not practicable. Maybe as it is, like it was said that it is a pilot project for NMMZ. How best can we give the committee power other than the power that we are saying they have so far which has been just ceremonial.

**CM3:** I want to concur with Mr Mashamaire. I'm sure if you look closely, there as sometimes when we say as local committee when we have people who might come and say they would want to view Great Zimbabwe we will be having letters that we sign then the person views for free. Ndozvimwe zvatiri kuti isusu colonialism yakauya isu tichiita chivanhu chedu tiripo ikatibvisa ichi declayer kuti yava a national heritage, asi vanhu chivanhu chavo vaingoita munzvimbo imomo asi ikezvino manje ndoo chaakutora matanho aka kura kura kudai. Isu tirikuti zvatiine local committee, ngatichiregai kuita local committee iya senge wazora mwana margarine pamuromo tigoti wadya chingwa isu tisina masimba. Seizvezvi tetisina masimba pazvese zvaticuita kuti vanhu vadii dii. Isu tenge tichiti tipeiwo mukana wekuti kana tichiti toda kuita zvikaranga zvirege kugozha. Se zvanga zvichiita varungu varipo vachiti gozhesera kana tichida kuita zvikaranga zvedu vachititi hatigoni kuita zvikaranga zvedu, zvinoti gozhera. Pamwe ini ndanzi sekuru vako vanoda kuitirwa zvikaranga zvakati zvikati, ndoti varume ngati bikei doro togara pasi semhuri totaura kuti ngazvi dai zvidai. Asi tsamba iya inoti torero nguva kuti tiite izvozvo. Isu hatisikuda kuti tive nemasimba ekuti titi tozoenda uku. Nagavatipewo masimba ekuti shuwa tagara tiri vanhu vatatu vagara vari munzvimbo toda kuita chikaranga

*chedu tisingadi kuenda pekuti unopira ndiani. Imi ma researchers munoziva imi hatidi kutaura, magara muno verenga mabhuku.*

**RB:** *Masimba anofanirwa kupiwa local committee anofanirwa kubva kunaani?*

E4: The powers which the local committee is supposed to have, we can't here now for us to say no, we must give these people power because we have seen that we cannot do that. Then we move to even to our executive level they cannot also, they are also not able to say such local committee or the one at Great Zimbabwe must have some powers. Then from there we look at the government, they also cannot do that. What can make this possible is when we have a new law which gives people some powers and with this law, they should also first look at the kind of Act that you are operating with currently, to see whether there is anywhere the committee is stated. Now when we look at the correct Act that we are using, it is the one which is still in the colonial era. So, it means now there is nothing we can change. So, what I think is that, it should start with a complete overhaul of the current Act, then we include all that we think is missing with a decolonial thought. Then the new product then goes to parliament so that the legislators can look at it and debate it and approve it and then we can from there be able to have a committee that is effective with necessary powers vested in them.

**E9:** Adding on to what has been said by Mr Mashamaire, *hatifanirwi kukumbira nyaya yedoro chete*. Remember we are talking about management. The management is the one including the vetting which we were talking about. So, we must not only focus on the issues dzemadoro chete. Vetting is part of management. So, we are saying community involvement in the actual management of the site.

**E6:** What I am thinking also is that, we have looked at our case together *sedare repa* Great Zimbabwe takabatana ne committee, we are saying it must go to parliament to be discussed. I'm sure tambo tarisa tikaona paine ma departments matatu. UNESCO has a voice when they are saying *ngatidzoserei nhaka kuvaridzi vayo*, that's why you saw human remains *anga akaenda kunaana Britain akadzoka. Chero akashaya chaipo chaipo peku lender* but it had a voice to say the whole World the remains should be repatriated, and it was not a country's government. So what I am saying is that, for our place for that voice kuti ribude richibva ku NMMZ rigopinda mu parliament I have said can mai Maduro find out the Taavazikamambo if it is a World Heritage Site which also belong to NMMZ *chakamboita kuti vapihwe kodzero dzakawanda kudero zvakatangira papi*. Secondly if we have other countries under UNESCO which have managed to involve local community how did they do it. What is called

involvement inobva papi kusvika papi? Does the community have power or else inongova nekuti local people huyai tidai then we also look at it so that when we write to NMMZ for them to take it to the ministry, for ministry to take it to parliament to be discussed but they would also want to see what else we are doing. UNESCO has some voice together with the government of Zimbabwe's relationship with institution will have an impact. So, I personally think all that should be talked in different ways. Let's not have one option. Because one speaker at some point raised that we have been given some powers as traditional leadership but there is another person called the sanator who speaks on behalf of all these traditional leaders as if they do not also have power. As if he the only one with the power. Asi kana achitaura mupaper anoita sekuti ava vane masimba asi vasina. Izvi zvinobva futi ku parliament yedu which would have discussed and say we have given them power. *Asi kana zvataurwa zviine mamwe ma organisations anozo monitor kuti simba ratati vanopihwa, ratiri kutsvaga kuti vapihwe vazopihwa zveshuva here voziva kuti masabhuku apihwa simba.* But if we only do with our government, we may not be successful, and it may take many years for us to achieve it. But there are some organisations and institutions which fall under UNESCO which address even state laws. I think that may help us.

**E9:** We have had mention of cases of other countries which have worked with the local committee. Ours may as well give birth to something that can be copied in many other different places

**E4:** Kuri kunzi mupihwe masimba mungada masimba eyi?

**CM1:** *Handiti tirikuti isusu tirikuchengetedza nhaka yedu, pane vanhu vanouya vanobva kwavabva kwaka siyana siyana, masvikiro anouya muno and vanouya ne direct tsamba kubva kumusoro hana kan kumbozoonavo vanogara pano kuti aoneswe kuti uku hamuindi, uku kune mitemo yedu yakati nekuti tisu tinoziva zviriko. Saka ndoo masimba atoodaka kuti titongeo munzvimbo medu.*

**RB:** *Imi se committee munoshandidzana sei ne NMMZ.*

**CM1:** Initially when we started our committee, we had agreed to meet every month end, but because of some challenges we faced of transport nezvimwe with no agent matters to attend to, we then adjusted to three months to discuss whatever matters that would need our attention. However, we are at their disposal, we are available anytime when need be.

The education officer added to the response saying;

**E6:** What he is saying is *vanga vaka sheedzera misangano yavo every month pakaita machallenges ndobva vazoti three months. But if there is need vanodanwa*”, [what he is saying is that they had called their meetings every month then there were some challenges and they agreed to meet after every three months. But when there is a need they are called in].

**CM2:** *Pamuvhunzo wavhunzwa nemurume uyu ndamboti kuda kuchembera, ndoona sekuti hapana chadanidzirwa nekuti wavhunza kuti imi munombo Shanda sei? Tikati vhunzai secretary. Takatenderana mwedzi zvika kona, tika tenderana three months saka hamungangoti kana tangovadana. Hatisi kusangana asi kuti kana imi mongoda committee moti chiuyai. Asi zvitenderano zvedu hazvina kuteedzwa. Togona kuita five months tisina kusangana. Hanzu maimbo shanda sei, imi murikuti kana tavadana. Taka tenderana kuti one-month tikati tozvinetserei hedu. Chitenderano chataka tenderana hachisi kushandiswa*”. [On the question asked by this man, I thought maybe it’s because of my old age but I do not think he was answered well because he asked that how we have been working together. Then we said ask the secretary. Initially we agreed to meet every month so you cannot just say when you want the committee then you say come. He asked how you have been working together. We agreed every month then we decided that we should not stress ourselves because what we agreed on was not being followed],

**RB:** What could be missing, *todii kuti zvigadzirike*. It seems there are some cases which may require meeting every week, and every month, some three months and some even on daily basis. Is there a possibility of NMMZ and community to work together daily? What could be the challenges?

**CM1:** Panoti gozhei, I think we have been working well so far because there are phones. *Kana paine zvinhu zvinodiva zviri emergency, huyai, danai committee tosangana because hapana chouviri chatinovana. Kutu munhu wosiya kurima wova everyday pano panenge poopisa manje*. So, we have phones, if there is an emergence we will come. What we are saying is, I’m sure these letters do not come every day, there is always some time they are held here after being received. Let’s say they would know that there are some people who have applied to visit or use the place on the tenth day of such a month then, then we can have a sitting sometime before then we vet to see if that does not affect our values than coming every day.

**CM4:** Did you also make it clear that this committee is voluntary. But if are to take turns for let’s say since we are seven or eight then we come in on weekly basis. The person who will be

on duty will be representing the committee and report to others on weekly reports. I think that is possible.

**E1:** I think what is important to also understand is how we operate in terms of managing our heritage sites, derives from the National Museums laws the principle being the NMMZ Act. It is the one which gives us authority and guidelines. What is important on the issue raised particularly on committee is that this initiative is not derived from the legislation it may be difficult to make it a permanent thing but, if we have a new legislation. Laws are made by people; they are made in the parliament through our MPs who we vote in. If our MPs change the laws that govern how heritage is managed in the country, and we contribute what we want that management of heritage sites have local community committee. Voicing that we would want maybe all heritage sites to have representation of local community daily, if that is what will be passed by the parliament. When that is in place that is what we will start to work with. So, the problem is at national level, that where we do not have laws of this nature we can derive from. The current one does not give us that room to manoeuvre which is why at the end of the day we end up more like voluntary or ceremonial.

**CM3:** Since this local committee initiative was established, if are to look at how much stray fires we used to have in this place. We have made great strides so far, we have put off many stray fires here since they were still the national director of museums, Dr Mahachi, Dr Matenga. *Paiita moto yaityisa*. But since we had the local committee, getting into the community teaching them we see that these fires have been reduced. Also, people from the community now appreciate that Great Zimbabwe is important to us. Now with the committee people have better knowledge of the Great Zimbabwe. *Saka isu tenge toti NMMZ haikuona here kuti parikuita ma changes, imi muchiramba muchingoti itai voluntary voluntary asi vamadzishe achiona kuti pane zviri kuitika, moto dzaamishoma*.

**E1:** *Pakanaka mukuru*, but what we are saying is when we look at our country's legislation. Don't you think that if the legislation has given more authority to local communities to manage would result in producing more valuable results than saving like a school SDC. This is what I think because we will go back again to the issue of your rituals which have been talking about before. Is it not that we want to do rituals, should we ask the permission to conduct our rituals from someone else when we are the custodians of the place?

**CM3:** Ndinodzoka panyaya yekuti imi munoda kuenda panational level but, tiri kuona kuti this program inobata vanhu varikuno; iri kubata isu kuno. Vanhu vari pano pa Great Zimbabwe tisu

tinobatwa nezvinhu zvatiri kutaura izvi. Musati munotarisa kune mamwe maruins kunaana Khami nezvimwe hazviko. Saka isu tiri kuti sezvo zvinhu izvi zviri pano pa Great Zimbabwe mukange mootaura zve local committee uko vachatadza kuzviziva kuti zviiko izvi. Asi imi munoziva kuti panaapa pakamboitika colonialism vanhu vakadzingwa navarungu vakati ndezvedu. Now varungu viand still zvinongova zve hurumende yapinda inongotizve ndezvedu. Kuvanhu hazvisati zvadzoka kuti tive namasimba ekuti titi ah uyu munhu arikuda kuita zve church achisunga micheka. Hanzi sezvamunozoita zvekuti taona zvikari pakati pakati, isu toti ko makadiiko kumboti zivisa kuti murikuona munhu anoti zvakati zvikati. Ndoo chikumbiro chedu tirege kuzo zivisana masungigwa micheka, maitwa zvikari nei nei. Asi vanhu vaya vachiuuya Chair Havana kumboziya kuti nhasi kunoitika zvakati. Zvaziikanwa nemi vashandi muno. Ndoo pane chikumbiro chedu ipapo. Ngapave namasimba, takamirira madzisheka, madzishe acho.

E6: Just to help each other, what Doc has said is that NMMZ does not have other powers to create an office to have a member of the local committee every day in order to help in the day to day running. The NMMZ as a government, as have witnessed people asking for donations, donations which we can give with without paperwork is difficult because NMMZ rely on grants. We could give them firewood, and we seek for donations from other companies and we are giving firewood why? And they to me, no, for you to move any museums' dollar, it requires a lot of paperwork and this paperwork will be audited. So, as an initiative which has started here, like I have said before that it is a pilot project, in other regions they do not have it. So it is something that we wish that it gets us to a point where we will be allowed as was mentioned by Doc Mkwende to have community representatives who will become permanent helping us with a salary or gratuity. But from NMMZ right now to afford paying gratuity out, because NMMZ funds have auditors from museums and then the external. So, all that becomes complicated. That is why we said, if NMMZ because it has a committee in the Southern region. If the head office negotiates with the ministry that we now have such an initiative and explain well what led to the development of the initiative in line with other initiatives like that of paying of fees for the school learners, and that we are considering have full time local community committee representing the community so that they help with operations at the site contributing to one, two, three productive things and get the authority then they can start. But from NMMZ even if they go to ministry is also difficult with our government. Do you know Kraal heads they have a time when they did not get their pay? Now to we are now giving them without full mandate huye nekuti vari kuti supporter zvakaita sei. Now to give them transport we do not

have a car. Therefore, we are sayin *zvimwe zvataka pindurwa, zvimwe zvakabuda*. *Zvakabuda* because iyo hurumende haina chairi kuita kuti zvifambe asi isu tiine shungu dzekuti deno tabatana nevava. Mukapihwa masimba huye vakapihwawo *zvimwe zvinobatsirawo* muhupenyu nenyaya yekuti kana vasiya kumunda wavanewo something, asi hatisati tava nazvo.

## Appendix 3

### Focus group discussion with local community

**Revai Boterere (RB):** Good afternoon elders, my name is Revai Boterere, Nyati mhenyu, wekwaMakoni (clan praise). I am conducting a research which focusses on how a decolonial thinking can shift how Great Zimbabwe is being managed. It is important that I also hear why Great Zimbabwe is important to you, and the ways you use Great Zimbabwe for?

**CM1:** This issue I see it this way, what I would wish to see happen, if it is possible because Dzimbabwe is our guardian, *ndo panobva hupenyu hwedu isusu sevana* veDzimbabwe [it is where we earn a living as Zimbabweans]. Now if it was possible that our chiefs come together, with others leaders above them up to the leaders above them who are the authorities of these monuments and have a meeting including spirit mediums and discuss that how can we restore the sacredness of the place as it was before. The spirit mediums will manifest and will advise and say no do it this way. *Zvarondedzerwa kudero zvoitwa nemazvo*, that is how we can have the sacredness to be restored because now it seems as it is hidden as we have privileged most the modern life. Harahwa dzinoti furatira, saying we don't know what they are talking about whilst you are talking sense. This is how I see this place.

**RB:** So, when you say Dzimbabwe what do you mean?

**CM1** I personally value, looking at how we live now in Great Zimbabwe, in this place of ours. We are living a better life, though we sometimes come across challenges here and there, for challenges are inevitable but I value how we are living every day.

**RB:** Yes lets here from you as well, what do you value about Great Zimbabwe and what do you know as traditional ways that could be missing in the management of this place?

**CM2:** My name is Julite Chikozhere, ndiri we Shawa, mhofu (clam praise). For me, Dzimbabwe is important because *ndiyo mhiko yavanhu vatema*. Great Zimbabwe is important

to us African people (black people). It connects all the four corners of this country. This is our ancestors' place. This is where they gathered finding solutions on problems that they faced. It is an important place that connects all the corners of the country. It is important place because our elders lie in this place and they are our guardians. It is where we can come and seek answers to problems which may befall us such as illnesses, hunger, or other problems. We can't just do things, but we must communicate with them first, get instructions and then do what we would have been instructed to do. So, I can say Dzimbabwe is the most sacred which connects with other sacred places

**CM1:** Now you see that all these other places across the country, meaning every ethnic groups in the country came from Dzimbabwe spreading all over the country. They came from Dzimbabwe here. The great ancestral spirits lie here in these caves sharing with others in all the four corners of the country. All the sacred places, those that are said to have springs and other sacred qualities, they share with Great Zimbabwe, This Dzimbabwe, that's why we value it.

**RB:** Colonisers had their ways of managing this place and in many ways as u can attest to, we have been alienated. All your wish on this place as you have pointed earlier also refer to ways of using the place that would help protect. So, when it comes to your rituals where these would be conducted.

**CM2:** Where we do it in here, we do it so that we can be heard, and our request are answered. Also, even when you are let's say in Bulawayo you can be heard if it is at the right place and in a place where you will be allowed to do so.

**CM3:** What I add is that, I can communicate with my ancestors from here and be heard, I can do it outside this place of our forefathers, I can be here, it can be as far as Bulawayo I can still be heard. Therefore, I said Dzimbabwe is the bigger one of all because it connects with others across the four corners of the country. It is still one family. It is the giant, the great, which is why it is said to be our heritage. This is the reason why the white man has always wanted the great Zimbabwe because they know that it is here *pane mhiko yacho*, and know that if we keep like this, we will get all that we want. We will share with our children and leave the Dzimbabwe children to suffer from hunger.

**CM4:** For me why I say is important is because it is where our ancestors lie, it is the breast of the nation. This place teaches us our traditional ways of life especially school learners who come to learn here. They learn of how our elders lived even dressing. I believe they learn a lot

from us performers. Even ourselves we have learnt a lot in life in this traditional way of life. We must protect it because it a sacred place.

**RB:** Reflect on the traditional ways of life (tsika dzechivanhu), normally in sacred places there are spaces where some activities are restricted. Do we have this at Great Zimbabwe?

**CM1:** sacred places do exist here, but what happens is that, I am going back to what I pointed earlier because now zvinhu zvakadzima because of the ways we used to have and those that did not belong here(I mean the whites who colonised us) they messed up things here, *saka harahwa dzinofuratira*. Not that they would have gone forever, it just a matter of them giving us their backs just to show that what is happening is not the right thing. *Saka nzvimbo idzodzi dzinonyarara* [so these places become silent].

**RB:** where exactly?

**CM1** laughs

**CM5.** If I also remember very well, the Zimbabwe bird which was taken buy ‘the whites’ but what made them return them is because this place is sacred.

**CM1:** What happens is that I cannot point that here, it is not right

**CM2:** What I might to say is that, Dzimbabweans as a family, if possible, people are given a chance and have our spirit mediums and our chiefs from across the four corners. Not that we should invite everyone because this would mean we need a bigger sitting. We will find out what we have done wrong which needs to be corrected so that we go back to out ways of life. Because now we are just living but we have not gotten at the actual point where we are heard but seeing they see us. So, what is needed is to have all the chiefs around and their spirit mediums and meet in Dzimbabwe. When they meet then we get to be told the truth as they used to because for us to gain this throne, we got it because chiefs and spirit mediums moved together, telling them that now don’t do this, wait, today do not just play. Also, it was because the children followed instructions. So, the truth is that now we have forgotten. We can’t excel, we will do it slowly, but it continues pulling us down. These chiefs are supposed to meet so that we are told were we went wrong. Now if you look the spirit mediums they have been put aside like a hip of firewood. So those who used to send how do they feel, those who said my bones shall rise again. Now have they not risen again?

**CM1:** This means that these spirit mediums vanhu vakatogarwa nemidzimu yacho iyoyi. The masvikiros are the ones who then manifest and organise in their ways telling people that you are missing this and that. On this matter do it this way, and on this do it this way so that everything is clear. Unlike now when one *svikiro* is planning this and the other *svikiro* is planning that, the other its own plans as well. So, if they come together saying we have this goal that we want to achieve *midzimu inenge yakateerera* and they plan those who would have manifested. Now this *svikiro* will speak and the other will speak as well and the ideas are joined to form one solid idea.

**RB:** Now that it is open to many people what are supposed to do to manage well?

**CM1:** Don't you think it is a simple matter, if it is that they have planned for us and tell us that you will do this and that, telling us that now you can open but you will do it this and we all do that one thing than its clear. It must be protected. When it comes to protection of the site they will have to provide with writings that even if anyone visits from wherever they will be able to read and be guided with the support of managing authority guiding as well that when get at this place you go this way or do this way, and don't do this when you get to this point. Iyewo akasazoitawo anofanirwa kumonerwa nemidzimu yacho kuti waresva. Anorangwa ndookuti nzvimbo yacho ichengetedzekewo zvakanaka.

**CM2:** In addition to that, when we are sayi masvikiro should come tother. When they come together do not think they do not know. These people are the ones who know the way to go, like how they conducted the rituals before, they cannot mis it. Now we can that our Zimbabwe is open to everyone, this is just similar to a house that is leaking, yes, we will be in the house, but the house will be out of order. Tirimo muDzimbabwe asi vakuru vedu vanonyatsoona kuti ko vana vedu Seiko kudzungaira kudai, sei vasinga gone kufunga. So, we are in a house, but the roof is not thatched. *Panofanirwa kuti pafungiwe muDzimbabwe muno chokwadi svina irimo. Kna ndichiti svina, zviito nezviga zvedu isusu vana veDzimbabwe.* We are not managing well. *Hatisei kugona kuita zviga zvaitwa namadzitateguru edu.* In Zimbabwe, these people that we have mentioned earlier if they come together, they will share ideas with each other. In this place, we are supposed to have ritual ceremonies, *rinenge rakanangana ne Zimbabwe.* This is our custom as Africans (black people), something big will be supposed to be done and correct some of the things that we would have done wrong not yet known. That will get to be known through such activities. Again, as a country that have spilt a lot of blood in many ways, we have some groups that came back from war and some did not. So, a certain group is happy,

and we have some that is crying, urikuhwa chikaranga changu? So, on that would you think Musika vanhu and our soil they would celebrate that. Zvakafanana toti ndiwe une mhuri viand mhiri viand ku South Africa hameno ikoko wava kunzi wagwara asi unonzwa nhomba kurwadza nekuti iropa, huye kozonzi munhu uya wazoti siya asizve uchatsvaga kuona kuti ndoita sei. Hazvigonika kuti mwana vangu avigirwe uko ndoda kuti achengetedzerwe mumusha nokuti ndoomusha wavo. Saka ipapa isusu kuhafura hafura, hatinga goni kuhwereketa zvakawanda, asi zvakawanda zvacho zviriko. Asi isusu chatinenge tichida vanhu ava masvikiro. Masvikiro akasendekwa. Ngaatsvagwe ariko. Ndoo chinhu chikuru kwazvo ichohco.

**RB:** you are saying the place has been desecrated, what are some of these signs?

**MC1:** Look here, I would want to tell you just a few things. *Muno maimera fodya mugomo umu, vanhu vanga vasingambo tambudziki fodya, maimera makuzvungu matomatisi aya, manga musinga shupiki. Bani ramunoona iri waiti muchito pfuura kudai unenge uri chokwa chokwa* (foot sounds produced when walking in a swampy ground), *hazvinei nekuti nguvai iri mumvura chete chete. Yanga iri nyika nyoro. Kwanga kusina chino tambudza vanhu. Zvavaida vaingo tora. Enda unondi torerawo svishizha svefodya, mwana aimanya otouya nayo. Zino ikozvino hamusisina, matomatisi aimera hapachisisna. Izvozvi mvura yatiri kutaura apa hapasisina, pakatooma handiti urikutozvionawo. Ihuruva yega yega nemhaka yei? Nemhaka yekuti zviri kutaurwa natateguru ava ichokwadi ichocho mimwe midzimu yakanyunyuta. Haigoni kuti zvisununguke zvese vamwe vakatsamwa. Shuwa mungaridya sadza here kuti mumwe ari kuchema mumwe ari kupopota. Uyu arikuimba dzake dhe chechi uyu arikudii, mungaridya imi.* [Here we used to have tobacco growing in the hill, We used to have tomatoes grow in the hill, you could not struggle. All this place used to have water regardless of seasons changing it was water all over any time of the year. It was wet land. People did not struggle; they would just take. Go and bring me a few tobacco leaves, a child would quickly run and bring it for you. Now we no longer have those tomatoes that used to grow, the water that we are talking about its not there anymore. It is dry as you can see, it's all dust why? It is because as tateguru has said, it is true some of our ancestors *vakanyunyuta*. They cannot normalise things when some are angry. Surely would eat sadza here when someone is crying, and some are aggrieved; some are singing their church songs here; would u eat that sadza]

**MC3:** Our view is that as a country that was colonised at some point, the whites wanted the place to be theirs and they are the ones who came with their ways that disturbed the way we

were managing our places. The place had so much value. So, they are the ones who started with doing all these things wrong. We left our cultures and started following that which was brought by the white colonisers. *Vedu vadzimu vaya vari mukati menyika vabva vati furatira*. [Our ancestors in this place have given us their backs]. Mudzimu weshere uri mudendere. There is nothing that exist with no beginning. So, the destruction and desecration of this Zimbabwe when some people wanted to make it theirs, they at some point even used guns and almost defeated us, *ikambova Rhodesia iyo iri Zimbabwe*. True, there was some building and destruction of a lot of things. We must start rebuilding again.

**RB:** We are now Zimbabweans, what should we do now?

**MC4:** This is what we said earlier that we need to reorganise ourselves and do things right, identifying where we went wrong as I also agree with the former speakers. *Zvinoda masvikiro, zvinoda masvitsa, zvinoda vakuru venzvimbo kuti kana vachikwanisa kubika doro vachichema Zimbabwe rose kuti taida kuti zvinhu zvidzoke pagwara*, [I requires spirit mediums, it requires traditions, it requires leaders of the place, if possible brew beer and go around Zimbabwe crying to the ancestors that we want things to go back to the right path.

**MC1:** We very much appreciate NMMZ staff who are helping to manage this place, it is good, *asi tiri kureva pahuyerwa pose ipapa ndoo panoda masvikiro kutanga votaura nhoroondo dzacho dzinofanigwa kuitiwa nyika yosununguka ava vakango Chengeta hawo saizvozvi*. Havana zvavari kukanganisa varikuto batsira zvaka simba. [But we are saying on the sacredness of the place that is where it needs spirit mediums first and give us the direction we are supposed to take, and the country will be freed whilst NMMZ continues with its work of managing like this. They are not wrong they are helping.

**RB:** What could be missing?

**MC5:** There is no other way of doing this, besides masvikiro, manyusa nembonga dzavo, nemadzishe ose, come together and find ways.

**Tourists arrived and there was some performance by the mbira group.**

#### **Appendix 4 Interview with Expert 2**

**RB.** Thank you, sir, for this opportunity, my name is Revai Boterere a Masters student from Wits University. I am currently working on a research project looking at how decolonial thinking can shift how heritage is being managed at Great Zimbabwe.

**E2.** In as much as I understand and know community participation in terms of the mentality of decolonising, the participation which the community are purported to be doing, to me, it is not meaningful participation rather it is just a mention of participation. Yes, they draw from different community village heads, as they send representatives in the meetings, the meetings will be dominated by experts. The communities will be trying to seek favours from the authorities so that they may have their children selected for the school fees and other favours or some gratuity. I was involved in the discussions for five years, in the discussions we were doing most likely, we were discussing just that they are present, but they do not contribute meaningfully. Even if they try to contribute, they will say that ICOMOS say this, then they would also say that according to the World Heritage Convention we are not allowed to do this. But their interest are sometimes taken sometimes they are not taken fully. So, to say there is participation in my view it is not existing, but it is just by name, it is more ceremonial according to my knowledge. Committees have been complaining a lot in terms of how the site is being managed. One good example of evidence of complaining is stealing of the strand wire. If they were satisfied, they were not going to steal the fence. So, they were saying you are alienating us from our monument. By putting a wire, it's like you are saying this is our site you stay there. So, screening them off was like a physical barrier to them and they are doing like that. If there is a barrier it must be through word not physical barriers. I once had meetings with the committees personally, they were raising those concerns. They were raising concerns in terms of access. Sometimes they were not permitted to pass through the monument to go to the other side of the monument like vanhu vanogara kumhiri kweMujejeje. So they were saying so what is the value of the monument to us, we have seen these ruins for many years, we are not interested in seeing the ruins. We are simply passing through. So if you prohibit us from passing through they will do the counter attack.

Also, cattle, because in the monument it is a protected area and that is where the grass (rich pasture) if you make people pay fines because, because there were fines – they ones made a kraal where they take all the stray cattle. The following morning, they would find the kraal destroyed *mombe dzatorwa nevaridzi*. So, there were some loggerheads. Also the burning of some veld fires. In most cases they came from communities, so they were saying yes, these are monuments, it's our shrine and we have a stake, so, if you put physical barriers then it becomes tit for tat. But I appreciate the current management system. They are trying by all means to incorporate them but amongst the members of the communities there are some who are mischievous. But the full representation of the communities they are not fully represented and

their views are not fully taken aboard, they are just people who are from the community who do not know anything and when they try to voice up they say according to this and this, world heritage says this, the Act says this. As I was discussing to Doc Expert 3, there are some researches by scholars, I have ones been tour guide there for about eight years, the views of the scholars that is the dominant interpretation model that is being done at Great Zimbabwe from probably 1996 up to now is that of Thomas Huffman. The use of space which Huffman provided is the one that is being used, the Doma culture, the initiation ceremony, activities being done at the great enclosure that is the dominant interpretation – the king had many wives. Yes, it's fine but there are some researches that are being done, that information is not filtering well to the presenters, it is kept by academics.

I don't know of yesterday or a week ago whether they have changed but the colleagues that are there I worked with them for almost every day, actually I taught them how to interpret the same, so this is what I am saying is lacking.

**RB.** Thank you for raising this, I also experienced it three times with the three different tour guides particularly in the hill complex and at the hut they start tours it was like all the tours were guided by one person.

**E2.** Yes, there might be researches of decolonising the GZ interpretation and the use of space, but it is in the hands of the academics, it is not yet synthesised down to the interpreters. Heritage education department is the one that synthesises and give information to the school children in a very simplified manner, still the tour guides they find it humorous to discuss it that way. They want the kids to enjoy, the king had many wives, initiation you know if you talk of sexuality amongst the children, they love it very much. So, they have found it a very interesting story of Huffman. Scholars like Chirikure and others availed some researches contrary to Huffman has produced that is not presented and the use of myths. Some of the myths have not been verified. You know if you talk of myths, you think you a leeway to create any story, because a myth does not have tested hypothesis, so they use also myths especially in the cave, its acoustic nature, they were shouting wife number 39, 40 etc in the cave. If you were to be taken by a tour guide, the tour guide was going to explain that way. That is not substantiated information which should be provided to the tourists to make it a fact. So, the tour guides lack to streamline between facts and funders yet they will be trying to amaze the tourist to get the tip. So, some of the explanation that is given is trying to coerce a tip, trying to create a story that is so fascinating, sometimes misrepresenting the fact so that one at the end of the tour gets a tip.

Also, the type of administration which has been involved has influence. Administrators have a large bearing in terms of interpretation whether they understand the importance of heritage itself or not. The background of the administrators. If you can track the background of administrators like Ken Mufuka, Mahachi, Ngoro, Matenga, Mvenge and others, some were historians, some Archaeologists, and right now we now the current director and he does not have archaeological background and that can impact as well in terms of the interpretation. What he prioritises is most important and that maybe not be what is prioritised by Doc who has an archaeological background. You see that has got a bearing in terms of interpretation. At one point, if one is a director is not to check what is interpreted, archaeologically or heritage management. The training in terms of administrators also impact in terms of interpretation and presentation of the site. Also, the training, I am sure the tour guides must be trained, yes, they must be coming from the local community but the last time I know of the training it was 2010 when we trained *ana* Mlambo. We tried to train them but yet they are now not allowed to enter. The people who were not trained are the ones who are now interpreting the site now. It is a question of whether you have five O levels, if you have and can speak English then follow the tour guide and listen how he is interpreting then you are given tourists. Sometimes the way they interpret is more like a cassette or CD, we have song number 1, 2,3, where they say *kana wasvika apa unenge uchi explainer zvakati zvakati*, they don't mix the approaches. If you want to test that go around 8, 9 or 10am in the morning and say I don't want to start with Hill complex start with the Great enclosure, the flow of information gets confused and now the person explains the great enclosure down the valley in a reverse way, one gets confused. So, the type of interpretation that is there in terms of decolonisation I felt like there is a lot that has to be done from the academics to the tour guides who are in the front.

## **Appendix 5**

### **Discussion with Expert 4 and 5**

**RB.** I'm sure we can go straight in our discussion; you now know me like introduced my self yesterday and what my research is about.

**Expert 4 (E4).** Yes, so, here we have many areas *takatarisa* conservation, we have ethnographer, we have archaeologist then we have exhibitions *kwardinenge ndiri*, and the surveyor. So, as a conservation team with the others who work with collections, normally we do not work in isolation. We work with the community but at the same time we have an instrument that we use that is the Great Zimbabwe management plan. The management plan

gives us guidelines on how we manage for example when we are doing research, how should we do it defined in the plan that when we are dealing with GZ and its accessories how do we do it. The GZ in particular as it was declared a world heritage site, we are also guided by conventions which feeds into our management plan. The plan has been designed considering that as we are in UNESCO what are we expected of, what are the guidelines. Even in the plan the community is involved in managing and is considered. So, the plan is reviewed after every five years. The plan was born from the Act that we use, the NMMZ Act. When we were declared a national monument, we did not have a management plan, but later it was realised it is lacking and it is a UNESCO requirement for every World Heritage site to have a management plan. I can say that the monument it is more of a mixed method where we are putting an effort to work with an all-inclusive strategy, using the old system which is colonially informed and that which was alienated. Mutemo waka kosha in managing this resource because haisi community yese inonzwisisa kuti chinhu ichi chaka kosha. You will find that we have other sites outside GZ which are of similar nature with dry-stone walling but most often when we go in such places to do condition surveys you would find kuti mu community, we are met with contestations dzekuti the other section of the community is taking the stones to build their houses and others are saying this is our thing, it is our heritage, our culture it must not be timbered with. Maybe the challenge will be in such cases they may not know who to report to there is such acts of vandalism. But they get some comfort with our presents and get to explain their challenges.

We try in many ways to involve the community. In fact, in our system now we have Great Zimbabwe Local community committee. So, the committee when we seat in our meetings maybe when discussing problems of veld fires, stray cattle, etc how we manage they also contribute in how we can help each other protect or deal with such challenges. Even when conducting research, we try in many ways to involve the community. The Idea of involving the community is no knew trend that we are embracing as it is being advocated for by UNESCO.

**RB.** There are efforts to involve the community, but how far have you gone with incorporating the intangible aspects of this heritage in your management.

Like it is with art, art is more than what we see. Art is in the person, story behind and ideas which are expressed. So it is with GZ, true it more than the monument we see. We have some backsliding when it comes to the intangible aspects though there are efforts. To manage this well the other important thing is us going back to the drawing board and ask ourselves who

own the shrine. The intangible aspect comes with the owners of the heritage, Kana takasa ziva muridzi vayo hatigoni kutora chero munhu toshanda naye for example in the case of rituals. In the case of GZ there is a challenge yekuti we are in area with a community with many leaders. So, on the four different groups surrounding the monument, they all claim ownership. So as managing authorities the challenge is as much as we would want to do that, who do we give chiremera chacho. If we are to allow one group others will come and contest why the other group have been permitted.

**E5.** Another challenge that we have on local communities is that Zimbabwe at large is a community and some people come from outside Masvingo wanting to do their rituals and the local community living around the site they also come gun-blazing kuti why they would have been allowed. So, we also have the national community to consider.

**RB.** Where exactly in GZ

**E5.** Some vanongoti chero kungopinda mufence ndatotsika, ndangonzi ndisvike pachikuva. Umwe anoti apa ndoo pakavigwa teteguru vedu so that's where I want to conduct my ritual. Some come vachida mu Hill complex or Great enclosure. We do not have a problem with that as long as they follow the procedures, application and waiting for clearance. Not only have the ATR people come but even wemachechi. Wechechi (ma Johanne masowe, Zioni) ndoo vanoto nyanya.

**RB.** I have been having a conversation with other members of the local community to hear their interpretation of Great Zimbabwe. *Waiti iwo isu rino idzimbabwe. Haasingori matombo aka tunukidzana chetesekuona kwenyu asi chinhu chinoti koshera nekuti vakuru vedu vaichengetwa mumakomo nemuma pako. Makomo nema pako zvinoera. Chamunoti munhu haisi nyama, munhu mweya saka mweya yavakuru vedu irimo mumakomo nemapako. Saka vazhinji vanouya vano vinga gomoin the hill complex. Makomo anoera saka vanoteera huyera year hurimo. GZ wakaitarisa inofamba nenhoroondo yayo, ndoo makabva mudzi wemadzinza akazo zara munyika ukazvin tsvagisisa. Gomo iri ndiye Zame ano tambidza vamwe vana Zame (mamwe makomo). Hanzi nanhasi tine chishuo chekuti, we are very happy kuti NMMZ is helping us protect but kune kamwe kaku resveka kari kuitika kasiri kuoneka katinofungidzira kuti mamwe matambudziko atiri kusangana nawo for example kushaikwa kwemvura, kudzima kwechitubu, nezvimwe. Dai tsika dzakare tisinga tarisi kuti mambo upi kana upi woronga pamwe nekuti umwe neumwe ane masvikiro ake and masvikiro iwayo anozivana, if they work together zvingatinakira.*

**E5.** Ndoopane challenge, hamungava sanganisi imi madzimambo iwawa namasvikiro awo vakaswera zuva rese wachiwirirana. Tine challenge yeMujejeje wakapwanyiswa in 2012 by an unknow person *asi* it has some intangible value. Imwe community inotaura zvayo imwewo zvayo. Kuti tiite resuscitate. Chakapwanyiswa matombo, saka sokutaura kwawo wanoti wakasvibiswa panoda kuti pachenurwe. We are in the process of drafting a letter to the Chiefs kuti vaiye tionesane about Mujejeje *asi* patorine basa.

**E4** Politics ndii dzimwewo kubva kare chaiko. The colonial masters having realised that the monument is of value to the people. Mumadzimbabwe mune makuva amadzitateguru, Cecil John Rhodes akauisawo *hama* yake Allan Willson kuti anovigwavo ipapo which distorts the intangible aspect of the monument. With the current political environment ndoopane nyaya yekuti mayb someone in politics arikudawo kuwana some political milage ndinouisawo someone anobva kwandiri with paperwork. Last time we experienced someone akabva kuguruve, we experienced zvibutwa zvefodya zvakasiwa muma monuments which scared visitors and the locals complained.

**E4.** Another issue when we are talking of this colonially informed system of management, we also talking of professional system of management as government assigned by ministries to curate, there is a third part in management which applies particularly here in Zimbabwe which is the political hand. In as much as we are saying we have contestations with the community which are trying our level best to collaborate with mend all the differences so that we work as one, you would find that someone comes from the government with presidential powers claiming that he/she has been asked to come, ndiri svikiro, they come and do whatever they do and the local community complain about these. They blame NMMZ officials for allowing yet we do not have power the political hand.

**E5.** The other issue is on the chiefs, two are of the same totem Moyo, whilst the other two are of the two different Shumbas. There is now lack of trust with NMMZ by the Shumbas who think there is a bias to the Moyos who are brothers.

**E4.** In terms of benefits

- So far there is from the ethnographic department, where the little revenue generated, a potion is used to assist with school fees for children from these four leaders. Now they have twenty kids that they are helping with fees from form one to four.

- Also, we have some projects we do with them for example grass cutting, lantana clearance
- The Shona village we have groups who conduct different activities for example selling just to improve their livelihoods. We have those who do mbira, ngoma, basketry, traditional healing etc.

**E5.** So, we are trying to engage the community through these activities at the theme park. Even employment, stone masons, the locals are the ones who do restorations, and they are permanently employed under conservation as stone masons. So, we are tapping into that knowledge (intangible) tacit knowledge – haidzidzwe kuchikoro.

**RB.** So, for continuity, how do you go about it?

**E4.** What we do, big projects the funded ones, we take people on contract basis, and from these that is when the young are groomed by the seniors who are more experienced. That is also when we identify skill, though zvedu tisati taakumberi zvekuti we can also organise other projects which involve school kids from the local schools to tap that knowledge.

The other thing is the separation of the National Parks and NMMZ, two components dzaifanirwa kushandidzana because nature and culture zvinopindirana.

Also our Act comes from the colonial period, it just had ammendments haina kumbo chinja.

**RB.** Thank you very much good people.

## Appendix 6



*Members of the Great Zimbabwe Local Community Committee and experts during a focus group discussion held at the Great Zimbabwe Monuments administration offices: author's own.*

## **Appendix 7**

The National Museums and Monuments Act [Chapter 25:11],  
[https://www.parlzim.gov.zw/acts-list/download/1011\\_3ed136348f837eede18c3608fb3e95d8](https://www.parlzim.gov.zw/acts-list/download/1011_3ed136348f837eede18c3608fb3e95d8)

## **Appendix 8**

Refer to the Great Zimbabwe Management Plan of 2012