YOUR MONUMENT OUR SHRINE
The preservation of Great Zimbabwe

Webber Ndoro
Your Monument our Shrine: The preservation of Great Zimbabwe

Dissertation in African archaeology to be publicly examined in Auditorium Minus, Gustavianum, on May 30, 2001, at 10 am for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The examination will be conducted in English.

ABSTRACT

Cultural heritage management in African and in other non-western societies, has mainly been concerned with the preservation and presentation of archaeological monuments primarily from a technical point of view. In Zimbabwe the emphasis has been on the preservation of spectacular monumental architectural places like Great Zimbabwe. Most efforts to preserve and present the archaeological heritage in Southern Africa suffer from a failure to fully understand the significance of the cultural heritage and its value to local communities. Following independence, many Southern African nations realised the value of the past in nation building and the need to restore cultural pride, which had seriously been eroded by colonialism. However, local community interests are often ignored at the expense of international guidelines and frames of operation. Despite the attainment of independence heritage management in Southern Africa assume that local communities are irrelevant to a 'scientific' approach of managing their own heritage.

This thesis explores traditional ways of heritage management. They are discussed in relation of the various experiences at the Great Zimbabwe National Monument. The architectural conservation programmes implemented at Great Zimbabwe are outlined and reviewed in the context of archaeological heritage managers in Southern Africa. The thesis emphasises the need for integrative planning and management structures that promotes a rapprochement between scientific and local knowledge structures. This provides the best chance of avoiding irreversible cultural degradation resulting from arbitrary decisions of management and policy makers.

Key words: Archaeological- and cultural heritage management; preservation and presentation; cultural landscape; Great Zimbabwe; national shrines; cultural significances; local and indigenous knowledge; cultural values.

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Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University
Uppsala 2001
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Cover: Ritual ceremony to re-open the fountain at Great Zimbabwe in 2000. The cover also shows the wall of the Great Enclosure and on the back a picture from the interior of the Great Enclosure.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Conceptual framework

Across the world, for thousands of years different communities have left traces of their activities. Sometimes these traces are in the form of considerable structures like the pyramids of North Africa, the spectacular Graeco-Roman architectural monuments of Europe, or the amazing temples and gardens of Asia. Some of the traces of human development and achievements survive today either as ruined architectural structures or buried archaeological remains. These prehistoric remains have attracted the attention of contemporary peoples. Wherever ruined monuments are situated, they always create a sense of wonder and curiosity to know and explore more about the people and cultures that produced artistic work on such a grand scale. In many parts of the world, the ruined monuments and archaeological remains have been preserved and presented to the public as evidence of the past. Legislation has also been enacted in order to protect the ruined sites from destruction or damage, and more positively encourage their preservation.

The surviving ruined monuments in many parts of the world frequently display a high degree of craftsmanship and intellectual refinement. The fact that they have survived for centuries is a testimony to the workmanship and prowess of those who built them. The prehistoric ruined monuments in Southern Africa (Fig. 1.1) are a testimony to the development of the subcontinent and its diverse peoples. However, given the socio-economic context, as will be discussed in this study more has to be done to secure and present the archaeological heritage of the subcontinent.

For some time cultural heritage management in Africa and perhaps other non-western societies, has mainly been concerned with the preservation and presentation of archaeological monuments primarily from a technical point of view. Very often such programmes have had a specific focus. In Southern Africa the emphasis has been on the preservation of the architecturally spectacular Madzimbabwe stone walled structures (Miller 1996; Matenga 1996; Ndoro 1994, 1996). The major problem with most efforts to preserve and present the archaeological heritage in Southern Africa seem to emanate from a failure to fully understand the cultural significance of the cultural heritage and its value to local communities. Following independence, many Southern African nations realised the value of the past in nation building and the need to restore cultural pride, which had seriously been eroded by colonialism. It is thus surprising that very often the interest of the local communities are ignored at the expense of international guidelines and frames of operation. It also appears that despite the attainment of independence heritage management in Southern Africa has tended to assume that local communities are irrelevant to the often “scientific” methods of managing their own heritage. This research explores this traditional way of heritage management. This is discussed in the light of the various experiences at the Great Zimbabwe National Monument. The architectural conservation programmes implemented at
Great Zimbabwe is outlined and reviewed in the wider context of archaeological heritage management in Southern Africa. Heritage management is taken to mean not just the preservation of physical remains and its implications on development issues, it is a multifaceted concept which takes into account the landscape in which cultural property (both tangible and intangible) and the interest of all the concerned groups. It also involves upholding all the values ascribed to the heritage by all interested and affected parties. Heritage management therefore subsumes three main concepts (Grundberg 2000):

- **Memories**: individual, collective, cognitive and culturally constituted processes
- **Culture**: actions, habits, text music, rituals, events, material objects, monuments, structures, places, nature and landscapes
- **Cultural heritage**: individual as well collectively defined collections of memories and cultures made because of deliberate socio-political processes

The main objective of the present study is to explore the way archaeological heritage management has been practised in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa in general and at Great Zimbabwe in particular. The major concern is the manner in which archaeological monuments have been preserved and presented. The other concern is to examine if there have been any significant changes in the way heritage management was being practised before and after the attainment of political independence.

The study focuses on the colonial and post-colonial influences in archaeological heritage management, especially the construction and maintenance of the cultural significance of a site. The research provides an examination of the archaeological heritage management, which has been influenced by shifting concepts of cultural significance, particularly where significance is contested within and outside of local and international communities. Specifically, it will focus on the notion and practices of archaeological heritage management, which are contested by indigenous communities who had been previously denied access to it. The research examines the disjunctive relationship between the significance of the cultural heritage and its management. This involved investigating the preservation and presentation programs at Great Zimbabwe National Monument in which the issues of management and representation of archaeological heritage are negotiated by government, archaeologists, specific interest groups and the wider community.

This thesis examines various ways in which cultural heritage management has evolved in Southern Africa. Great Zimbabwe, as one of the well-known sites in Southern Africa, will be used as the main example to examine these processes and other related places will be used to amplify
the practise. Most studies on Great Zimbabwe have focused on the culture history and the economic organisation of the settlement during prehistoric times (e.g. Garlake 1973; Huffman 1997; Sinclair 1987). Whilst these studies recognised the power of prehistory and the monument in today’s socio-political environment, very few studies have actually focused on the implication of this on the present day preservation and presentation of the site. The main objective is to develop a holistic approach to the management of Great Zimbabwe and related monuments as cultural and natural landscape. This will provide for a better heritage conservation and utilisation, which will take recognition of the unique local and international status of the monument.

Why protect these places? This question is conventionally answered by pointing out that archaeological resources are non-renewable. Once a site is destroyed it is gone forever. In the African context the value of this resource is enhanced because it is one of the fundamental sources of information about pre-colonial history. Some sites have acquired prominence as symbols of pre-colonial African achievements and as such are important to people of African ancestry wherever they may live. Given the many years of being denied access to these monuments during the colonial period ruined sites might be the only alternative to cultural empowerment to the indigenous populations. It is the only tangible way of making them proud about their cultural heritage.

1.2. Preservation

The concept of conserving archaeological monuments is well established in many developed countries especially in the Northern Hemisphere. The long history of durable and permanent structures has meant that monuments in these parts of the world have survived for many centuries. This has not just been a question of a favourable climatic environment or the use of inorganic material (Herrmann 1988), but also due to a deliberate process of conserving the built and cultural heritage. Rapid industrialisation has also in many ways ensured a nostalgic view of the past (Lowenthal 1996; Tunbridge & Ashworth 1996). It is relevant to note that no rapid industrialisation has taken place in most of Southern Africa. Urban centres like Johannesburg-Pretoria conurbation, Harare, Lusaka and Maputo remain islands in an otherwise rural cultural landscape.

Preservation normally refers to the action taken to prevent decay and it embraces all acts that are intended to prolong the life of an object or structure. It can also include restoration and reconstruction as aspects of preserving a concept on prehistoric monument as long as original materials and designs are used. Throughout the world the objective of preservation when dealing with ruined monuments has been to arrest or retard the process of decay (Feilden 1982; Thompson 1981). In the case of excavated sites, the objective is not only to eliminate degeneration but also to rehabilitate the structure into a new environment. The preservation of these ruined monuments presents special problems. Unlike historic buildings in use, ruined monuments in most cases will have lost some of their structural members. Most no longer have a roof to protect the rest of the structure. They may also be covered with vegetation and could be structurally unstable. However, the dilemma in dealing with such structures is that their importance and attraction may actually be based on their ruinous state, which conjures romantic and picturesque images. Thus, any intervention in the name of preservation to stabilise or clean up the site might be in conflict with long established public views of the site. In England, English heritage has tried to solve this dilemma by advancing a policy of “conserve as found” (Emery 1987). Here, examples like Fountain Abbey come to mind. English Heritage has even encouraged the growth of some weeds in order to cultivate the romantic picturesque images of a ruined monument in the countryside. The romantic image created is exemplified during the nineteenth century by the writings of William Wordsworth, John Morris, and John Ruskin. The works of the latter have had a major influence in the preservation movement in Britain. However, the dictum “conserve as found” may inhibit reasonable and intelligent presentation of the ruins to the extent of making it meaningless to continue protecting it. In Italy and Greece some restoration to revive the original concept and legibility of the ruined monument have been made.
In Italy restoration by anastyloses, using original material has been promoted as being acceptable as long as it is based on the evidence of sound archaeological research (Feilden 1982).

The preservation of ruined archaeological monuments presents another problem. This is the problem of dealing with materials in an open and virtually uncontrollable environment. The climatic environment in many instances contributes to the decay of many monuments. Yet the size and large area covered by most of the structures mean that any attempt to control the environment is bound to be unsuccessful.

Choosing the appropriate intervention option has to follow preservation principles. Before any intervention, the historical evidence should be fully recorded and should not be destroyed, falsified or removed. This implies that intervention be the minimum necessary and be governed by unswerving respect for the aesthetic, historical and physical integrity of the structure or site (Feilden 1982). The intervention should also be reversible if technically possible. This may be difficult and in many cases it has been found to be impossible to achieve. Many physical interventions might be reversible in theory but in practice difficult to carry out. Related to the idea of reversibility is the fact that any intervention should not prejudice any future work. It should be possible for future researchers to have access to all the evidence incorporated in the structures. It is also important that we allow the maximum amount of existing material to be retained whenever possible. These principles ensure that we do not build a new design to replace the original. After all people want to see the original (Price 1990; Molina-Montes 1982). It is for this reason that authenticity is central to contemporary heritage management and preservation theory. The definition, meaning, contents and origin of authenticity have been clearly illustrated by Lowenthal (1992), Eco (1986) and Jokiletho (1994). Authenticity has been related to the development and improvement of the scientific methods of preservation.

The general question of authenticity was the subject of debate at two major world conferences in 1995; at Bergen in Norway and Nara in Japan. The importance of this debate has also prompted ICCROM to issue operational guide-
and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention of 1972. It is against this background that the concept of authenticity has been formulated. In the management of World Heritage sites, the operational guidelines define authenticity in terms of design, material, workmanship or setting. The discussions in Bergen and Nara indicated that these need to be expanded and redefined on a regional basis. This has already happened with the Venice Charter, which has been redefined in Australia to form the Burro Charter. This is specifically applicable to the Australian situation. It is therefore clear that the Venice Charter and the concept of World Heritage are based on a western European rationale and methodology. Non-western cultures have a different way of looking at the values attached to the monuments and hence the way they would define authenticity. One can in part argue that the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) has extended the influence of the Venice charter to other parts of the world.

1.3. Presentation

The presentation or interpretation of the archaeological heritage includes a broad scope of endeavours ranging from formal education and curriculum development to less structured programs such as site tours and displays. It also encompasses communicative devices such as the publication of popular histories, public awareness posters, brochures and development of multimedia presentations. Public presentation and interpretation involves the development of communication strategies between the scientific researchers and non-specialists such as park interpreters, whose job is to deliver the message of archaeology to a variety of public audiences. There seems to have been a growing interest in the last ten years to make archaeology reach the public and involve them in the discourse on heritage management (see Cleere 1984, 1989, Gathercole & Lowenthal 1990; Hewison 1987; Ucko 1994; Stone & Molyneaux 1994). In recent years the presentation of the past and the construction of knowledge in places like museums and archaeological sites has increasingly been criticised and questioned (Stone & Molyneaux 1994; Merriman 1993). There seems to be a general dissatisfaction with the way archaeological remains have been presented to the wider public.

Preserving the authenticity of archaeological remains while making them accessible and intelligible to the visitors and the general public is a dilemma for all who manage these resources, especially ruined monuments. Archaeological remains more than any other form of cultural property are notoriously hard to understand just by looking at them: they require additional information to make them intelligible. At times models and reconstructions can help, but large monuments are complicated structures, difficult to understand without the historical and comparative knowledge which ordinary visitors lack. Yet these people, the majority of them are subjected to the selection, classification and mode of analyses based on the interest of the research specialist. The models and displays at most sites make one wonder whether we are preserving the past or the present (Leone 1983; Wallace 1981; Shanks & Tilley 1987).

In non-western societies, for example in Southern Africa, there are fundamental problems in presenting ruined monuments to the public. For both functionalist and structuralist reasons, non-western societies are given to reflecting on their past in terms of myths and legends (see Mafinowski 1954; Levi-Strauss 1958), yet presentations of the few publicised archaeological places in Southern Africa are directed at foreign visitors as the targeted audience; indigenous visitors benefit very little from these efforts to present the places. The local community is totally alienated from its own cultural heritage. If the cultural heritage is to be protected in Southern Africa, then the presentation of monuments must take cognisance of the indigenous population. Ideally, an integrated preservation and presentation strategy should ensure that the message of the past encoded in the archaeological remains are interpreted and presented effectively to the indigenous communities as well as the foreign visitors (Ndoro 1994).

But how can this be done, in these societies, which are supposed to have beliefs in myths and superstitions? Recent studies in Africa and other non-western societies have shown that all societies appreciate the past and respect their cultural heritage in ways of their own, not by the atti-
tudes of western academics. Hall (1984) argues that the intellectual constraints of archaeology and scientific research have very little meaning to African communities. The preservation and presentation of Southern Africa’s monuments must take notice of the social matrix and cultural perceptions of the past, integrating the indigenous traditional and scientific pathways to knowledge. A creative and meaningful presentation would benefit indigenous communities, as they begin to participate in the conservation of the archaeological sites.
2. HERITAGE MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND DEVELOPMENTS IN ZIMBABWE

2.1. Introduction

Archaeological heritage management is about care and continuing development of a place such that its significance is retained and revealed and its future secured. Archaeology in the context of heritage management should add to its primary aim of reconstructing the past societies, the protection and presentation of sites and monuments. Archaeological heritage management is not only the technical prescriptions but also the creation of a dialogue between archaeology and the general public. Heritage management therefore bestows on archaeology the additional responsibility of being sensitive to public aspirations and at the same time protecting the archaeological resources. Both as a theoretical concept and in practice, heritage management is central to defining archaeology's role in society. This chapter explores the development of heritage management in Southern Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. The main objective is to outline the main influences, which shaped the development of heritage management in Zimbabwe and explore how the present situation has arisen.

According to Kristiansen (1998), archaeological heritage management in Europe developed in three phases. The first phase was the before the 19th century when the main emphases were on the archaeological objects. The main focus was on research and the protection of artefacts. It also focused on museum collections, classification and cemetery excavation. Artefacts were removed from their original context and presented to the public in urban areas through museums. The second phase was from the 19th century with the major thrust being on the protection of archaeological monuments. This was mainly a response to the destruction of monuments by developments in the process of industrialisation and field clearance for agriculture. During this period, the middle classes in Europe began to visit monuments and this led to the preservation and restoration of some ruined monuments. The last phase began in the 1970s when efforts were concentrated on enlarging the area of protection with emphasis on the surrounding landscape around the monuments. This was due to the increasing understanding of the relationship between monuments and their surroundings. The landscape provided an important dimension for understanding and experiencing the larger context. What is important to note here, is the fact that the changes in heritage management in Europe were linked to changes in the new popular interest and behaviour of its citizens. In part it was an ideological change that developed hand in hand with changes in archaeological research and in popular perceptions of both the landscape and monuments. Heritage management was part of wider changes in society. What the Heritage agents and archaeological researchers were doing was to satisfy a public need. However, this was not the case in Southern Africa.

Archaeological heritage management as we know it had been introduced to Southern Africa.
iod and continued to be even after independence agents like UNESCO. d international demands have always driven the gement in Southern Af management elite whose rent from those of the ministers new models of. Indigenous views and held by the wider com nes was disregarded. Western lies of cultural material categorisation, division lace of the synthetic in tegration and associa it in Europe as from the part, could be described interpretation, an attempt scape as a cultural conse uses and meaning over n as part of the cosmology of a people. This way heritage management is used to promote or reinforce social strategies.

2.2. Developments in Southern Africa

In Southern Africa, the tendency has been to think that heritage management started with the European colonisation of the subcontinent. However the fact that the Europeans found so many archaeological sites intact means that these sites could survive because of some form of management. Obviously places associated with religious practice and those in everyday use received more attention than those abandoned. In Zimbabwe it is no mere coincidence that so many of the national monuments are also rain making (for example Khami, Great Zimbabwe, Domboshava and Silozwane Fig. 2.1). Such places are sacred and protected by a series of taboos and restrictions. King Lobengula preserved Khami as a place for rainmaking and had soldiers stationed at the monument most of the time (Summers
During Lobengula’s reign, the Shona religious leaders who resided in the Matopo area were allowed to conduct rituals at most of the caves. Mzilikazi and Lobengula were said to have sponsored some of the religious ceremonies conducted in the Matopo. However, once the area was designated a National Park and the sites declared national monuments these activities were prohibited (Ranger 1999). At Domboshava the rituals still continue today but are deemed illegal by the National Monuments Act. In fact the area designated for protection is less than a square kilometre but the whole hill and the nearby forest is supposed to be a sacred cultural landscape. The same situation prevailed at Silozwane in the Matopo and Makwe in Wedza. In Mozambique the site of Manyikeni was under Shona traditional custodianship until 1975 when it was then handed over to the University of Eduardo Mondlane. In Botswana there is evidence that the Khami type-site Majojo is being used today for ritual purposes (personal observations). During the pre-colonial era most places of cultural significance enjoyed protection in the sense that no one was allowed to go to them except with the sanction of the religious leaders. However, with the advent of colonisation these places become important scientific sites. Scientific research makes the sites accessible to a wider and larger audience and but this has led to the desecration of the place and its cultural debasement.

Generally in Southern Africa the mandate to preserve and present the archaeological heritage is entrusted to National Museums. In South Africa some universities where also responsible for sites, for example the Universities of Witswatersrand (oversees sites in the Johannesburg area) and Pretoria (is responsible for Mapungubwe the early town site on the Limpopo). In countries such as Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi and Tanzania the responsibility over archaeological resources is shared between departments of Antiquities and Museums. This at times has led to conflicts over responsibilities on specific resources e.g. the ownership of artefacts and their subsequent presentation to the public. At times collections are shared even between countries for example the Omo Early Stone Age material from Ethiopia is shared by the University of California (Berkeley), France and Ethiopia. A similar situation exists with the Olduvai Gorge material fragmented between Kenya and Tanzania (Mzalendo 1996). In Botswana part of the cultural material from the site of Domboshava is now at the University of Texas (USA). The dual or multiple of ownership of archaeological resources at times militates against a uniform and more holistically effective management system.

In countries such as Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe where there was a large European settler population, heritage management developed as a preserve for the few and as a result it was seen as a highly academic subject and never meant for popular consumption. Museum organisations and universities were responsible for the management of sites. The main functions of these institutions were research and application of scientific principles. The studies usually focused on the establishment of categories, typologies and chronology. Very little was done in the form of linking the studies with the local communities, who were also themselves seen as objects of study. During the colonial times the local communities and their cultures were also to be discovered, analysed and taxonomised as cultural and geographical entities (Kifle 1994). It can be argued that the so-called lack of interest that most indigenous communities seem to show in cultural resources is deeply rooted in the social and political fabric of the subcontinent. Many people particularly in countries, which had a large European settler community, were excluded from cultural resources, their use and management. In schools and churches, for decades they were taught to despise their cultures. There was an assumption that only Europeans would be interested in these things as objects of study. Whilst the communities did not abandon their culture wholesale, it is now difficult for them to express themselves confidently.

2.3. Protective legislation

A central element in heritage management is an appropriate protective legislation. All countries in Southern Africa have laws that govern the way heritage resources are to be protected and used. The protective legislation of the archaeological
and cultural heritage throughout the world is usually governed by three basic assumptions namely:

- To protect the resource existence for the present and future generations.
- To develop the dimension of understanding and experience the cultural heritage, as a precondition for human life quality.
- To protect and extract the scientific information inherent in the cultural environment as a precondition for describing and interpreting its history.

National legislation in Southern Africa is similar in many ways in its objectives, definitions, forms of ownership, actions or practices permitted or prohibited and sanctions. The focus is on the protection of the structures and objects. One universal requirement in the subcontinent is that it should be location specific, and have historical artistic or scientific value. It must also have existed before a certain date. In the case of Zimbabwe before 1890, in Botswana 1902 and in South Africa until the recent legislation (2000) it has to be at least fifty years old. Thus places associated with the recent liberation struggle cannot qualify to be declared national monuments. In South Africa, places like Robben Island are protected not because of the infamous prison but in part because of the colonial history represented on the island dating back to the occupation of the Cape by the Dutch East India Company.

Most protective legislation ranks heritage resources into two categories, national monuments and ancient monuments/relics. At the national level the main protective designation established by various protective legislation in Southern Africa is a national monument. This is the highest designation and its purpose is to provide a means of recognising in law those monuments deemed to be of national importance. This is the case in Botswana, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. A close look at the designated sites indicates that even after so many years of independence, colonial sites dominate in all the countries. It is clear that despite the fact that all Southern African countries are now independent, sites from the colonial period clearly dominate these, which are afforded the highest protection. Thus the legal instruments seem to continue to undervalue and misrepresent the cultural and archaeological heritage of Southern Africa. Of the nearly 12,000 sites registered in Zimbabwe, approximately 200 are of colonial ancestry. This means that almost every colonial site is a national monument.

In Zimbabwe, just as it is in other Southern African countries, legislation is silent on the issues of the intangible aspects of the heritage. (In South Africa a new legislation introduced in 2000 has now changed this). The definition of ancient monument, the lower form of protection is any building, ruin, relic or area of land of historical, archaeological palaeontological or other scientific value. The terms culture and cultural landscapes are not used in the Act.

In all Southern African countries except South Africa, the government or the state agency owns designated ancient and national monuments. In South Africa national monuments can belong to individuals or institutions. Thus the legislation gives guidelines on how to look after nationally valued property. This means that the designation of a place as a national monument does not in anyway impinge on the individual or groups rights to land ownership. In most of the countries therefore, the enactment of protective legislation makes cultural property government property; interest of government equals adherence to national and international regulations whose formulation had no input from the local communities. The transfer to state ownership of much of the cultural or archaeological resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stone Age</th>
<th>South Africa</th>
<th>Zambia</th>
<th>Zimbabwe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Art</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Age</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colonial</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4400</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Colonial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
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Table 2.1. Ranking and distribution of designated national monuments
through designation also resulted in displacement of local people and disempowerment in regard to control and access to cultural resource utilisation and management. Even in South Africa, the property laws, which allow individuals to own land and therefore cultural sites also led to the disempowerment of the traditional custodians of the land and therefore cultural heritage.

Generally the protective legislation in Southern African countries is very strong in what they are intended to protect. For example the Zimbabwean National Museums and Monuments Act (25:11), requires members of the public to notify National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) of any archaeological sites or relics that they find. It also makes it an offence to destroy, alter, damage or remove any archaeological sites or relics without written approval from the Director. The penalty for the latter offence is a fine of up to Z$2000 or five years imprisonment or both. The legislation implies that the public is responsible for ensuring that archaeological resources are not destroyed without prior approval. Unfortunately in most of Southern Africa, the general public is not aware of this legislation. The reality in a number of Southern African country is that existing laws are not being used and promulgation of new ones will not change matters. Despite many inadequacies, the existing laws could still protect the heritage particularly the physical structures. Although most countries have laws that specifically prohibit damaging, excavation or removal of antiquities without permits, the penalties are paltry and as a result many groups violate them.

2.4. International conventions

The other designation which applies to Southern African countries that is even higher than that of a national monument, is World Heritage status. The World Heritage Convention (1972) was ratified by three countries in Southern Africa (by 2000). The convention provides for the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of cultural and natural sites of outstanding universal value. Six cultural sites from Southern Africa are on the list, Zimbabwe (2), Mozambique (1), Tanzania (1) and South Africa (2). Several other sites are currently being processed for nomination. The 1972 convention was born from the encounter of two intellectual traditions: one, emerging directly from the Athens Conference organised in 1931 under the aegis of the League of Nations concerned with the preservation of cultural heritage, relying largely on the classic concept of ‘masterpiece’ or ‘wonder of the world’; the other was concerned with transmitting to future generations a certain number of outstanding natural sites in an unspoiled state (Pressouyre 1996). While enjoining states to undertake the inventory and assure the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage, the 1972 Convention has formulated criteria of excellence permitting recognition of the most outstanding properties in each category and placing them under the protection of the international community.

At present the balance weighs heavily in favour of cultural heritage sites located in Europe (Table 2.2). At the same time the heritage of humankind as defined by the convention is modelled upon a restrictive concept of cultural heritage. Cultural properties on the World Heritage List, whether they are monuments, groups of buildings or archaeological sites, should have a spatial dimension. Further its intangible aspect is not considered. Africa’s heritage though of infinite richness does not always coincide with the sphere of application of the 1972 Convention. In Africa, more than elsewhere, the simplistic classification, long challenged by anthropologists, which opposes the immaterial heritage to the physical heritage is meaningless. Culture should be perceived in its totality and in its complexity as an ensemble of behaviours, of man’s connection to the social group, to nature and to the divine. Artistic creations are rarely

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Continent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia &amp; the Pacific</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa (excluding Southern Africa)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>21</td>
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devoid of practical, social or religious motivations. Thus there is a conceptual difficulty to apply Conventions such as the one of 1972 as it appears to mutilate the idea of culture by introducing inappropriate categories. In most cases the idea of cultural heritage to a large extent has been embodied in and confined to architectural monuments (Pressouyre 1996).

The study of art and architecture, archaeology, anthropology and ethnology no longer concentrates on single monuments in isolation but rather on considering cultural groups that were complex and multidimensional. These demonstrate in spatial terms the social structures, ways of life, belief, systems of knowledge and representations of different past and present cultures in the entire world. In fact, the search for monuments, groups of buildings or sites in keeping with European definitions implied in the Convention has for a long time done Africa a disservice by ignoring some of its most authentic and most precious heritage. This is the idea of cultural landscapes which does not separate the cultural and natural heritage. Given the fact that adherence to the convention brings in financial incentives in the form of grants; it can be argued that organisations such as the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and The World Conservation Union (IUCN) assume rights of governance. Thus fulfilling these conventions becomes the main objective of the heritage managers than the interest of the owners of the heritage.

In 1990 the General Assembly of ICOMOS adopted the Charter for the Protection and Management of Archaeological Heritage (ICAHM). The Charter calls on nations to make archaeological resources part of their overall land planning in order to ensure that development does not result in the destruction of the archaeological sites. It calls for adoption of adequate protective legislation and funding for archaeological investigations. However, most heritage managers and agencies in Southern Africa are not aware of these professional charters, which are intended for a better legal and physical protection of the heritage. Because of the problems discussed above there are no regional or country charters (e.g. the Australian Burra Charters) adopted for the protection of the archaeological heritage. There is need to make heritage managers in southern Africa and the rest of the continent aware of the Charter. Even the several foreign archaeology field schools need to be made aware of the charters.

2.5. Risk management

There is now an increasing recognition in the world that all heritage resources are at risk in the sense that there is always a chance or possibility of loss, injury, damage or some other adverse consequence as a result of nature or the intentional actions of individuals. This concept of risk management is largely lacking in Southern Africa, although countries like Botswana and South Africa have begun implementing steps towards such a policy. Four stages have been identified in the development of risk management for heritage resources (Darvill & Fulton 1998). The stages start with the identification and perception of risk in terms of the kinds of hazards that might impact on archaeological monuments. Subsequent stages deal with the examination of risk, the evaluation of incidence and the development of risk reduction strategies. The basis of this model is that heritage resources like archaeological sites or monuments exist as integral components of working landscapes and are thus also very fragile in being subjected to the erosive effects of whatever is happening both on the land itself and the surrounding areas. The landuse practices and natural decay are the main elements which determine the survival and condition of the heritage resource. This then means careful planning is required for all intended actions which impact on the landscape be it negatively or positively.

In many European countries risk management of the heritage was included in the physical planning process during the 1960s and 1970s in countries like Denmark and England. Integration of heritage management and physical planning and protection led to the incorporation of archaeology and conservation with nature conservation (Kristiansen 1998). In Europe the main objectives of the new perception of the cultural environment is the adoption and reinforcement of the protection and management of the cultural environment within other relevant legislation and
planning. Part of this wider international planning is reflected in the Habitat conference in 1998 and the Rio conference of 1992.

In the sub-region, archaeological resources do not enjoy adequate protection partly because of the inadequacy of other national legislation. It is also very striking that all protective legislation in Southern Africa are overridden by Mines or Mineral rights. Thus where mineral rights exist the heritage protection is weak. In South Africa the Engineering and also Agricultural regulations override the National Monuments Act (1969). However, the Environment Conservation Act (1989) and the new Mines Act (1993) does allow for the protection of the man made environment. The new environmental regulations seem to harmonise this by allowing impact assessments before any development. This will also become the case in Zimbabwe and Botswana once the environmental legislation comes into operation. In the face of mining operations heritage agencies in the region will have to rely on protective instruments other than their own.

The other weakness in the implementation of risk management in Southern Africa is the lack of any meaningful integration of the heritage laws and the general urban and regional planning systems. Large urban projects therefore, do not recognise the existence of the heritage legislation. It also means that planners do not design schemes with the heritage in mind. The fragmented nature of these pieces of legislation works against a systematic adoption of risk management. In most European countries, an environmental legal instrument caters for risk management.

The threats to the well being of the cultural heritage are not limited to material damage. Displacement of cultural heritage against the will of the owner causes what may be called spiritual damage. Separation of cultural items from their natural environment under coercive circumstances such as colonial occupation may inflict
spiritual damage upon the people and cause great emotional stress. In Southern African colonisa-
tion resulted in the seizure of territories of in-
digenous populations. In Zimbabwe laws such
as the 1931 Land Apportionment Act and the
1969 Land Tunare Act led to the uprooting of
people and in some instances the distance moved
meant that the people lost touch with their cul-
tural heritage. In the newly established com-
munities could not respect the religious and cultural
monuments (Pwiti & Ndoro 1999). This is the
reason why there was an upsurge of ritual ac-
tivities at such places as Ntabazikamambo and
Great Zimbabwe after 1980.

The existing legislation in all Southern Afri-
can countries does not explicitly state that pre-
development impact studies should be undertaken.
It does however imply that the public is responsi-
ble for ensuring that archaeological resources are
not destroyed without prior approval. Unfortu-
nately, as has been indicated above both public
and developers are largely unaware of this legis-
atory. Any attempt at implementation should
therefore be preceded by a general awareness cam-
paign. Undertaking pre-development impact as-
sessments and ensuring that mitigation occurs
would ensure that a representative selection of
sites is preserved for posterity. However, the in-
tegration of the protection of the archaeological
heritage with development or planning policy is
a very difficult business in Africa. We have to
think here of Maslow's (1954) hierarchical needs,
the food and shelter dilemma. He postulated that
there is a hierarchy of needs, which tend to mo-
tivate human behaviour. The hierarchy ascend-
ing from the basic biological needs to the more
complex psychological motivations and these
only become important only after the basic needs
have been satisfied. When food and safety are
difficult to obtain, the satisfaction of those needs
will dominate a person's action and higher mo-
tives are of little significance. Only when basic
needs can be satisfied easily will the individual
have time to devote to aesthetic and intellectual
interests. Artistic and scientific endeavours do
not flourish in a society in which people must
struggle for food, shelter and safety. What is more
important to a village, a dam or Stone Age sites
whose origins the local people do not even know?
The local community does not even see the re-
sults of the research and do not even benefit from
the protection of the sites.

2.6. Developments in Zimbabwe

The development of heritage management in
Zimbabwe can be linked to changes that occurred
in the early settler society. The pioneer column
that entered Zimbabwe in 1890 did reflect the
British and South African settler society of that
time. Carl Mauch's `discovery' of Great Zimba-
bole and, more importantly, the discovery of gold
objects at some sites reinforced the notion of
Zimbabwe as the source of gold for the biblical
King Solomon. It was these images of a country
filled with untapped wealth that attracted peo-
ple to join the pioneer column and many of these
people were prospectors who had been working
in South Africa. The arrival of the pioneer col-
umn at Fort Salisbury was followed by its dis-
banding. William Harvey Brown (1899) in his
book *On the South African Frontier* describes
how the camp was rapidly depopulated as people
went in search of gold. The search was not
directionless but was rather guided by the gold
of the Queen of Sheba myth. Prospectors went
round the countryside swapping blankets, beads,
brass cartridge cases and sometimes the shirts
from their backs for information on the location
of 'Ancient Workings'. Although references are
less numerous, it is also clear that these pros-
pectors focused on Madzimbabwe type sites
(stone walled sites) and found some gold.

The link between the Madzimbabwe type sites,
ancient workings and gold was therefore con-
ﬁrmed by people's experiences. The disappoint-
ing results of the early prospecting in northern and
southern Mashonaland were not immediately ap-
parent, partly because they were masked by the
armed take-over of Matabeleland by the British
South Africa Company (B.S.A.Co). It was this
incorporation of this area into the B.S.A. com-
pany that provided the next scene for the com-
mercial exploitation of archaeological sites.

In June 1894, Hans Saner (one of the newly
arrived settlers) and a number of fellow travel-
ers visited the Zinjanja (Regina) ruins. They
noted bottle shaped, stone lined holes on the sur-
face of the platform and, thinking that they might
contain treasure, they drove a trench from the outside wall to one of the holes. The results were disappointing but they were made up for at the next site visited, Danamombe. Here the party found silver, pottery, and chains and over 15 ozs of alluvial gold in the burnt and decayed houses remains. Saner recounts how he kept the source of gold secret but he eventually told two Americans, Burham and Ingram.

All remained quiet on the ruins front until September 1894 when it was announced that 208 ozs of gold had been recovered from a ruin in Mberengwa (Belingwe). This announcement came at an opportune moment for the B.S.A.Co. because by this stage the South African press was casting doubt on the existence of vast mineral resources in Rhodesia. The *Bulawayo Chronicle* played the story for all it was worth as a counter to the South African claims. They were further assisted by the belated announcement that Burham and Ingram had found 607 ozs of gold at Danamombe. This late announcement seems to confirm Seuer’s story that Burham and Ingram had followed his lead to Danamombe, collected gold and taken it to London and surreptitiously sold it to Rhodes.

The announcement of these two finds was followed by the formation of the Rhodesia Ancient Ruins Ltd, a company formed to mine the stone ruins. The setting up of the company was however not problem free because Burham and Ingram already had a concession for Danamombe. After some negotiations the latter two individuals were given shares in the new company. The initial launching of the Company was preceded by the advertisements in *The Bulawayo Chronicle* pointing out that it was the only body licensed to work and explore for treasure (Summers 1967). Two special conditions were attached to this work: (i) that they were forbidden to damage the ruins as such and (ii) that on Rhodes’ instructions Great Zimbabwe was to be excluded. The B.S.A. Co. was also to receive 20 % of all finds and had the first option to purchase the rest.

It is clear that the development of heritage management in Zimbabwe was clearly linked to the potential economic value of the ruined structures. Soon after the B.S.A. Co. had been granted a charter to occupy the land, they sought help from the Royal Geographical Society and the Association for the Advancement of Science to conduct research on the origins of Great Zimbabwe. This was to be lead by Theodore Bent who was also linked to the treasure hunting company, the Rhodesia Ancient Ruins Ltd. In order to cover up the mounting criticism from the academic world on the activities of the company, an ordinance to protect the ancient monuments was passed by the Legislative Council and it became law in 1902 as the Ancient Monuments Protection Ordinance. In this Ordinance, ancient monuments and relics were defined as any material predating 1800. The colonial administrator was to implement the ordinance. However, the ordinance exempted ancient workings from protection. These were to be exploited under the 1895 Mines and Minerals Ordinance. This exemption on mine and mineral claims as indicated earlier still stands.

The importance of the 1902 Ordinance is that it laid the foundation of the present heritage management system in Zimbabwe. However, this ordinance did not cover Rock Art sites in its definition of ancient monuments. This anomaly was amended in 1912 with the proclamation of the Bushmen Relics Ordinance which was influenced by large-scale exploitation of Rock Art sites in South Africa (Murambiwa 1991). 1902 was also very important in the development of heritage management in that this was the year when the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo was established. Its mandate was research and public presentation of the natural heritage with specific reference to geology. Again one might say the influence of gold mining was very much in the minds of the people who established this museum.

The developments in South Africa continued to have a profound impact on the heritage legislation in Rhodesia with the repeal of both the 1902 and 1912 Ordinance by the 1936 Monuments and Relics Act. The previous ordinance had not differentiated the status of ancient monuments. The 1936 Act, brought in the new concept of ranking sites by affording some national status as National Monuments. The 1936 Monuments and Relics Act also brought into existence the Commission for the Preservation of
Natural and Historical Monuments and Relics better known as the Monuments Commission. For the first time an administrative organisation was proposed. Thus it was felt at this early stage that protective legislation was not enough and that there was need for some effective physical protection in the form of regular inspection of the sites. Apart from undertaking maintenance and excavation, the commission was also tasked with documenting and keeping a register of all ancient monuments and relics in Southern Rhodesia. From this national register the Commission could recommend some to the Minister of Internal Affairs for proclamation as National Monuments. Although this was the thinking, it took ten years before the Commission could make its first appointment.

By 1954, the Commission had designated seventy-nine sites as National Monuments. The Commission also carried out publicity campaigns in the form of public lectures by its members. Generally by this time the number of visits by the public to National Monuments like Great Zimbabwe, Victoria Falls, Rhodes Matopos and Inyanga was on the increase. The Commission also had several publications aimed at both the academic and general public. They even had a schools program aimed at popularising archaeology.

However, during this time the general public was defined as 'white'. (This was not so much pronounced during the Federation 1953-58). Even the major archaeological surveys, which led to the creation of a comprehensive database, only concentrated on the settler commercial farms. Thus in the African reserves the awareness of heritage management issues as articulated in the protective legislation remained unknown. This was made more complicated by the large-scale population movements, which resulted from the 1931 Land Apportionment, and 1969 Land Tenure Act. A number of places of cultural significance like Great Zimbabwe, Matopo, Mhakwe, Ntabazikamambbo, Khami and Tsindi were placed under commercial or National Parks lands. The Africans in the reserves no longer had official access to them. For example, the people of Mangwende in Murewa used to occupy the area around Tsindi and used to conduct rituals. After they were moved they could not continue using the site without being prosecuted for trespassing or practising witchcraft. Movement to new area like Gokwe and Sipolillo (Guruve), areas sparsely populated, meant that the places they moved to had little cultural meaning to them (Figs 2.3 to 2.6). The superimposition of the site distribution maps compiled from the databank in the Archaeological survey and that of the Land Apportionment does indicate that most archaeological places are now located in the areas designated European Land.

The Christian churches too also denounced the importance of specifically traditional sacred sites and their link with paganism. For example, after many years of unsuccessful mission work in the Matopo the Christian church at Hope Fountain decided to conduct its service at these sacred sites like Silozwane in an attempt to discredit their use by local communities (Ranger 1999). Above all by the late 1970's the African reserves were over populated and this led to deforestation and general land degradation. As a result archaeological sites were destroyed and cultural landscapes altered. The effects of the land appropriation can be seen today by the perceived lack of appreciation and care for archaeological sites in areas where people were moved (Pwiti & Ndoro 1999). Thus it can be argued that the creation of the Monuments Commission although a positive move in terms of protecting the archaeological heritage, some of the colonial laws on land impacted negatively on the cultural landscape.

The 1972 National Museums and Monuments Act repealed the 1936 Act. The main contribution of the new Act was to bring about the amalgamation of the Monuments Commission and the various city museums in the country. Although this move has been viewed negatively by some (see Collett 1992; Murambiwa 1991), it helped to spread heritage management to all the major cities. It can also be argued that the city museums expanded the presentation of the archaeological heritage to the general public. It also meant that for the first time all archaeological property (finds and sites) were under a single curatorial administration. The 1972 Act lead to the creation of five administrative regions and
at present all the regions have the capacity to protect and present the archaeological heritage. It is however, at Great Zimbabwe that most experimentation in terms of preservation and presentation has been made. The heritage management system at Great Zimbabwe in part reflects the general thrust of the system in Zimbabwe.

2.7. Discussion

Since the arrival of colonisation in Southern Africa, local communities have become increasingly alienated from their cultural heritage. Most of the legislation and administrative structures were set up during the colonial period and as a result they seem to have been aimed at limited interests. With the introduction of protective legislation archaeological sites become government property. Interests of government equals modernisation and this means the heritage agents will not permit cultural or ritual ceremonies to take place on the sites. In many instances local communities were moved hundreds of kilometres away from their original homes thereby creating physical and spiritual distance between them and their ancestral homes (cultural landscapes and monuments). It appears the pioneering protective legislation was not founded on an objective approach to preserve the diverse African cultural landscape but rather on protecting a few sites which served the interest of the early white settlers. The promulgation of the Witchcraft Suppression Act (1937) and the condemnation of ancestral worship by Christian churches suppressed African cultural activities. It is no coincidence that the main Christian churches were located near major cultural sites. For example the London Missionary society at Hope Fountain Mission was near the Matopo sites, The Dutch Reformed Church was at the foot of Great Zimbabwe, the Anglican Churches in Manicaland were near several important sites. Whilst the Roman Catholic Church near Domboshava sites. The Christian church was particularly strong in its influence since it had control of the education system. The transfer of ownership of cultural property to government and the displacement of people in these areas meant that the local communities no longer had legal access to the sites.

The main problems faced by Southern Africa countries in heritage management are numerous but the main ones here include:

i) Mass destruction of sites by development projects

ii) Looting and illegal exportation of antiquities

iii) The quality of management of archaeological resources.

iv) Limited efforts in making the heritage relevant to the local situation.

v) Negative impacts on the few places chosen for tourist exploitation.

Most Heritage agents in Southern Africa lack meaningful heritage management policies. There is lack of capacity and research methods on the presentation of cultural resources and lack of capacity to diagnose the deterioration mechanisms and the prescription of curative measures. There is also usually total absence of any presentation or interpretative work aimed at reaching the local general public. What does exist is usually aimed at the foreign tourist or the academically trained public.

In Southern Africa more than anywhere else, heritage management has a great potential for re-building of cultural identity amongst communities that have lost their roots and archaeology can play a significant role in enhancing pride in self-determination.

Generally, heritage management in Southern Africa is conducted under a patchwork of legal and regulatory mandate promulgated by governments linked to a middle class with strong links to western cultural milieu. These legal mandates are never designed in consultation with the local communities. Global charters emanating from such organisations like UNESCO nowadays support these local legal statutes. For many heritage managers in Southern Africa, heritage places are valued for their potential to inform about by gone days. However to the indigenous communities heritage places are essentially linked to the land, their ancestors, their culture and traditions; sites embody life forces (Pressouyre 1996; Kifle 1994). Religious rituals conducted in the past are still important and significant even if the group has been moved to a new place. The place is important because ancestral spirits continue to reside
Early Stone Age
Middle Stone Age
Late Stone Age
Unclassified Stone Age Sites

African Purchase Area
Commercial Farmland (European Area)
Lake
National Land
Communal Area (African area)
Unreserved Areas

Figure 2.3. Distribution of Stone Age sites in relation to Land Apportionment.

Rock Art Sites

African Purchase Area
Commercial Farmland (European Area)
Lake
National Land
Communal Area (African area)
Unreserved Areas

Figure 2.4. Distribution of Rock Art sites in relation to Land Apportionment.
Early Farming Communities

- African Purchase Area
- Commercial Farmland (European Area)
- Lake
- National Land
- Communal Area (African area)
- Unreserved Areas

Figure 2.5. Distribution of EFC sites in relation to Land Apportionment.

Late Farming Communities

- African Purchase Area
- Commercial Farmland (European Area)
- Lake
- National Land
- Communal Area (African area)
- Unreserved Areas

Figure 2.6. Distribution of LFC sites in relation to Land Apportionment.
in these places. Thus to them heritage management is not restricted to the physical archaeological remains but that cultural resources have tangible and intangible aspects of the world that has meaning, regardless of when it was last accepted. The protective legislation in most countries needs to reflect these ideas common to their people. It appears therefore that the protective legislation and regulatory mechanism in Southern Africa is not founded on the objective approach to preserve the diverse African cultural landscape, but on rather narrow definitions of what constitutes a cultural landscape. In most cases the local communities would care little for the global Charters or the local legal instruments from central government.
3. GREAT ZIMBABWE: NATURE OF THE MONUMENT

3.1. Introduction

Great Zimbabwe with its associated features forms one of the most unique architectural and dramatic historical landscapes in sub-Saharan Africa. Its development is perhaps the most important historical and cultural symbol of African identity in Southern Africa. All these characteristics were recognised by its designation as a national monument and a World Heritage Site. Even though this might be the case, this world heritage site administered by National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) has always been at the centre of controversy in its management. As a prelude to the discussion on the cultural significance of this monument and its associated landscape, this chapter introduces the physical and material components of the monument. These have been the main focus of many studies in archaeology so far. It has generally been assumed that the stone walling, being the most visible evidence of the settlement defines the main parameters of the spatial extent of Great Zimbabwe.

The site of Great Zimbabwe is located at the southern edge of the Zimbabwean plateau (Fig. 3.1). The scarp here formed by numerous granite hills, precipitates moisture from prevailing south-easterly winds. Its rainfall is higher than elsewhere around it, often with days of low mist and light drizzle throughout the year even when the rest of the country is dry (Garlake 1973). The light sandy soils between the hills have the capacity to support luxuriant woodland and Garlake suggests that the country around these hills attracted abundant and relatively reliable rainfall for crops, an easily tilled soil, ample timber and firewood as well as small game.

Great Zimbabwe enjoys the advantage of lying close to two other ecological zones. The hills to the north of the site are part of the gold-belt of the metamorphic rocks that produce heavy and very fertile red soils. The country just south of it suddenly descends into the drier and much more open grassland environment that is suitable for cattle rearing.

The impressive Great Zimbabwe National Monument is the largest of many similar sites scattered in the region between the Limpopo and the Zambezi River. There are more than 300 dry-stone walled sites in the region. The famous ones apart from Great Zimbabwe, are Danamombe, Naletale, Khami, Shangagwe in Zimbabwe, Domboshaba in Botswana, Manikweni in Mozambique and Thulamela in South Africa (Fig. 3.1). These ancient African Later Farming Communities (LFC) structures are constructed largely in the rocky granite hills which characterise the landscape in this region. The ruined structures comprise dry stone walls and numerous earthen (dhaka) structures of varying sizes. The monument presently defined occupies an area of approximately 720 ha (Fig. 3.2).

The Later Farming Communities structures associated with the Zimbabwe type sites, are prototype of settlements found all over Southern Africa. The word Zimbabwe is derived from the Shona (a variant of the Bantu language) word dzimbahwe meaning houses of stone.
3.2. Archaeological background

As indicated, the Madzimbabwe tradition is mainly associated with the dry-stone wall architecture of the Southern African Farming Communities. It is associated with the settlements of Bantu speakers, and their dominance of the region extending between the Zambezi and the Limpopo rivers. The settlements were based on military prowess and the accumulation of wealth in cattle and trade with Arab-Swahili traders on the east coast of Africa. The Great Zimbabwe site is perhaps the most spectacular and best known of this Madzimbabwe tradition (Huffman 1997; Sinclair 1987; Mahachi 1991).

During the Later Farming Communities period, Great Zimbabwe was probably the largest settlement in sub-Saharan Africa. It was certainly the largest built up area before the colonisation of the region by Europeans. The settlement pattern of this Later Farming Communities site reflects the socio-economic arrangements and cultural ethos of the African communities during this period (Huffman 1981; Mahachi 1991; Collett, Vines & Hughes 1991). The settlement was constructed over several centuries starting from c. AD 900 to about AD 1500 (Sinclair et al. 1993a; Chipunza 1994). At its peak it appears to have had a population of between 12,000 to 15,000 people settled over the area of the present day monument (Garlake 1973; Huffman 1997). The monument is what remains of an ancient capital which controlled most of present day Zimbabwe. The monumental architectural structures are a reflection of the settlement’s power and wealth in the region. Its wealth was based mainly on cattle husbandry, crop cultivation and the domination of the trade routes between the gold fields on the Zimbabwe plateau and Indian Ocean in the east. Trade contacts between Zimbabwe in the southern African interior and the Arab-Swahili on the east coast were established well before AD 900 and by AD 1250 the Later Farming Community town of Great Zimbabwe had become an important commercial centre (Sinclair 1987; Pwiti 1991).
Towards the end of the fifteenth century the population of the settlement began to decline, and by the sixteenth century very few people continued to stay on the site (Collett, Vines & Hughes 1991). The ecological imbalance caused by such a concentration of population and the rise of the Mutapa state in the north and the Torwa state in the southwest may have contributed to the decline of the settlement (Summers 1971; Sinclair et al. 1993a; Pikirayi 1993). Although largely abandoned by the majority of its inhabitants, the site continued to play an important role in Zimbabwe. During the nineteenth century, there is evidence that the settlement was being used partly as a religious site and also as a centre of refuge; but most areas of the site had been abandoned and were now in a ruinous state (Burke 1969).

Europeans who visited the site during the early part of the twentieth century generally attributed the construction of the monument to the Phoenicians (Burke 1969; Kuklick 1991). However, the first serious archaeological investigations by Randal-MacIver (1906) and Caton-Thompson (1931) confirmed the indigenous African origin.

3.3. Architectural details

The structures of the Madzimbabwe tradition, whose architecture is one of the principal cultural identities of the African Later Farming Communities period, were not built to a plan. They were constructed and altered over two centuries to suit the needs and tastes of their occupiers. The design and construction methods of
the structures vary considerably, the only consistent factor being the use of stone and *dhaka* (paddled clay soil binding naturally weathered granite gravel aggregate) as building materials. These materials form an integral part of the architectural elements of the Zimbabwe type monuments. The stone and *dhaka* structures are curvilinear. This clearly demonstrates that the architecture was indigenous and that no geometrical designs from either the Middle East or Asia were known at this time (Caton-Thompson 1931; Garlake 1973). The lack of knowledge on the building style from the Middle East is further amplified by the fact that the stone structures do not interlock; they abut or lean on each other. The architectural development seems to have been a natural response to the development of the site. The symbiotic relationship of the materials namely granite and *dhaka* seems to have been a natural progression to blend the landscape and the settlement. The stonewalls enclosed and adjoined *dhaka* houses to form an integrated unit. Thus, one of the major functions of these walls was to screen off and enclose space. No defensive function is apparent on these walls. However, the history of warfare during this time is unknown. The stonewalls vary in height between 0.5 m and 10 m and are either free standing or retaining walls. What remains of the *dhaka* structures are mainly the floors, foundations and sections of house walls. Most of the *dhaka* structures only become visible after excavations. The dry-stone walls, synonymous with monuments such as Great Zimbabwe and Nasikala, can only be described merely as the skeleton of the prehistoric monuments. The flesh was the dwelling structures made of clay or *dhaka*. Unlike the dry stonewalls, very few *dhaka* structures remain above ground. Most of the structures are concealed by vegetation. Archaeological excavations of these reveal the elaborate remains of the prehistoric *dhaka* features e.g. the one in the valley at Great Zimbabwe excavated in 1986 (Fig. 3.3).

**The Hill Complex**

The Great Zimbabwe site can be divided into three main architectural zones. These are the Hill Complex, the Great Enclosure, the Valley Ruins and the peripheral settlements. The first components constitute the core or central part of Great Zimbabwe. The inner perimeter wall separates the hill from the valley and the Great Enclosure. A second low stonewall, the outer perimeter wall which runs around the southern and western sides

![Figure 3.3. House remains from Possett excavations 1987 (unpublished Collett excavation).](image-url)
of the Great Enclosure and the Valley Ruins, separates these areas from the surrounding peripheral areas.

The Hill Complex is constructed on the hill located north of the site. The occupation of the hill goes back to the Early Farming period when the communities had not yet developed the technique of dry stonewalling. The archaeological stratigraphic sequence shows that stonewall building began on the hill (Chipunza 1994). Here, the dry stonewalls constitute the major architectural features (Plate 3.1). The Western Wall with its solid stone conical turrets and monolith decorations is the largest wall. With its lintelled entrance, this is perhaps the finest architectural construction on the site. The Western Enclosure provides massive evidence of human occupation and gives the only complete occupation sequence of the whole settlement from the Early to Later Farming Communities (Robinson 1961; Huffman 1971; Mahachi 1991). The Western Enclosure contained 3-5 m of stratified house floors; the thickest concentration anywhere on the monument and this deposit forms a complete sequence. At the back of the Western Enclosure is another stone lintelled entrance, the only original entrance remaining on the site. This wall, one of the most spectacular pieces of engineering, is founded on several uneven granite boulders. The original builders introduced wall breaks in order to stop the walls from sliding on the slopes of the rock foundation (Plate 3.2). This technique is also seen at another Madzimbabwe type-site called Matendere. Another imposing wall is the south wall, built on the brink of a rock precipice. Although its height is approximately 9.95 m, the base is only 4.2 m wide. In most of the enclosures on the hill the natural granite boulders were incorporated into the matrix of the dry stone structure to create a close symbiosis with the landscape. The hill more than anywhere else shows the engineering qualities of the traditional stone masonry. Most of the dry stonewall structures on the hill are free standing, except on the slopes where retaining walls are used to terrace the slope or to provide a building platform. This could have been necessitated by a gradual expansion of the settlement. Very few dhaka structures remain as part of the Hill Complex but, when it was discovered in the late nineteenth
century, the Western Enclosure had moulded dhaka platforms, benches and walls. These were largely destroyed in 1915 under the misconception that weight endangered the stability of the dry-stone wall, (Garlake 1982). On the south and western slopes of the hill is evidence of extensive settlement in the form of terracing and construction of retaining walls.

The Great Enclosure

The Great Enclosure (Plate 3.3), situated across the valley but adjacent to the Hill Complex, is perhaps the most spectacular and substantial structure on the monument. With its outer wall of approximately 252 m in length and with a maximum height of 11 m, it is by far the largest single prehistoric structure in sub-Saharan Africa (Garlake 1973; Summers 1971; Hall 1987). Inside, it contains a number of internal stone enclosures, dhaka platforms and other architectural features including the impressive Conical Tower. In this single enormous structure, the evolution of the masonry techniques as well as the growing ambitions of its builders can be traced. A notable feature of the outer wall is the gradual change in size and improvements in workmanship. The back of the wall is decorated with stone monoliths and a chevron pattern. The entrances were originally lintelled with wood just like those in the Hill Complex (Matenga 1996). However, the entrances are round and the external ones have stepped thresholds. Most of the internal entrances have a pair of semi-circular projections that look like buttresses. However, the features seem not to have a structural function except that they narrow the entrance and prevent seeing through the enclosure. The same role seems to be played by the parallel passages found on the site. The main features are the platforms and house remains which survived the early excavations by Hall (1905).

The Valley Ruins

The Valley Ruins, located between the Hill Complex and the Great Enclosure, contain most of the architectural features already described. They are similar to the Great Enclosure except that the Valley Ruins comprise several individual enclosures. Although the external entrances have
semi-circular buttresses as in the Great Enclosure, they are much wider and show no evidence of being lintelled. One of the striking features is the parallel passages. These connect individual enclosures in the valley (Plate 3.4). The longest connects the valley enclosures and the Great Enclosure. The narrow (and at times buttressed) entrances and the parallel passages seem to suggest the idea of restriction of peoples’ movement within this ancient complex settlement.

**Peripheral settlement**

The three areas discussed above constitute the main core area of stone building, but in terms of area it is about 10% of the whole estate declared a monument. There are a number of peripheral enclosures and settlements within the monument and immediately outside it (Fig. 3.4). These are situated around the ring of hills that encircles the core or central Great Zimbabwe. These areas have stonewalling, terraces, dhaka structures and various features of archaeological importance. Usually these areas are neglected in terms of research and effective management. However any serious attempt to understand or present the monument should take into consideration these peripheral areas. These were the areas where most of the population lived as evidenced by the
numerous house floors around the hills surrounding the core structures (Chirawu 1988; Mahachi 1991). This evidence is important because it confirms Garlake (1973) and Sinclair’s (1987) suggestions that the stone walls must be viewed merely as one component of a building technology for which most evidence happens to have survived. However, the determination of the internal socio-political and the temporal relationships of the component parts of the monument is as important as finding the relationship between core walled areas and non-walled peripheral areas.
3.4. Dry-stone structures

Although other materials such as dolerite and ironstone rocks, timber and dhaka were also used in the construction of the monumental walls, granite was the predominant material.

Geological investigations indicate that the granite used for the blocks was mainly biotite and its mineralogical composition is summarised below in Table 3.1. The blocks were quarried from the exfoliating bedrock located in the outcrops that surround the monument.

The dry-stone walls at Great Zimbabwe perform two functions, free standing enclosures or boundary walls and retaining walls for the provision of terracing. The construction and structural behaviour of symbolic structures, such as the Conical Tower and the buttress found along passage walls, although not performing either of the above functions, may be considered similar to the free-standing walls. The free-standing walls are generally constructed of two outer faces of carefully staked and coursed blocks infilled with core blocks. Core material comprised of blocks that are less regular in size and shape but generally of a similar nature. Contrary to the general belief, the core was not rubble but was carefully packed.

Generally, the retaining walls comprise an outer face of coursed regular blocks (Fig 3.5). Unlike the free-standing walls, the core material is more irregular but of a similar size to the face blocks (Fig. 3.6). The core blocks have been placed in the backfill material up to two metres behind the face of the wall. The majority of the core material cannot be considered to be part of the retaining wall as many gaps exist between the blocks, which are filled with backfill material. These walls cannot be considered to act as gravity structures as the walls' sections are generally insufficient to resist the over-turning movements.

Table 3.1. Mineralogical and physical properties of granite from Great Zimbabwe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Quartz</td>
<td></td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Feldspar</td>
<td>Microline</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plagioslase</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Biotite</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Muscovite</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Iron ores</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3.5. Illustrated dry stone walling used for platform construction.

Figure 3.6. Illustration of the components of a freestanding dry stone wall.
number of walls were constructed as free standing with two outer faces, but have subsequently been backfilled and have become retaining walls. Walls like these act like gravity retaining walls (Jones 1979).

The walls at Great Zimbabwe are founded either on granite bedrock or on soil material. The quality of foundation provided varies considerably. A number of retaining walls in the Valley Enclosures have been built on granite bedrock, which slopes downwards away from the wall face. For walls built on soil material the foundation comprises layers of granite blocks at the base of the wall. These foundations can be surface footing, or have foundations up to as much as a metre deep. The soil material on which the walls are constructed appears to vary between natural granite sandy clays and midden waste. Some walls have foundations built partly on dhaka material used to leve! the footing, for example the Buttress Entrance in the Hill Complex.

There are noticeable architectural variations throughout the dry stonewalls at Great Zimbabwe, and from the time of Mauch onwards, these aesthetic difference have been recorded. Hall (1905), Stevens (1931) and Whitty (1961) have described the style differences in the masonry at Great Zimbabwe. All these descriptions are very similar. In 1961 Whitty proposed a system for classification of wall styles based on observation of the shape and size of the face blocks, quality of workmanship and general aesthetic appearance. He generally divided the wall styles into four categories. Because of their importance in the debate on the chronology and development of the site as well as their importance in the documentation process of the cultural property it is worth giving Whitty’s descriptions here:

(1) Class P walling. This consists of structures in which blocks forming the wall face are irregular in shape and size. They are laid in such a way that the longer dimension lies roughly in horizontal plane. This method of building produces a wall with pseudo courses running for short distances more or less horizontally but taking such crazy swoops as the variable thickness of the blocks and the lie of the land may dictate. The majority of the building stones show no sign of systematic dressing to shape, presenting sometimes a smooth unfaceted surface to view but often enough having an edge or corner knocked off to make a better fit. With very few exceptions all the stone has been noted, particularly in the bases of walls of this class, of occasional stones much rounded by weathering. Rectangularity was in any case obviously not the primary requirement for blocks (triangular-faced blocks are sometimes used) nor was consistency of size, for this varies considerably, some stones being large enough to require two men to left. In spite of these irregularities the resultant face of the wall is fully consistent in texture and usually approximates to the vertical. This class of walling commonly, but not invariably, exhibits very careful laying of blocks, which are fitted together so that gaps and holes are few, and a nice face maintained.

(2) Class Q walling. This is easily recognised as the better-class and neater work. Walls of this type are built of approximately rectangular blocks laid in relatively even and level courses. The blocks are confined to a far more consistent size than in class P walls, the face of a typical one being about 7–10 inches (178–254 mm) long by 4–6 inches (102–152 mm) high. Most of these stones show evidence of having been roughly dressed to shape. The greater part of this dressing work has been applied to the end and faces of the blocks, the upper and lower edges being in any case more or less parallel due to the natural tabular cleavage of the granite. The stones appear to have shaped only in order to obtain a rectangular face, those parts of them hidden within the structure having been left random. The are carefully matched in height so that unbroken courses of equal depth run in some cases for as much as 100 ft (30.5 m). Areas of walling of this class often cover many square yards without a false course. The courses generally run out by tapering down to a shallow size, two such courses giving place to a single deeper one. As a rule each course is set wide of the face of the one below by a fraction of an inch, so the wall acquires its characteristic batter.

(3) Class R walling. The walls of this class are composed usually of a mixture of blocks typical of P and Q together with triangular and other irregu-
lar-shaped lumps of stone. They are poorly fitted together, needing the frequent use of small wedges, and often show gaps and holes in the facing, which varies considerably in appearance. There is sometimes what looks like half-hearted attempts to lay blocks in courses, but the results to achieve the standard of Class Q walls. There is no systematic batter on the walls, whose facing is rough, irregular and craggy.

(4) Class PQ walling. This in appearance a style intermediate between P and Q, having some characteristics of each. Although it is well represented in the Great Enclosure, it is much less common in other parts of the ruins. As there is ample evidence, described below, and confirmed by Summers in Part IV36 for being a transitional type, it is treated as such here. Undoubtedly there is no walling in the Great Enclosure, which could by a stronger argument, be described as “PR” or “QR”.

Whitty also made a very useful observation that adjoining walls are not bonded together and therefore the later wall must be leaning against the earlier. This provides a relative chronology, particularly when linked to the archaeological results of Summers and Robinson. Using the styles P, PQ, Q and R, Whitty established a chronological relationship, which was confirmed by archaeological research. This has been used to establish a tentative framework for the development and expansion of the settlement over the 200 years or so of its effective occupation (Collett, Vines & Hughes 1991; Chipunza 1994).

As mentioned before, the difference between wall styles is essentially aesthetic. However, the overall more impressive appearance of the Q style walls is an indication of an improved form of construction. The blocks in Q style walls are more regular and cuboidal in shape. The coursing and bonding in Q style is generally better than in others.

These styles are also associated with particular architectural features.

P style – Generally sited on sloping rocky terrain or amongst boulders;
- Height/base width ratio in order 3.5;
- Batter inconsistent, irregular;
- Squared entrances, irregular;
- Foundations: structures follow topography, no trenching;
- Acted as predominantly retaining and some ‘screening’ (free-standing) walls.

Q style – Generally sited on low-lying ground without boulders;
- Height/base width ratio rarely exceeds 2.5;
- Fully consistent batter, in higher walls more marked towards the top;
- Rounded wall ends;
- Frequently trenched, levelling of trench, some evidence of footing;
- Predominantly free/standing enclosure walls, few retaining.

The architectural details of the stone walling of Great Zimbabwe are important in the understanding of the developmental sequence of the individual areas. Generally it has been observed that Class P predominates on the Hill Complex and the rocky sides of the valley, Class Q predominates in the Great Enclosure and the valley, Class R generally occupies the outlying areas. The work of Robinson (1961), Summers (1961) and Whitty (1961), apart from demonstrating an indigenous evolution of the stone masonry styles, also indicated that Class P walling is the earliest and is followed by Class Q which later devolved into the uncoursed Class R (Fig 3.7).

From the work of Whitty, Robinson and Summers a tentative chronological sequence could be made:

Period 1: Early settlement, no walls built; pole and dhaka house – c. AD 400
Period 2: The first solid dhaka house built on the hill and trading connections well established with the East African coast – AD 1085
Period 3: Stone walling in the Hill Complex begins and is extended to the slopes – AD 1450
Period 4: Q walling is introduced and the Great Enclosure built – AD 1450

By looking at imported ceramics Garlake (1973) was able to refine the chronological sequence of the monument. He examined a piece of ceramic of Persian origin, which was found to be similar
to ones found in Mogadishu, and this was dated to the 13th century. He further examined other imported ceramics made of sea-green celadon which had Chinese designs and these were dated to the Chinese Ming dynasty (AD 1368–1644). His dates were supported by Huffman’s (1981) excavations at which an Arab coin with the inscription of Al-Hasan bin Sulaiman was found. This was dated to AD 1320–33. The ceramic and coin evidence were strengthened by the new ^14C dates from Great Zimbabwe (Huffman & Vogel 1991). These show that the first solid dhaka houses were dated to 1130 AD, period 3 of Robinson, Summers and Whitty to the 12th and 13th centuries. Thus the construction of the walls at the Great Enclosure is now dated to the 13th century and style Q to the 14th century. This shortens the occupation period of Great Zimbabwe to less than 200 years. However, the discovery of the blue on white porcelain of the Hongzhi period of the Ming Dynasty (AD 1488–1503) by Collett, Vines and Hughes (1991) indicates that the site might have been occupied for a longer period albeit with a reduced population.

Figure 3.7. Wall styles at Great Zimbabwe (after Whitty 1961).
3.5. Dhaka (earthen) structures

As described above, the dry-stone walls, synonymous with the Madzimbabwe tradition, can only be described as the skeleton of the prehistoric monuments. The flesh is the dwelling structures, built with Africa's most common indigenous building material, dhaka, a paddled clayey soil, binding together naturally weathered granite gravel aggregate. When dry, the mixture forms a durable material, which is described as dhaka cement or gravel cement because of its characteristics. In prehistoric times the builders utilised the plastic properties of the material, when wet, to construct substantial round houses and moulded fittings on the walls and floors. The fittings were mainly benches, kerbs and basins. At times decorative motifs were designed on the wall or floors (Garlake 1973).

Some of the dhaka features are less easily identifiable today. Different dhaka surface textures and colour changes were achieved by exploiting the varied clay mineral compositions derived from the local parent geology. The most carefully selected and worked dhaka produced a hard, durable smooth surface and was able to survive considerable wear and exposure. Some of the dhaka structures have partially survived in various forms for 500-900 years. In prehistoric times the domestic dhaka structures were enclosed by the dry-stone walls, in order to divide space into areas and to form courtyards and enclosures. In some sections of the settlement the stonewalls were also plastered with dhaka so that the enclosure presented a homogeneous appearance with the dwelling.

Unlike the dry-stone walls, very few dhaka structures remain above ground. Most of the structures are concealed by vegetation, soil and rubble deposits. Of those above ground, only partial structures survive as evidence of the housing features. The evidence of the underground structures is the numerous mounds scattered inside and outside the stone enclosures. The mounds are the results of deterioration of the once complete dhaka structures. Archaeological excavation of these reveals the remains of the prehistoric dhaka features. In some cases these will be house floor fittings, dividing walls and, at times artistically moulded and decorated features expressing some symbolic and figurative ethos of the Later Farming Communities.

Although the Madzimbabwe tradition dhaka structures show some genealogical relationships with contemporary Southern African vernacular architecture, archaeological evidence indicates some subtle differences in their design and construction. The structures were designed to last, and were more complex than the more recent single compartment house dwelling synonymous with dhaka material. The houses then were often divided into two or more compartments, with verandas, and complicated interior platforms and fittings all under one roof (Fig 3.8). Some of the walls seem not to incorporate a timber framework within the dhaka matrix and were non-load-bearing. The outside veranda posts supported the roof. The non-load bearing walls were used to protect and divide interior space. The veranda sometimes had a low dhaka wall around it. The surface finishes for the walls and floor were similar and at times decorated (Rudd 1984).

The mineralogical constituents are summarised (Table 3.2). Most of the dhaka structures were made from grey or brown material. The colour difference also reflects the two quarrying sites on the monument. Chemically, the material has a high content of silica and aluminium, and moderate amounts of iron and potassium oxides. The deficiency of kaolin clay mineral in some of the material indicated some degree of firing the remains during or after construction.

3.6. Material culture

Apart from the architectural structures, archaeological artefacts also constitute an important aspect of Great Zimbabwe's cultural property. Every excavator and explorer over the past hundred years has found material culture related to the builders and occupiers of Great Zimbabwe. The major class of material culture from the site has been potsherds, which have been found in tones. Related to potsherds is the evidence of spinning as seen in the many spindle whorls. The numerous metal products ranging from hoes, spears, axe and arrowheads, illustrate iron work-
Table 3.2. Approximate minerological and physical properties of dhaka from Great Zimbabwe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minerals</th>
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<th>Valley (Brown/Red samples %)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaolin</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mica</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felspar</td>
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<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron/Potassium</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Physical properties of dhaka

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
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<th>Valley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean density</td>
<td>1.8g/ml</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean porosity</td>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size range of pores-microns</td>
<td>&gt;500</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;500&gt;105</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;105</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*pH Approx</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soluble salts</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;.23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gold, Copper and bronze objects have also been found and these are usually related to adornment or ceremonial objects. The most famous and perhaps most intriguing are the Zimbabwe birds (a series of soapstone monoliths which have at their apex a carved bird). These have received more attention from researchers than any other type of category found at Great Zimbabwe (Matenga 1998; Jacobson-Widding 2000). More important from a heritage management viewpoint is that they are widely used as visual images for promotion of the site and one of them has become the national symbol (Plate 3.5). Several other soapstone objects like dishes and figurines were also found. Some of the material culture found at Great Zimbabwe are a testimony to its trade prowess; these include imported glass beads, Chinese celadon, Islamic glazed ceramics and double iron gongs which are also found in Zambia and the Congo.

Figure 3.8. Artist’s impression of a prehistoric dhaka house (reconstructed from the Posselt excavation).
3.7. Conclusion

This chapter has defined the monument largely basing it on the archaeological research so far carried out. It is clear from this that stonewalls have largely been used to define the site. This limitation of this assumption in heritage management will be discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Research carried out by Sinclair and others has indicated that even for archaeological purposes the monument is much broader.
4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF HERITAGE MANAGEMENT AT GREAT ZIMBABWE

4.1. Introduction

From the beginning of the twentieth century, several attempts to preserve the site of Great Zimbabwe were made. Most of these involved the clearing of vegetation and provision of access to the visiting public. The “discovery” of Great Zimbabwe by Carl Mauch, a German explorer in 1871 led to many speculations on the interpretation of the site particularly its origin (Hall 1987; Kuklick 1991; Mahachi 1991). Some of the preservation problems affecting the monument today emanate from the early attempts to research and interpret the site. The British South Africa Company sponsored a number of expeditions. Their aims were directed at the question of the authorship of the monument. Theodore Bent, who was accompanied by R. W. M. Swan, a cartographer and surveyor mounted one of the first projects in 1891. They managed to produce maps of the monument and these early maps have played an important role in the subsequent documentation of the site. Among other excavation pioneers at Great Zimbabwe was Willoughby (1893) who extensively dug on the site and he produced one of the earliest maps (Fig. 4.1).

4.2. The first Europeans

Carl Mauch brought the size and grandeur of the Great Zimbabwe ruins to the attention of Europeans in 1871. During the 16th century, Portuguese traders had written about the rich and famous kingdom in the interior. De Barros and Dos Santos had vaguely referred to the settlement of Zimbabwe in their writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. They were intrigued by the stone structures reported to them and sought to explain their origins. To them the ruins could only be linked with such legendary figures like Prester John, King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. But no detailed eye witness accounts were available. In Southern Africa however, by the 18th century many myths and ideas about Great Zimbabwe had developed particularly centred on the idea of a lost city in the interior of Africa. These ideas were particularly strong in South Africa. However, it was Carl Mauch who revealed the settlement for the first time to the outside world. By the time Mauch visited the site, many myths had already been built on the ruined site. Many Europeans thought of it as a lost city in the interior. Carl Mauch had heard about the ruins whilst in South Africa and like many Europeans of his time had been taught that the southeast coastal area of Africa was the biblical land of Ophir. With the gold fever griping Southern Africa at this time, it was natural that whenever a reference to the ruins was made it was linked with the ancient Ophir. Thus when Mauch found the ruins he confirmed mythology from time immemorial. Mauch explored the site with Adam Renders, a European whom he found living with the Shona people. He mapped the ruins and speculated on the possible builders. Using wood splinters from a crossbeam comparing with his pencil, he concluded that the wood was cedar. Cedar could not possibly be found in this
part of the world and therefore should have been imported. The ruins could thus have only been built at the instructions of the Queen of Sheba. His description of the ruins and its origins found support from popular literature of the time such as Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's mines*. Carl Mauch's beliefs became widespread in Europe. Here the mythology of African societies being incapable of anything and backward found support from the imperialist Cecil John Rhodes. Rhodes was convinced that the site of Great Zimbabwe had been constructed by Phoenicians. Linked to the idea of the Phoenicians having built Great Zimbabwe was the general Victorian beliefs about African societies being incapable of change. Rhodes and his company, the British South Africa Company saw the importance of the site in the overall plan of their dream. They could use this to justify the colonization of the area. They were after all following in the footsteps of the Phoenicians. Thus when Cecil John Rhodes visited Great Zimbabwe, the local people were told that the great white chief was coming to visit the home of his ancestors.

### 4.3. Men of science and politics

The link of Great Zimbabwe with Ophir and King Solomon's mines had unfortunate implications. Many fortune seekers ransacked the ruins. Rhodes commissioned two separate research studies on the monument. The first was archaeological, led by Theodore Bent, an antiquarian. His 'findings' reinforced the mythology that Sabean Arabs who were influenced by the Phoenicians built Great Zimbabwe. People like Posselt and Theodore Bent were able to find more treasures like the carved birds, which have become a national symbol. Bent found the carved birds and he dug a trench around the base of the conical tower, destroying the stratigraphy around the Great Enclosure. Although he recovered a few Persian beads, he ignored and threw away thousands of artefacts, which he thought were of a latter date. More damage was to follow with the creation of the Rhodesian Ancient Ruins Company. The 1902 legislation to protect the monument had no effect on Bent for he continued the destruction of viable archaeological material. He threw away layer after layer of what he termed *kaffir* rubbish. He argued that the architectural style of the ruins supported a south Arabian origin. He suggested that if Africans had built Great Zimbabwe, they would have done so "as slaves of a race of higher civilization" (Bent 1892, p. 33). The second research commissioned by Rhodes was for an archival research for descriptions of the monument in European libraries and archives. Alexander Wilmot undertook this (Kuklick 1991).

However, the first archaeologist David Randall-MacIver who had been trained by the famous Flinders Petrie excavated the Great Enclosure. He uncovered artefacts, which were basically similar to modern Shona material. This indicated to him that the builders were ancestral to the Shona people. He also demonstrated that the Arab and Persian imports could not possibly date beyond the Middle Ages and thus the theory about King Solomon could not be sustained. He wrote that:

> "the people who inhabited the Elliptical Temple belonged to tribes whose arts and manufacturing were indistinguishable from those of modern Makalanga (Shona)" (Randall-MacIver 1906, p. 63).

The settler community did not accept such findings. Hall led them in attacking Randall-MacIver arguing that MacIver had no intimate knowledge of Africa. The settlers partly rejected the interpretation because it was attacking the central ideological justification of colonizing Zimbabwe. Rhodes and his followers saw the colonization as legitimate since they were resurrecting the lost Caucasian civilization as represented by the Phoenicians (Sinama 1997, p. 27). In 1926 F. J. Scholfield studied the architecture and building methods and concluded that the structures were of African authorship. This was reinforced by Gertrude Caton-Thompson who also revealed that the monument in all probability was indigenous in origin and that the cultural material from her excavations showed that the present day inhabitants had everything to do with the monument. She did not see any greatness in the architecture. It was typical of "native" style and like most of her compatriots did not think highly of the local populations. Thus, she wrote:
'No other than our happy-go-lucky Bantu could be accused of erecting them. Who else could build a place as big as the temple without working from a plan? Who else would just make encircling walls come together by a little deviation from the symmetrical when they were not going to meet? What other race would build walls without using a plumb line?' (cited from Kuklick 1991, p. 155).

In her own words:

'the architecture at Zimbabwe, imitative apparently of daub prototype, strikes me as essentially the product of an infantile mind, pre-logical mind, a mind which having discovered the way to making or doing a thing goes on childishly repeating the performance regardless of incongruity' (Caton-Thompson 1931, p. 103).

Thus the Europeans who visited the site during the early part of the twentieth century generally attributed the construction of the monument to the Arabs, but the first serious archaeological investigations by Randal-Maclver and Caton-Thompson confirmed the African origins of the site. Nevertheless, most of the settler community would not believe in these so-called scientific investigations.

There is hardly any doubt that by 1960 within the National Historical Monuments Commission the creation of Great Zimbabwe was taken to be indigenous. In 1958 Roger Summers, Keith Robinson and Anthony Whitty launched a large-scale research program at Great Zimbabwe. The aim was not to revisit the question of the builders since this to most archaeologists had been solved, but to refine the chronology using the ceramics and architectural styles. Thus from a research point the question of origin had been solved but the dating of the cultural material remained an important issue. The question of chronology could only be refined during the 1970s.

Hall's excavation culminated in the publication of his book Great Zimbabwe (1905), which was widely condemned by the international scientific community, but proved very popular among the settler community. The interest on the origins of Great Zimbabwe by 1919 had generated no less than sixty-three books and articles on the subject (Cooke 1974). In 1909 the first systematic report on how the site was to be managed was drawn up by Masey (1911). This was partly in response to the extensive damage done on the site by R. N. Hall. The British South Africa Company commissioned the report. Masey's report noted the need to maintain the monument particularly to clear vegetation. He also pointed out the problems, which were being caused by tourists and that cattle grazing in the monument from the nearby communities also led to destruction of some structures. His recommendation was that the monument be fenced at least to prevent cattle from coming in. He also noted the need to employ a resident archaeologist to take care of the general preservation work. Masey realized...
the need to manage the visitors and suggested that a site museum be erected. This would serve to interpret the site to the wider public. Given the general controversies surrounding Great Zimbabwe at the time, Masey’s report was quite comprehensive and recommended specific actions to be taken. Apart from general maintenance work his report also suggested that collapsed walls should be restored. The report also pointed out the problem with local communities in letting their cattle graze and at times causing fires in the estate. One of the major problems on the site of Great Zimbabwe is the rapid erosion of parts of the Western Enclosure of the Hill Complex. This was triggered off by the well meaning but misinformed preservation recommendations from Masey’s report that many of the dry stone walls could be preserved by removing the archaeological and dhaka remains resting against them. The work was carried out by the Public Works Department of Southern Rhodesia (PWD). The excavation was carried out with little consideration for the archaeological or aesthetic appearance of the area. The work was also executed under the assumption that the dry stone walls were the only important component of the monument. As a result dhaka structures and archaeological artefacts were destroyed. The excavation by the PWD left a huge exposed pit, which in a few years had almost doubled its size due to continuous erosion (Plate 4.1)

Apart from Masey’s report, the early years of managing Great Zimbabwe were marked by the absence of any direct intervention on the fabric of the dry stone walls. However, with the appointment of S. Wallace in 1914 as curator of Great Zimbabwe, the face of the monument began to change. Wallace was responsible for a large number of necessary but misguided and inaccurate restorations. Using Masey’s 1911 report, he embarked on major restoration of the monument. This marked a departure from previous efforts, which were mainly directed at finding the origins of the site and also provide access to tourists. From 1914 to 1931 Wallace restored many walls at Great Zimbabwe including the entrances at the Hill Complex as well as those of the Great Enclosure. The restorations were

Plate 4.1. The Western Enclosure Hill Complex showing the excavated pit at 200 m (MT. Survey Ltd 1994).
architecturally inaccurate and did not follow any preservation ethics (Walker & Dickens 1992; Ndoro 1994). After Wallace, many curators at Great Zimbabwe carried out unsystematic repairs to collapsed and unstable walls on dry stone ruins. However, priority was placed on the interpretation of this unique heritage. Many people were visiting such sites as Great Zimbabwe, Khami and Danamombe and these needed more information on such questions as who were the builders of such structures? When were they built and what do they represent? Major excavations and documentation work was undertaken by Summers, Robinson and Whitty in 1958 at Great Zimbabwe. Robinson also carried out excavations at Khami (1959) and Peter Garlake (1973) later at Nhunguza. These were aimed at establishing the chronostratigraphic sequence of this heritage. Their work has remained the basis of most of the interpretation of the Madzimbabwe tradition. Since the 1960’s the interpretation of the archaeology and architecture of these monument has been the main preoccupation of archaeologists (see Sinclair 1987; Mahachi 1991; Sundström 1992; Chipunza 1994; Huffman 1997). In the 1960’s the top priority for most curators in the country was archaeological research. No clear policy or management plan existed apart from attempts to satisfy research based archaeological questions. The preservation aspects were left to unqualified technicians. The archaeological research did not consider the long-term preservation of these sites. A listing of all the archaeological and preservation work done at these sites in the past five to six decades indicates that these account for most of the distortion or loss of part of the structures. Even the radiocarbon dating revolution of the 1950’s also left a scar on the fabric of such monuments as Great Zimbabwe. This led to the removal of the few wooden structural members on the monument, resulting in the collapse of one section (Plate 4.2). These well-intended acts that have led to most of the irreparable damage, serve to indicate some of the complications involved in managing the archaeological heritage today.

At other sites like Naletale and Khami, Robinson carried out several restorations mainly utilizing concrete. The concrete capping at Naletale prevented the collapse of large areas of the decorated facades. However, the disadvantage of this was that their aesthetic appearance becomes too artificial. Concrete or cement grouting was used at some sections of Khami, particularly on the hill. Here dhaka was mixed with cement. As will be shown below the local communities were opposed to the use of cement on all monuments. However during this period no attention was paid to indigenous voices.

By the 1960s the potential of such sites as Great Zimbabwe to become major visitor attractions had been realized. By 1928 a hotel had been built near Great Zimbabwe to cater for the European tourist. The following year the Southern Rhodesia publicity Bureau published a guidebook aimed at the tourists. It reflected the contemporary settler community interpretations of the monument. This was captured adequately in the way the various components of the site were named (Fig. 4.2 & Fig. 4.3). The early guidebooks were largely based on the works of R. N.

Plate 4.2. Collapsed wall owing to removal of wooden structural member for 14C-dating.
Hall and T. Bent. Apart from attributing the construction of the monument to the Phoenicians, there was an attempt to link the site with the history of Rhodesia. Major Alan Wilson one of the heroes of the 1893 Anglo-Ndebele war had originally been buried at Great Zimbabwe. Wallace (1936) in his guidebook urged the tourist not to leave the monument without paying a visit to Wilson’s first grave. The number of visitors was growing each year and soon Great Zimbabwe became the second most popular attraction in the country after the Victoria Falls. As a result, visitor facilities such as a site museum, a curio shop and a traditional village were erected. Also included were lodges for visitors and a car park. At Khami a site museum was also built. Most of the facilities were randomly located and no consideration was given to the archaeological deposits on site. What mattered most were the dry stone walls. No respect was given to the archaeology or cultural significance of the site. In any case the visitors were mainly of European origin who had no cultural affiliation to the sites. Part of the monument was even turned into a golf course. The ultimate alienation of the monument occurred under the National Parks administration when forced labour bridges of prisoners were used to keep the monument tidy for tourists. Great Zimbabwe’s management was under National Parks, an organization whose main concern was the preservation of wild life rather than cultural property. Even the research archaeologists like Robinson and Summers, who where under the Historic Monuments Commission, operated from the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo, more than 300 km away from the site.

Figure 4.2. General map of Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia Publicity Bureau 1929).
Figure 4.3. General Map of Great Zimbabwe (Wallace 1938).
4.4. Men of the people

From the 1900 to the 1970s despite the analytical research findings, most of the colonial settlers continued to believe that the Phoenicians built Great Zimbabwe. The Governments of the day did everything to encourage this notion. The fear was that should the archaeological findings be accepted, all the notions about the African people's backwardness would be challenged. This could be a strong base to challenge the colonial theory of white supremacy. They therefore made sure that the dissemination of such findings was restricted.

The Rhodesia Front government, itself built on an antagonism to all African aspirations towards equality, recognized the dangers of promoting black cultural pride and political consciousness through any indication that Zimbabwean history, however remote, had a proud record of achievement (Garlake 1973, 1982). This fear was heightened by the rise of African nationalism on the continent and the attainment of independence by some African states such as Ghana and Nigeria.

Following the 1965 Unilateral Declaration of Independence and the rigorous control of information that accompanied it, archaeologists found that research had become an open political activity. Andries Joannes Bruwer (1965) who dedicated his book Zimbabwe, Rhodesia Ancient Greatness to the Prime Minister Ian Smith perceived a concerted conspiracy by Peter Garlake, Roger Summers and others archaeologists who continued to suggest that Great Zimbabwe was of African origin. Several other publications in Southern Africa branded these archaeologists either as misguided tools of politically motivated enemies or traitorous agents of a worldwide communist conspiracy of subversion (Gayre 1972).

During the colonial period, the settler community provided the organizational milieu, funds and audience for research, presentation and preservation of the monument. From 1965 to 1980 the Rhodesian Front acted to control and censor all displays, material, guidebooks and archaeological research that were accessible to the public. They ensured that all historical and archaeological writings that were accessible to the general public did not suggest that Great Zimbabwe had a proven African authorship. The textbooks used in African schools up to independence in 1980 emphasized that "old tribal stories tell us of a race of brown-skinned people with straight black hair used to mine gold here long ago. They built stone forts or villages called Zimbabwe" (Miller 1960, p. 29). The control of access to this monument and its grandeur also prompted an opposite reaction in the African Nationalist politics of the 1960's and 70's. The nationalist movements saw the site as a potential political symbol which could unify people against colonial rule by appealing to the pride of the civilization of Great Zimbabwe. They not only began naming their political parties after Great Zimbabwe (e.g. Zimbabwe African National Union ZANU and Zimbabwe African Peoples Union ZAPU), but went further to declare that an independent Rhodesia would be named Zimbabwe.

The Rhodesian authorities were outraged. For example, a correspondent for the Rhodesia Herald of 4 June 1962 talked of the misappropriation of the ancient pre Bantu name of Zimbabwe to the cause of Mr. Nkomo and his fellow black settlers. The correspondent argument was that the black people of the country were like the whites, recent arrivals and thus "it is of great importance that those who currently usurp the ancient name of Zimbabwe have historical or cultural right to do so".

During the 1976 to 1980 war in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) most sites were abandoned for security reasons. For almost six years no maintenance was carried out on archaeological monuments. Thus the vegetation, which had occasionally been cleared, did manage to grow and threaten the structural stability of the monuments. However, after independence in 1980 the government viewed such sites as Great Zimbabwe as major visitor attractions and a source of great national pride. After all, the nation had been named after this great monumental archaeological site. There was therefore the need to pay attention to the long-term integrity of the monuments and forge new management systems sensitive to all the demands of the monument. Just like the previous governments, the opportunity offered by Great Zimbabwe in fostering unity
and a new identity could not be missed. Many of the artefacts from Great Zimbabwe become national symbols depicted on the country’s currency, stamps, and insignia and on the flag (Pwiti 1996).

Just like the previous government, the nationalist government, after independence, took the opportunity offered by Great Zimbabwe in fostering a new identity. For the government of Zimbabwe, the past (including the archaeological past) could play a political role. After all the country had been named after the archaeological site. Thus at independence the Prime Minister of the new nation could declare that “independence will bestore on us... a new future and perspective and indeed a new history and a new past” (cited in Pwiti 1996, p. 153). Just like the colonial government, the new government was not hesitant to build a past they were comfortable with. Herbert Usheuwokunze, (the then Minister of Home Affairs) started it rather more bluntly in a foreword on a book on Great Zimbabwe “Now the time has come to set the record straight, to seek out and renew our past. Archaeology is no more than a tool. For the first time in Zimbabwe it is wielded for the people” (Pwiti 1996, p 153). Thus emphasizing the vulnerability of archaeology and Great Zimbabwe to political manipulation.

A major step was made by reopening Great Zimbabwe to the public and providing a skeletal staff to maintain and service the expected visitors. Major publicity campaigns were made and these were given a tremendous boost by the publication of Mufuka’s populist guidebook to Great Zimbabwe Dzimbabwe: Life in the Golden Age (1983) and Peter Garlake’s (1982) Great Zimbabwe described and explained. Mufuka’s use of oral traditions, myths and legends was heavily criticized by all leading academics in Zimbabwe. However, many ordinary Zimbabweans welcomed his book. It offered a past which they could easily identify with rather than the dry pottery classifications, and chronostratigraphic analyses that have until recently characterized studies on Great Zimbabwe. The focus on linear chronology or cultural identity based on pottery studies which have been emphasized appear to be irrelevant to the heritage of most people. Like Wallace before him, Mufuka also turned his attention to the fabric. He unsystematically restored some of the collapsed walls in the valley ruins. Early uncontrolled excavations had on disturbed these.

This interplay between nationalism and archaeology was not unique to Zimbabwe. In West Africa the Negritude movement (literary writers movement in French speaking Africa) in their protest against French rule stressed the supremacy of African culture. It was natural therefore that Negritude’s emphasis on Africa’s past cultural richness led to an interest in archaeology as expressed by the work of Cheikh Anta Diop (1979). Diop argued for a close relationship between black Africa and Ancient Egypt. He used archaeological evidence to trace migration routes, arguing that the burial mounds of the Niger Delta were West Africa versions of Egyptian pyramids (Diop 1979; Holl 1990). It appears that like Negritude, a distinctive brand of archaeology has developed in postcolonial West Africa. It has closely remained connected to issues of national consciousness and ethnic identity and has stressed continuities between the past and present, often providing a charter for the present day that is given authority by reference to the past (Hall 1995; Holl 1990).

It has also been argued for example that there is more at stake than just archaeological facts in the debate on the status of the Neolithic in Eastern African. The Neolithic skeletal material from east Africa was often classified as Caucasoid giving rise to racist theories of migrations of Azanians, Hamites or Megalithic Cushites (Onyango-Abuje & Wandibba 1979). Onyango-Abuje (1980) suggested that there may have been a number of centres of animal and plant domestication in sub-Saharan African which await discovery and notes that it is overdue for archaeologists start looking for these. He then suggests that autochthonous domestication of animals in Eastern Africa can only be properly investigated if the reactionary and traditional diffusionists are stopped from carrying out research in Africa (Onyango-Abuje 1980, p. 292).

Great Zimbabwe is important to nationalism and state ideology in two main ways. The first is through religion and ancestral worship and sec-
ondly as an example of African achievement. With the rise of nationalism in Zimbabwe in the 1960's there came a cultural revival which manifested itself in the regeneration of traditional religion. Ranger (1985) refers to Peter Fry a Christian Evangelist who said:

'I have been led to believe that traditional beliefs and practices were drying out and were of little significance to contemporary situation. However, bit by bit I become aware that this was by no means the case...the number of people succumbing to spirit mediumship was increasing, churches were burnt and stoned...It become quite clear that traditional beliefs and practices were related to the rise of African nationalism' (Peter Fry cited in Ranger 1985, p. 187).

Gelfand (1959), Abraham (1966) and Lan (1985) also allude to this revival in traditional religion. Spirit mediums such as Nehanda, Chaminuka and Kaguvi became nationally important during the days of African Nationalism. From the nationalist point of view what would be a better way of uniting a diverse population, which shares a common religion. Great Zimbabwe therefore provided a legitimate shrine for the national spirit medium. Thus Sophia Muchini could claim that as Ambuya Nehanda the only Shona spirit medium associated with war should be based at Great Zimbabwe.

The local communities at Great Zimbabwe too felt that with independence they could also reclaim the place for their ancestors. The local people expected that with independence they would be allowed to settle at Great Zimbabwe. Thus in 1981, Sophia Tsvatayi Muchini, claiming to be the spirit medium of Nehanda (the legendary female guardian of the Shona people) occupied Great Zimbabwe. During the liberation struggle the monument was at the centre of military activities which lead to the attack on the hotel and museum (Garlake 1982, p. 16). As the spirit medium of Nehanda, the heroine of the 1896-7 Chimuraga war, during the liberation war Sophia Muchini was also involved in recruiting, organizing and advising the guerrilla forces on many occasions. Prior to 1980, Muchini had tried to settle at Great Zimbabwe because she viewed it as a national shrine and as Nehanda she felt she should be allowed to practice at the monument.

Her first attempt to settle at Great Zimbabwe was in 1974. However the colonial government did not allow her to do so. Instead they imprisoned her on two occasions between 1978 and 1979 (Garlake 1983, p. 16). She was only released a week after the 1980 elections. She immediately returned to Great Zimbabwe were she began to conduct cleansing rituals on the site particularly of the freedom fighters who had just returned from the war. However, these activities, although supported by traditional leaders, did not go down well with government who then sent soldiers to evict her. After a bloody battle the spirit medium was evicted. This indicated clearly that government was prepared to use force against the local communities in order to regain what was seen as a national symbol of unity. Sophia's claim to stay at Great Zimbabwe is shared by most of the local people. Chief Nemanwa shares the need to conduct a cleansing ceremony at the site and that his people should be given back the custodianship of the site (Nemamwa pers. comm.).

Sophia Muchini has tried on several occasions to establish her self at Great Zimbabwe with the help of the local politicians but without success. The idea that local people around Great Zimbabwe are deprived of access and control of their heritage is not an isolated one. Ueko (1994, p. 244) gives the example of the people of Murewa who perceived the establishment of the Murewa Culture House as a place to champion the local traditional culture. However with the appointment of a Christian priest as the Director, traditional healers and spirit mediums together with their cultural material medicine were removed in order to rid the Cultural House of pagan practice. At other archaeological sites like Siloziwane and Domboshava the rain making rituals have
been prohibited by NMMZ in order to preserve them for scientific research, thus denying access to the local communities.

4.5. International input on managing Great Zimbabwe

In 1982 UNESCO sent a consultant to Zimbabwe to advise NMMZ on how to preserve Great Zimbabwe and other related monuments. The consultant, Sassoon, stressed the desperate condition in which the monument was, particularly the lack of any maintenance strategy (Sassoon 1982). The vegetation growth particularly the Lantana camara plant was causing damage and making access to parts of the monument almost impossible. His report pointed out the need to look beyond the stone walls but also on other archaeological remains like dhaka structures. The report included a draft plan of action for the preservation of the monument and other related sites. He also advised on the equipment needed and the training of personnel. Above all, he emphasized the need for continued cyclical maintenance on the site. The importance of Sassoon’s report was its comprehensive nature in dealing with the general management problems, interpretation and physical preservation needs.

In 1987, UNESCO commissioned other consultants, Rodrigues, a geologist and Mauelshagen, a photogrammetrist to carry out specialist evaluation on Great Zimbabwe. Their brief was similar to that of Sassoon except that this time the experts were dealing mainly with the fabric of the monument. Their report observed that “there is not a single meter of wall completely free of problems” (Rodrigues & Mauelshagen 1987). This conclusion was hardly surprising given the background of the two consultants. They both had experience with European historic buildings whose building codes could hardly be applicable to Great Zimbabwe. Here most walls were curvilinear, had no mortar and no foundation. Their recommendations included the setting up of an intervention team to include trained stone masons and the procurement of essential equipment and material. Mauelshagen’s section of the report advised the adoption of photogrammetry to monitor the movement of the wall structures. Again the UNESCO report pointed out the need for trained personnel and the need for implementing a maintenance plan on the site. They also advised on the need for a research program to identify priorities of intervention and evaluation of possible preservation techniques. The report specifically tried to address the question of the condition of the dry stone walls. It also identified the need to document and monitor the structures. Thus it was clear that for both government and the international organization as represented by UNESCO the management of Great Zimbabwe was to focus on the technical aspects.

The management plans drawn up by the various consultants for the preservation of Great Zimbabwe exposed some of the inadequacies of NMMZ to deal with some of the basic conservation problems on site. For example, no accurate map of the site existed and thus inspecting the 720 hectares of the monument was impossible. There was also lack of basic equipment even for archaeological work. As in many developing countries, the effort to preserve the monument received vital financial and technical support from foreign institutions.

In 1988 the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries (SAREC) made funds available for archaeological investigations on the site. It also undertook to train archaeologists and artefact conservation technicians for NMMZ. SAREC further provided equipment for the archaeology laboratory. However, given the previous history of Great Zimbabwe, archaeological excavations could not be undertaken until solutions to the erosion of previously exposed areas had been found. The SAREC project understood the conservation requirements of the management plan and therefore decided to use non-destructive archaeological techniques. The project also provided field training for archaeologists on alternative conservation friendly methods of archaeological research. The methods involved the application of remote sensing techniques such as magnetometer and phosphate analysis (Sinclair et al. 1993b).

Apart from UNESCO consultants, technical assistance was also provided by the British Overseas Development (ODA) in the conservation of
the dry stone walls. They undertook to find a joint project between NMMZ and Loughborough University. The project focused on evaluating various methods of monitoring deformations on dry stone structures and identifying the failure mechanism on these walls (Walker & Dickens 1992). The program went a long way in providing a cheaper method of monitoring the structures using strain gauges. This was a more affordable method of monitoring than the photogrammetric system. Besides, the technique is simple and does not require highly trained personnel. The project also helped to isolate some of the possible causes of wall collapses. The project was funded for two years. However, its findings were not very conclusive. NMMZ could not continue with the project for the laboratory facilities did not exist, the University of Loughborough had provided equipment used during the project. This exposes the limitations of dependence on donor funds.

Several international experts including the engineers from Loughborough University recommended the use of consolidates and geogrids as a method of improving the stability of the dry stone walls. These solutions would be good engineering solutions, which could reduce the long-term maintenance of the structures. The major problem however is the high cost of importing the material and lack of expertise in applying these in the country. After careful evaluation of the costs and benefits of these solutions the local conservation team decided that efforts should be directed at the training of traditional stonemasons. Should the need arise, some form of *anastylosis* or reconstruction could be done provided proper documentation had been carried out. Apart from fulfilling conservation principles of using original materials and skills, this would also provide employment and skills to the local community. This solution would not depend on foreign currency, which is a rare commodity in Third World countries, but on local labour, which is cheap and easily available.

Provision was made for the establishment of a team, whose main task was to preserve, maintain and manage the archaeological resource. For the first time the brief for the archaeologist at Great Zimbabwe prioritised the preservation of the monument rather than academic archaeological research. The government also undertook to build laboratory facilities to be used for preservation research and teaching purposes. This was largely in response to the UNESCO reports and the recommendations of the preservation team. It was however clear to those on site that a comprehensive management plan was necessary if the long-term preservation of the site was to be achieved. It was along these lines that the first drafts of the Master Plan for the Preservation and Development of the Archaeological Heritage were made (Collett 1992). The Plan covered all aspects of site management and not just the preservation of the dry stonewalling: the resource was much more than that.

UNESCO and UNDP have since 1981 been involved with the preservation of Great Zimbabwe. As indicated earlier, consultants had been sent out on two occasions and some of their recommendations were also incorporated into the site management plan for Great Zimbabwe. It was however, realized that in order to implement most of the required components, more funds would be required. The equipment and some of the expertise could not be acquired from within Zimbabwe. The Plan outlined the necessary conservation plans and possible developments aimed at promoting the monument. Apart from highlighting the situation at Great Zimbabwe the document went further and looked at all the major archaeological sites managed by NMMZ. Apart from aiming at the preservation of the archaeological resources the plan also wanted to promote tourism with a view of generating income for the operations of the monuments organization. UNESCO and UNDP did not have the necessary funds to implement all aspects of the Master plan. In order to marshal human, material and technical support, a Donor’s Conference was organized. A Donors Conference that was then held in June 1992.

The Master Plan was presented to international experts and potential donors at the Donors Conference. The idea of the Donors Conference was to raise funds, equipment and raise awareness to donors and technical experts on the
preservation of Zimbabwean archaeological sites. The conference emphasized the idea of the potential economic development, which may arise from a better management of the archaeological resources.

Apart from receiving donations of equipment, the Donors Conference was also successful in that it exposed some of the heritage management problems in Third World countries like Zimbabwe. Here conservation of the archaeological heritage could easily be seen as a luxury given the other problems of hunger, health and education. The conference managed to focus on the potential economic and educational benefits if correct measures were taken.

The Master Plan for Resource Conservation and Development (Collett 1992) aims were to increase the publicity of the monument and thereby increase funding for their up-keep. It was the first comprehensive document relating to heritage management in Zimbabwe (and perhaps in Southern Africa). The success of the Donors Conference Master Plan should not be evaluated on the basis of the financial or material support given by the international community. They should rather be assessed in terms of improving the ability of National Museums and Monuments to manage the cultural heritage of the country. The idea to widen the scope of the Master plan to include not just Great Zimbabwe but the country’s entire heritage was a noble one. However, in terms of project management, the plan became too ambitious in its efforts to encompass all the aspects of heritage management. The major weakness of the Plan that was finally presented at the Donors Conference was that it tried to be a policy document and a project development plan. More than twenty-five projects were identified and the implementation period was less than fifteen years. Although the plan tried to phase the projects in stages so that major ones would not be done at the same time, this could not be practical given the regional administrative politics of NMMZ. Each administrative region wanted to have its own project running on the same magnitude as that of Great Zimbabwe. Thus, national interests were compromised. The result was that, the Old Bulawayo project that was supposed to start in 1998 was brought forward to 1991. The Domboshava, Ziwa and Danamombe projects were also brought forward. Given the limited personnel resources within NMMZ, the Great Zimbabwe Management strategies as outlined in the Master Plan took a side line as the more politically conspicuous Old Bulawayo project began to take prominence. The original idea of concentrating on Great Zimbabwe as a flagship for other projects quickly disappeared. It has to be emphasized that the technical aspects of managing a monument like Great Zimbabwe cannot be isolated from the administrative management ethos of those who manage them. Generally this document has had partial success in implementation. Projects such as the Old Bulawayo theme park, Ziwa, Danamombe and Domboshava site Museums have been started and several staff members of NMMZ have been trained at various institutions. It can therefore be argued that despite its over ambitious targets the Master Plan’s implementation has resulted in increased capacity for NMMZ to manage the heritage. However, it has not been successful in its commercial ambitions.

4.6. Discussion

It was clear that the preservation of ruined monuments involved not only the physical structures, but also their setting and natural surroundings. The topography profoundly influences the impression a site makes on the viewer. Any serious preservation plan should thus incorporate consideration of the environmental setting. When dealing with ruined monuments there is the need to understand the structures concerned and the cultural history and historical values. This is because during its life, a monument may undergo repeated changes and alterations. In this way the ruins become a historical document on which peoples cultural developments are inscribed. Preservation ethics demand that any intervention should respect the cultural significance of the place. This may include the misguided previous restoration work. This is very problematic as the case history of Great Zimbabwe shows. In this case, earlier restoration and preservation attempts were guided by the early controversies associated with the site. In a sense therefore, the resto-
rations by people like Wallace document the tur-
bulent historiography of Great Zimbabwe. How­
ever, we have to realize that first and foremost
the monument is a work of art; it bears witness
to the technology and craftsmanship of the pe­
riod when it was made. Thus, paying reverence
to a historic document might distort the inten­
tions of the original builders.

It is important to note that the physical struc­
tures are part of a cultural landscape, which goes
beyond the area at present declared a national
monument. Outside the estate are archaeological
and cultural sites related to the monument. On
the cultural landscape are also people who inter-
act with it in various ways. The potentially pow­
erful traditional institutions and their communi­
ties and other environmental agencies need to be
considered in planning for protection. The present
heritage management practice at Great Zimbabwe
although shrouded in the rhetoric that espouses
local stewardship is founded on notions of scien­
tific and international rationality. Evidence from
sites like Domboshava and Silozwane suggests
that the persistence of such practices ultimately
lead to undesirable circumstances. Although this
seems to be changing, the public is largely ignored
in matters pertaining to research or management
of archaeological resources.
5. PRESERVING THE FABRIC OF THE MONUMENT

5.1. Introduction

The National Museums and Monuments Act of Zimbabwe promulgated in 1972 sets out the legal provisions of protecting the prehistoric ruined monuments of Zimbabwe. The act also brings Great Zimbabwe under national administration and the state is responsible for its preservation and presentation through the statutory organisation of National Museums and Monuments. This chapter attempts to highlight some of the problems associated with the preservation and presentation of Great Zimbabwe. It also gives a brief introduction to the physical condition of the monument that up to now has been the focus of the preservation efforts. The primary purpose is to show the link between the preservation of the fabric of the ruins and the overall problems of presentation of ruined structures. As already indicated, the important structures are built of stone and dhaka (earth) materials. These have their own structural problems and their different behaviour has implications on trying to present the monument as an integral entity. There are also exogenous factors, for example tourism, which also contribute to the deterioration of the integrity of the site; these also have a bearing on the overall presentation of the cultural landscape. This chapter also highlights some of the problems associated with defining the monument as the stone and dhaka structures at the expense of the totality of the cultural landscape.

5.2. Dry-stone structures

The Great Zimbabwe ruins are situated in a region with an abundance of stone. Large outcrops of rock occur throughout the region and are characteristic features of the landscape. The rock is medium-to-coarse-grained granite. The rock is fresh (not decaying or decomposing) and consequently very strong. The Upper and lower faces of blocks are fairly regular but are frequently curved and converging. The blocks are predominantly from naturally formed slabs taken from the granite outcrops. These slabs originate from stress releases within the rock mass (Rodrigues & Manuelshagen 1987). When the overburden is removed the rock mass expands in proportion to the removed loads. When the expansion is incompatible with the physical integrity of the rock mass, the expansion is accomplished by the development of rupture surfaces inside the rock. These rupture surfaces tend to be roughly parallel to the topography, which explains their gently curved appearance. The undisplaced slabs produced by this mechanism are thick and wide and some are several metres long. Weathering agents like temperature and moisture changes can accelerate the formation of these slabs and their development. However, weathering agents, unlike pressure releases, tend to produce thinner and shorter slabs.

Once the slabs were formed it was not difficult for the builders to break them into smaller
usable blocks for the construction of stone structures. It has been suggested that using heating and pouring water on them to promote rapid contraction and subsequent breakage broke the slabs. Recent experimental work has shown that there was no need for water; the heat generated could produce the desired results (Dube 1990). However, an examination of the granite outcrops in the borrow areas reveals fine examples of the broken slabs with very distinct features indicating that percussion was used to produce some of the blocks. Even though this could have been a later development it is easy, cheap and more within the competence of the builders than the fairly complex heating and cooling process. The heating and cooling method is undoubtedly more expensive in terms of time, labour and resources. As Rodrigues and Manuelshagen (1987) indicate, the question of how the slabs were broken into usable blocks is of more than purely academic or archaeological interest. The two methods suggested introduce different degrees of fissuring in the stones, which, in turn affects the strength and durability of the blocks.

Weathering

Very few of the blocks are derived from moderately weathered outcrops but, even in such cases, they still have sharp edges and a high strength, suggesting that weathering has been insignificant since they were placed in the wall. It is also rare to see fractured granite blocks on the site. The most common occurrence of decay consists in the peeling-off of small chips mainly along the edges and corners of the blocks. These features always occur in retaining walls for example in the Hill Complex. This peeling-off seems to be a continuation of the natural weathering mechanism of stress release but it is also assisted by temperature and moisture fluctuations.

Some natural outcrops and large boulders in the Hill Complex show neat “taffoni” on the surface. Their origin is linked to the lichen growths in the area. The base rock is initially colonised by lichens, which promote some decay around their hyphae, producing small pitches in the rock. Once these features have been created, then other colonisers take advantage of them thus increasing the extent of decay. Once lichens are growing on a wall they produce a certain amount of decay. Nevertheless, the high quality of most of the stone blocks significantly reduces the effects of this weathering agent.

The large voids and the small number of contact points between blocks in the wall means that water is not drawn in by capillary action. Furthermore, rainwater drains through the walls, thus reducing its potential as an agent of decay. It seems unlikely that the weathering of the rock is a significant factor in the degradation of the structures. Nevertheless, while weathering has little significance in the overall process of degeneration, its effect on some pieces of the stone located in critical positions within the wall may promote distress in the structure and can trigger its collapse.

Stability

Certain characteristics of the stone blocks have already been described but it is worth remembering those which affect the stability of the structure. The construction procedures adopted by the original builders seem to be the main cause of most of the distress. An examination of a collapsed wall reveals that the walls have one well-defined stack of blocks in each external face. These external stacks extended from the bottom to the top of the wall. The external faces of the wall at times look like a succession of pillars made up of blocks stacked one on top of the other, having poor linkage with either the interior or even laterally. This peculiarity in the construction is further evidenced in some collapses where only the outer skin has fallen down. This is also seen in some pronounced bulges where large voids can be seen. In the interior of the walls blocks are placed with a tendency towards incipient coursing but the interlocking is often very poor. Frequently, these haphazardly placed blocks behave more like erratic agglomerations than self-supporting, interlocked block structures. The safety factor in such structures is very low and the minimum disturbance is enough to trigger a destabilisation and collapse. The main manifestation of these failure mechanisms can be summarised as follows (after Dickens & Walker 1992):
Bulging - a section of stone blocks in the wall protrude outwards to form a convex vertical profile in a previously plane wall face. Bulging in a free standing wall is likely to result from disturbance of the core material. In a retaining wall bulging may result from development of excessive lateral earth pressures, bearing capacity failures of the foundation material or a combination of the two (Jones 1979).

Toppling - the displacement of upper blocks in the walls away from their vertical equilibrium position. Displacement may be caused by external factors like vegetation growth e.g. vegetation growth growth.

Collapse - once a section of wall has collapsed the zone of instability will progress along the remaining area owing to the toppling of the blocks.

Settlement - section of wall may move downward owing to foundation failure.

Splitting - vertical separation of blocks owing to the weight of the wall. This could be caused by the differential settlement and frequently coincide with joints between sections of rebuilt and original walls.

5.3. Dhaka (earthen) structures

As indicated earlier, dhaka as a material is paddled clay soil binding naturally weathered granite gravel aggregate.

Failure mechanism. Generally, physical weathering, atmospheric conditions, movement of soluble salts and bio-deterioration accounts for most of the decay associated with dhaka structures. However, the rate of deterioration is a function of the dhaka composition, texture, construction methods and subsequent use history of the structures. Prehistoric dhaka remains represent an end product of the sequence of events, ranging from construction and occupation to abandonment. Transformation and decay will also begin again as soon as they are exposed to a new environment for example for presentation or exhibition purposes.

A comparison with contemporary vernacular architecture shows that dhaka structures begin decaying during the occupation period.

Besides the shrinkage fractures, which are usually expected with such material, it seems cracks appear on the structure immediately after construction. These tend to follow the joints between the floors, fittings and on the wall. The cracks in contemporary structures are normally covered up during routine maintenance by plastering. Despite this some areas of the floor show signs of distress due to wear:

- The fireplace generally exhibits multiple micro-fracture, superimposed on large deep radial cracks. This is largely due to continuous heating and use of the area.
- Doorways and stepped platforms show multiple micro-fracture and flaking of the dhaka surface.
- The permutation of cracks on these areas varies with the general use of the structures.

In the dhaka remains at Great Zimbabwe the failure patterns on the floors are similar to those found on contemporary vernacular buildings except that the ravages of time make them appear worse. In areas where timber posts have been dug into the floor, undulating cracks tend to develop radially. Besides these distinct patterns, randomly distributed cracks are noticeable on many floors. These cracks provide potential areas through which weathering and erosion agents could start the process of decay. The edges of the floors also show signs of continuous decay owing to micro-erosion and abrasion. With the newly excavated remains micro-fractures and flakes are a general phenomenon. These gave a rough and undesirable appearance to the fabric of the remains. With the fired structures there are fewer signs of distress but they are weak in compression especially soon after excavation.

The cracks and patterns of failure in most cases of ruined dhaka structures seem not to exhibit significant structural movement. However, they tend to form zones of weakness, which facilitate the development of subsequent decay processes. These emanate from environmental fluctuations or loss of maintenance after abandonment. The prehistoric structures, post-collapse appearance are characterised by a random heap of dhaka blocks, deep vertical and horizontal cracks and generally loose of shape. In some cases roots of plants have penetrated the cracked and eroding structures. The top section, of walls
shows signs of weathering with most of the edges eroding away. The interior surfaces of most of these curvilinear walls show signs of serious erosion, and the exterior surfaces exhibit a peculiar flaking towards the base of the walls. The wide cracks are a cause of anxiety with respect to the stability of these ruined dhaka walls. The fragile nature of most of these remains makes their presentation problematic. At present five dhaka structures have been left exposed for visitors.

5.4. External factors

Most of the structural problems outlined above could be ascribed to design and nature of materials used during the original construction. Their importance is that it emphasises that the preservation of the site has always been a problem from the very first day of construction. However, the fact that the monument was abandoned for centuries introduces new exogenous problems associated with ruined structures all over the world. Apart from the naturally recurrent decay of materials which occurs as soon as regular maintenance ceases, the major problems of monuments in sub-Saharan Africa are the uncontrolled growth of vegetation and the demands made on the site by contemporary society. It is also these problems which have an impact on the cultural landscape.

Vegetation. At Great Zimbabwe perhaps the most serious problem affecting its preservation and presentation has been vegetation growth. In Chapter 1, it was pointed out that one of the major attractions of ruined monuments is the juxtaposing of the ruin with plants or vegetation. At Great Zimbabwe plants grow on both dry-stone and dhaka structures. To the romantic this creates a very picturesque view of the whole site. The most popular post cards with foreign tourists at Great Zimbabwe ruins are the ones with plant growth on or next to the structures. An example are the post cards that depict the Valley Enclosures in spring with the pink aloes in flower or those showing the two big trees in side the Great Enclosure (Plate 5.1 & Plate 5.2). However, sentimental attachments of the beauty of plants blinds people to the damage they can do to the integrity of the monument. The big trees grow deep roots, which can destabilise structures. The growth of aloes and plants like Lantana camara, if uncontrolled, blocks access and viewing of the monument. The problem of vegetation growth is a serious one and there are no easy solutions to it. The trees and plants cannot easily be removed. Their removal affects the traditionally held image of the monument, which the contemporary visitor has come to associate with the site’s aesthetics. Besides, the vegetation also offers some protection to archaeological remains and even dhaka structures. The high trees and low creeping cover potentially shelters some remains from the direct impact of rain and wind erosion. Removal of some trees can also upset the foundation and hence stability of ruins and trigger a total or partial collapse of a structure.

Historically vegetation has caused numerous problems for the wall at Great Zimbabwe. The devastating effects of uncontrolled vegetation growth on the stability of dry-stone walls were apparent when Great Zimbabwe was first photographed from 1890. Indeed most of the photographs taken between 1890 to 1920 show overgrowth on the site. Other sites too like Danamonde, Zinjanja, Tsindi and Ziwa were in a similar state. Karl Mauch, the German geologist and explorer who visited the site in 1871 reported the problems which vegetation growth on walls was causing:

‘Otherwise everything is rubble and in ruins and thick undergrowth, some tall trees of three diameter left their leafy roofs almost to double the height of the undamaged wall and many fast growing trees have such granite stones grown into them’.

However, once vegetation growth has been established within the structure of the wall its removal becomes a significant problem. At this point its presence is likely to have been causing distress to the structure. If vegetation is left in place then collapse of the wall may eventually occur. Dry stone walls by their nature do encourage vegetation growth in them. The voids and clay dust which accumulates creates a conducive area for plant growth. The granite blocks rough surface traps moisture and this then provides for biological growth in the form of large or high growing trees or lichens and fungi. The flexibility offered by dry-stone walls in withstanding movements and its ability to readjust
Plate 5.1. Aloes in the Valley Enclosures.

Plate 5.2. Trees in the Great Enclosure.
its stability means that trees can grow within a wall structure for a long time before collapse. By this time the wall will have been deformed and blocks moved out of position. In some cases walls are totally destroyed.

It is the high growth vegetation’s root system, which normally causes deformations. Removing the root system without causing further disturbance is unlikely to succeed. Killing the tree may cause foundation failure as the roots decay and introduce voids and new moisture regimes in the soil strata. This was evidenced at Tsindi where a tree had been allowed to grow on the dry stone wall for many years. This resulted in the development of a bulge. A decision was then made to cut the tree and poison the stump in the hope that its slow decay would allow the wall to stabilise (Plate 5.3). However, this led to the collapse of the wall after three years, which then had to be rebuilt. A geotexiles grid with an herbicide was introduced to stabilise the wall and discourage plant growth. The grids are of open mesh construction, usually comprise polypropylene or polyethylene with carbon/black ultraviolet radiation inhibitors (Plate 5.4). Thus as far as tree growth is concerned the best option is to remove it before any roots are established. Clearly the fact that trees are growing on structures is an indication of the absence of a maintenance schedule for the place. Given that most sites do not have people to look after them it becomes difficult to implement a maintenance regime which is not based on the local community participation. However, for sites like Tsindi this option is not available given that it is located in a commercial farming areas and the community that claims ownership is more than 80 km away.

Vegetation also provides fuel in the event of a veld fire and these occur very frequently at Great Zimbabwe. No proper research has yet been done on the effect of fire on the cultural property, although its prevention is perceived as central to
the management of the estate (Nehowa 1997). Apart from the destruction of trees which in turn could lead to the exposure of archaeological material to erosion, the effects of fire on the dry-stone and dhaka structures is doubtful. Veld fires are common in this area and after its abandonment, Great Zimbabwe must have witnessed several bouts of them before the establishment of the modern management system. Veld fires rarely burn at temperatures above 500 °C, and accordingly will have very minimal effect on the dry stone structures. It is however the prevention of fires and prohibition of harvesting dead wood which leads to the accumulation of wood fuel which in turn increases the chances of a veld fire. The biggest cause of veld fires in the monument is supposed to be the surrounding local communities (Nehowa 1997) The villagers normally cause these fires when they clear land for cultivation or when they collect firewood. In fact Nehowa’s report applauds the eviction of people from the nearby Morgenster farm because it reduced the occurrence of fires. Thus even for the present day management at Great Zimbabwe, the removal of the local community as far away from the monument as possible would be a welcome move to the present managers.

Human effects: Because the site is open to the public the visitors cause some of the problems. The visitors cause damage to the site for example by climbing on walls, walking over archaeological deposits and over use of certain paths and areas of the monument. Examples are the entrances to the Great Enclosure and the western enclosure of the Hill Complex. Animals such as baboons and monkeys can cause the same problems. However the Great Zimbabwe ruins are under continued pressure from the ever-increasing tourist industry. The monument has the additional problem that it is a basic tourist resource and also an area of great archaeological and research value each of which requires its own particular management techniques.

As pointed out earlier, previous archaeological and preservation practice have also affected the preservation of the monument and hence its presentation. However, the general public particularly the local community is perceived as one of the major threats to the site by management. Given what has happened at sites like Domboshava where archaeological sites have been vandalised by local communities, perhaps their fears are not unfounded (see Pwiti & Mvenge 1996). The threats are in the form of poaching, cattle grazing, cutting down of trees for domestic use and the conducting of rituals on monument. The local communities have been blamed for the perennial devastating veld fires

Plate 5.4. Geotextile grids for stabilization of walls.
on the designated monument. Although not a major threat to the fabric of the monument, the local community frequent requests to conduct rituals on site are considered a nuisance by management. There is also fear that the granting of such permission would involve National Museums in what they consider ‘petty local politics’ (Matenga pers. comm.). Thus, in all preservation and presentation decisions, the local community has always been seen as a threat to the survival of the monument.

5.5. Recording and documentation

Whitty’s (1961) P, Q, R styles have always provided for a systematic recording of the aesthetic appearance of the dry-stone walls. This, together with the fact that walls abut each other and on dhaka structures, provides a chronological record of how the monument was built and developed throughout the centuries. Potentially these architectural features at Great Zimbabwe, together with excavated archaeological stratigraphy, provide a historical documentation of the site. However, preservation and heritage management practices demand a far more systematic record and documentation than just a chronological sequence. The two essential guidelines in recording and documentation are accuracy and easy access to the recorded data. A system of co-ordinates provides for such requirements at Great Zimbabwe given its size. Co-ordinates provide for easy access and accurate checks on areas of structural deformations, geometrical changes or in the case of dhaka remains where mechanical changes and deterioration of the landscape are taking place.

At Great Zimbabwe the documentation and recording system is two-fold in order to cater for preservation needs:

a) Survey to provide a co-ordinate system establishing the condition of the monument to be recorded. Such surveys on the condition of the site will provide an early warning sign to areas that may need intervention. This can also provide a record of the nature of intervention and its effectiveness in the long term. Such surveys should be done periodically.

b) A recording system that provides a monitoring component in areas identified in (a) above, and to improve the effectiveness of recent work. Besides the grid laying for the co-ordinate system which can be done by precise triangulation, terrestrial photogrammetry is perhaps the most accurate documentation system suitable for the periodic surveys. It will give the general morphology of the surface of the structures and an indication of the extent of defects. Furthermore, it also allows fixing the structures and the individual problems in a system of grid reference for easy access. Photogrammetry can also be used for the production of topographic maps and ground plans for archaeological remains. Although potentially it could be used for precise monitoring, for a site like Great Zimbabwe this could be very expensive its use should therefore be restricted to periodic surveys. However, the cost of acquiring and maintaining the photogrammetric equipment makes this form of survey far beyond the means of a developing country like Zimbabwe that will have to rely on donations for the acquisition of the technology. Besides, photogrammetry needs highly skilled technicians. Therefore, conventional survey techniques would be preferred as starting points for the periodic documentation. For the day to day monitoring of critical areas a combination of triangulation and use of strain gauges should be sufficient to detect any serious movement. A combination of basic mapping and precise recording can also be used to obtain a warning system for the dhaka structures. However, because one is dealing with largely indeterminate structures, which have capabilities of readjusting to a new equilibrium, monitoring should be repeated regularly before any action of intervention is taken. Dismantling an existing structure for the purpose of remedial action should be executed only when a scheduled plan of intervention has been established. This insures that proper recording and investigations take place. In 1994, the Finnish government, as part of its contribution to the preservation of Great Zimbabwe undertook an aerial and photogrammetric survey. This resulted in the production of a Digital Terrain Model (DTM) for the central area of the monument, thus providing a base for which future condition surveys of the monument can be
Figure 5.1. Digital Terrain Model of the landscape at Great Zimbabwe. (The contours are at five metre intervals).
made (Fig. 5.1). It will be the base line against which any changes can be measured and identified. The aerial photographs together with the terrestrial photogrammetry plates give an accurate status of the cultural landscape as it stood then.

It is important to emphasise the need for pre-intervention documentation and recording, not only to show the condition of the structures but also to give an indication of the likely problems. No practical measures of intervention should be undertaken in relation to the monument without an intimate knowledge of that property. Such knowledge can only be acquired by archaeological research recording and the surveys mentioned above. Photography is perhaps the most important and simplest visual method, which provides for a diachronic and synchronic record of the monument. Fortunately for Great Zimbabwe, an archive of photographs taken between 1890 and 1900 exists. These provide valuable information on the early condition of the monument.

5.6. Preserving sections of the monument: Case studies

In dealing with the preservation of Great Zimbabwe and related sites, the basic principles in the interventions have been governed by a strict respect for the authenticity, aesthetics, historical data and the physical integrity of the monument (Feilden 1982; Jokilehto 1985; Philipport 1972). The principles from the Venice charter, now expounded in the framework of the World Heritage UNESCO Charter 1972 have been the bases of all preservation work.

From 1986 a structural monitoring scheme was introduced at Great Zimbabwe as a means to identify and quantify areas within the dry stone walls threatened with collapse (Fig. 5.2). Monitoring of the structures at Great Zimbabwe was introduced as an integral part of an overall inspection to assess the condition of the site. Sowden (1990) has outlined the objectives of monitoring and inspections conducted on structures in providing information as a basis for management and control of structural stability. Monitoring also provides data to assist in the formulation of maintenance strategies. For the preservation of archaeological structures it provides useful data upon which an assessment can be made to see whether interventions are needed or not.

The monitoring scheme implemented on the dry stone structures at Great Zimbabwe are largely aimed at:

- Identifying areas where significant progressive movement and hence structural instability was occurring.
- Quantifying the movement and structural instability.
- Identifying causes of deterioration.
- Assessing levels and extent of required corrective intervention measures.

Several methods were tried as monitoring schemes. Old and new photographs were compared in order to identify the recent development of bulges or collapses. Some of the photographs had been taken during the 1920s, 1960s and 1980s. However, no indication of the current condition of the wall could easily be deciphered by this method. By using principles of Young’s Modulus a method using glass wires was introduced to detect in-plane movement. This involved fixing a wire across an area where movement was suspected. From the presence or absence of broken wires an evaluation could be made on the structural stability status of the wall. The method was easy to use and did not require much skill to implement. Its disadvantage was that it was not easy to compute the magnitude of the movement. However as an indicator of movement the method is effective. Problems were also encountered in the reliability of this method to measure real movement. Visitors, animals and insects could easily break the glass wire and this would register a false movement of the structure. Thus the method had to be used with caution.

In 1989 a joint project with the Universities of Zimbabwe and Loughborough was initiated (Dickens & Walker 1992). The project jointly funded by the British government and National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe aimed at providing the engineering expertise to the archaeologists at Great Zimbabwe. Its objectives inter alia were to study the behaviour of the dry-stone structures and to identify suitable methods of monitoring structural stability of the walls.
Figure 5.2. General preservation process implemented at Great Zimbabwe and related sites.
Monitoring schemes using demountable demec strain gauges and triangulation survey were introduced. Gauge points are mounted into small drilled, stainless steel discs affixed to the surface of stone blocks and readings are taken between them at regular intervals of time (Hendry 1977; Hume 1989). The discs are placed in pairs across horizontal and vertical joints in the wall, one disc on each block on either side of the joints. The demec strain gauges used at Great Zimbabwe are 200 mm long and their resolution is generally in the order of + 0.1 mm. This method gives the magnitude of the movement. Although it is more reliable than glass wires, this method is more expensive, given that the discs have to be specially made. The method only measures in-plan block movements and is not easy to interpolate particularly on dry stone walls. It cannot monitor the movements occurring in the core section of the wall. However, compared to theodolite surveying and photogrammetry, which require expensive equipment and highly trained technicians, the demec strain gauge is relatively cheap and easy to use. 43 sites were selected for monitoring using the demec strain gauges and twelve areas showed signs of significant movement (Dickens & Walker 1992). The main areas of concern were the Buttress Entrance and The Western Entrance of the Great Enclosure.

The Terrace Platform Wall

In 1986 several glass wires were randomly fixed on several sites and from the results, the Terrace Platform on the south slope of the hill was identified as in danger of collapse. This is a retaining wall and movement was believed to be due to soil pressure forcing a section of the wall to move out of position. This is a common cause of failure in most retaining walls (Jones 1979; Arya & Gupta 1983) The bulge affected the areas from the 11th course to the 18th course the top course (an area of about 370 cm in height and 480 cm in length). Thus the bulge affected the middle section of the wall. It was recommended that the wall be dismantled and rebuilt with some form of stabilisation. The process of dismantling the wall was recorded in detail. This gave a chance to examine and evaluate possible causes of the instability. To ensure an authentic reconstruction of the stone wall, the wall face was mapped and each face block colour coded. However, once the wall was dismantled no quick solution could be found on how to deal with it and for several years the wall could not be restored. At this stage not much knowledge was available on the mechanisms of deterioration and collapse of these dry stone walls. The major reason was lack of trained and experienced conservators familiar with dry stone monuments. The period was however, used to evaluate possible intervention methods and how they would facilitate preservation principles.

Initial restoration started with the Terrace Platform, which was a retaining wall and presented fewer complications. This gave the stone masons time to gain confidence in dealing with large areas of restoration. Because the wall had been dismantled in 1987 it had to be cleaned and care was taken to arrange the core material. With the face stones each block of stone was returned to its previous position as worked out from the archival records. The relationship and hence the context of the blocks was deduced from the colour coded numbers which record the course number and block number. Thus after eliminating the bulge and possibly some of the causes of instability, the restored wall still maintained the contextual relationships and the method ensured that no new material was introduced. Movement was registered during the first year due to the fact when the wall had to settle. Subsequent readings showed that the wall has now stabilised.

The Buttress Entrance

The Buttress Entrance located on the Hill Complex exhibited movements that needed immediate attention. This is a free standing wall with approximately 28 courses (approximately 786 cm) on the outer face and 17 courses (approximately 530 cm), it is about 200 cm thick at the top and 456 cm at the bottom. The wall showed signs of stress as evidenced by a bulge. This was most likely due to core block disturbance and the fact that the foundation of the Buttress Entrance was a granite outcrop with a steep slope.
The slope had a cross section showing a lower steep slope of 1:1 (45%) and an upper slope of 1:2 (26%). The data collected revealed evidence of increased movement during the rainy season due to pressures from the core material of the wall. These movements were exacerbated by tourist movement around the entrance. From the strain gauge readings it was apparent that the Buttress was structurally unstable and intervention was required to redress the situation.

Given the magnitude of movement, it was decided that the Buttress Entrance be dismantled and restored. The civil engineers from Loughborough recommended three possible options for a safe rehabilitation of the Buttress Entrance. They dismissed the rebuilding of the wall using the same techniques as the original builders because the safety factor against sliding was estimated to be approximately 1.4, whereas engineering designs required a minimum safety factor of 1.75 (Dickens & Walker 1992).

The alternatives were:

A) Horizontal steps: In view of the tendency of the wall to slide on the granite outcrop, a stepped horizontal foundation would have to be provided by cutting back the granite bedrock. In order to have the horizontal step, the granite would have to be cut back (Fig. 5.3). It was estimated that seven steps would need to be cut and the total length of vertical cut would be 1400 cm and 20 cm deep. About 1.5 tonnes of granite would be removed. The cutting of granite would be a radical intervention and would not be reversible. Historical information on the technical details of how the wall was founded would be lost. The height of the wall and inevitably the shape of the wall would change. This compromises authenticity the sacred cow of preservation.

B) Concrete steps: The alternative to cutting granite would be to provide stability by constructing steps using concrete. The concrete would have to be anchored to the granite using stainless steel dowels to prevent sliding. The concrete mix would have to be cement rich to ensure good durability. Approximately 1.4 m$^3$ of concrete, 2.76 m$^2$ of vertical formwork and 7 m$^2$ of reinforcement mesh would be required (Fig. 5.4). The introduction of concrete, whilst theoretically reversible did not guarantee stability in the long term. Besides, from a cultural point of view it would disfigure the wall and the local community would find this solution unacceptable. Given the cultural significance of this site to Zimbabwe and the local community, concrete could not be considered of as a viable option. Besides, this would mean introducing new material. The local community had always made it known. However, their voice was usually ignored for it was seen
as retrogressive and unproven myths.

C) Doweling blocks: A number of base blocks could be fixed to the granite using small diameter dowels. The doweled blocks would need to be bedded on cement mortar and the remainder placed on dhaka wedges.

The preservation team on site at Great Zimbabwe was to implement the outlined solutions. It was made clear that from an engineering point of view solution (A) of cutting the granite slope would be preferred. Apart from the suggestions to strengthen the foundation of the Buttress Entrance, the engineers suggested the use of geogrid to strengthen the wall structure. The geogrid would be laid horizontally at several courses and this would reduce the movement of individual blocks. All these solutions would eliminate or at least minimise the need to constantly maintain and repair the structures. Apart from introducing new material, Doweling individual blocks could not guarantee structural stability.

Against the background of the preservation principles the options given by the engineers were then evaluated. All three options presented serious problems. Apart from the above factors, it was also felt that the necessary experience in introducing these radical interventions was not available, at least at Great Zimbabwe. Preference would have been to try these methods first in the Experimental Yard. In addition the lack of experience and of detailed specifications on how the geogrid was to be used meant that its introduction would have been on an experimental basis. The long term allowable strength of the geogrid was unknown. However, it is known that its strength could be influenced by the construction, the sustained-load (creep) and chemical and biological polymer degradation.

During the mid 1980s a number of short walls had collapsed and had been restored by the traditional stone mason. A method of recording the structures by photographs and planning frames had been introduced. Whenever a wall collapsed, any available old photographs would be retrieved and assessed to evaluate how much of the original stone remained and whether there was sufficient historical evidence for a restoration by the stone mason. In the case of those walls in danger of collapsing the blocks would be colour coded, photographed and mapped. Before the dismantling of the Terrace Platform and the Buttress Entrance this procedure of recording had been followed. During the dismantling further documentation was taken to ensure accuracy in accordance with archaeological and preservation ethics. Given the fact that the traditional stone masons had in the past only dealt with smaller structures, there was some hesitation in trying them on this But-
tress Entrance. However, since none of the recommended options was consistent with preservation principles it was decided that the walls be restored using the original method of construction and with no introduction of new material. Archival records were also consulted.

With the Buttress Entrance wall the same procedure was followed. The task of reconstruction was made relatively easier by the fact that the wall had not yet collapsed and documentation had been carefully completed. However, the foundation presented practical problems since it was on sloping granite bedrock. During the process of dismantling it had been noted that clay (dhaka) had been used to wedge the foundation blocks into position. The same process was followed. Whilst the introduction of clay could potentially lead to problems in future, it played an important role in ensuring stability of the wall during the restoration. The restoration programme took three months. The wall has been monitored for more than two years using strain gauges. The results indicate that movements occurred during the first year but it now appears that the wall has stabilised. The movement might also be seasonal. However, no serious movement has been recorded on these sections.

The Western Entrance

The Great Enclosure has three entrances and all of them were restored inaccurately before 1915 by S. Claire Wallace as open entrances. From the observations made by Carl Mauch (Burke 1969) and by Bent (1892) the main entrances to the Great Enclosure and the Hill Complex were lintelled. The lintels were either of wood or stone. There is clear evidence that at least two of the Great Enclosure entrances had wooden lintels. From the monitoring program the Western Entrance of the Great Enclosure had shown continuous movement which had resulted in a bulge. The engineers from Loughborough University advised that the wall would eventually collapse given the continuous movement. A decision to correct this problem was taken. However the dilemma was whether to restore it to the pre-Wallace restoration or to the open entrance statues. It has to be considered that the restorations just like the excavations are part of the historio-
The idea of remaining faithful to the methods of the original builders ensures that the restored area is as authentic as possible. It limits the introduction of new materials. The method also ensures that violation of preservation principles as laid down by the various international statutes is minimised. It is important to note that most radical interventions require expensive equipment and a high level of technical expertise to implement. Most organisations which manage archaeological sites cannot afford such solutions.

5.7. Preservation process

Choosing the appropriate intervention option has to follow preservation principles. Before any intervention, the historical evidence should be fully recorded and should not be destroyed, falsified or removed. This implies that intervention be the minimum necessary and should be governed by unswerving respect for the aesthetic, historical and physical integrity of the structure or site (Feilden 1982; Price 1990). The intervention should also be reversible if technically possible. This may be difficult and in many cases it has been found to be impossible to achieve. Many physical interventions might be reversible in theory but in practice difficult to carry out. Related to the idea of reversibility is the fact that any intervention should not prejudice any future work. It should be possible for future researchers to have access to all the evidence incorporated in the structures. It is also important that we allow the maximum amount of existing material to be retained whenever possible. These principles ensure that we do not build a new design to replace the original. After all people want to see the original (Price 1990; Molina-Montes 1982).

However, although the principles of conservation may be universal, intervention at each ruined structure or site depends on the local circumstances. The solution must arise out of the ethos and social environment of the particular culture we are seeking to preserve. The method and the degree of intervention depend on the values we assign to the site. We have to consider the significant cultural, archaeological and any other values of the site. In the case of Great Zimbabwe and related monuments, the significance of the dry stone architecture is central. Whilst all aspects of the site have to be considered as a whole in order to appreciate the historical significance of the site. It cannot be denied that it is the fact that this African Farming community had the ability to build such monumental architecture using stones without mortar that makes it unique. The concept of dry-stonewalling is in many ways synonymous with the Great Zimbabwe site. This should have a bearing in deciding the method and degree of intervention. We should assess whether the method of intervention could possibly violate the significance of the site (Sullivan 1985; Crosby 1984). It is assumed that when conserving Great Zimbabwe type sites the idea is to preserve the concept of a prehistoric society's historical and architectural achievements. This should not however, be confused with advocating a policy of "conserve as found" which can inhibit appropriate intervention to the extent of losing the site. Apart from the conservation principles, the attitude and views of the local community must be respected. Great Zimbabwe Monument plays an important function in the cultural and socio-economic life of the local people. For example, during the 1990–91 drought years the monument became a centre of religious activities associated with praying for rain. Some even blamed the conservation programmes being carried out on site as the reason for the drought. They particularly blamed...
5.8. Discussion

It appears that the preservation of Great Zimbabwe has been based on reverence to the preservation principles as espoused by the World Heritage Convention (1972) and the Venice (1964) Charter. Whilst this is a positive sign, the examples in this chapter clearly indicate that this can only be described as 'technofixes'. They concentrate on one aspect of the heritage. The concentration on aspects like stone walls fails to realise that this monument is much more than dry stone structures. It is also situated in a landscape, which gives it a character and a sense of the place. This limits the perception and presentation of the heritage to its monumental aspects like the dry-stone architecture. The adherence to the catholicity of the preservation movement as espoused by the Venice charter also guarantees that the local community cannot contribute meaningfully to the preservation or presentation of its heritage. Given the role Great Zimbabwe played as a rallying point for African Nationalism, the exclusion of local community participation is surprising. This also indicates a lack of significance value assessment in the preservation of this monument. It appears the people who determine the value of this site are the tourists and UNESCO through its charters. This position is hardly surprising given the tone of the Master Plan for Resource development (Collett 1992) and The Strategic Plan (1998) emphasis on income generation. National Museums and Monuments commissioned both these documents.

The preservation policy, which in many ways has emphasised minimum intervention, has been criticised by the local communities who have expressed disquiet at the restoration projects. They feel that the spirits already protect the monument and the perceived problems are due to a lack of understanding of how the monument should be protected (Ucko 1994; Pwiti 1996). Even the visitors, who are the target of National Museums, seem opposed to radical interventions on the fabric of the monument. Most feel that restoration debases the cultural value of the monument. However, the expressed disquiet with the way the monument is being managed seems to emanate from a feeling of being ignored and not consulted in what they see as a major cultural phenomena in their area. The expression of these feelings is also a major indication that they do care about the archaeological heritage and realise that National Museums as a government agent have a role to play. The local council at Nemanwa Growth Point expresses ignorance on a number of projects going on at the monument and generally feels that the National Museums did not consider that the monument was in their area of jurisdiction. They felt that National Museums depends on its legal status and hence they can afford to ignore the local environment. What appears to matter to the heritage organisation is the feels of the tourist and international organisations such as ICOMOS and WHC.
6. REDEFINING THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter it was demonstrated that the concentration on architectural and archaeological features at the core of the site of Great Zimbabwe does not clearly define the important aspects of this cultural heritage. It was also pointed out that the local community is uneasy with some of the solutions. The suggested solutions although conforming to international standards as outlined in UNESCO charters can be described as ‘technofixes’ that show little understanding of the real complexities underlying the dynamics of cultural landscapes. The principles of preservation as espoused by ICOMOS and ICCROM do not take into consideration the socio-cultural matrix in which the monument is situated. These solutions usually treat the monument as a museum object to be curated and separated from the larger cultural environmental context. In order to begin addressing this fundamental aspect, this chapter discusses the cultural landscape on which the site is situated and how this has developed. The concern here is not only to offer a diachronic synthesis, but also to show that at any given moment the immediate landscape would have been of cultural importance. The primary objective of this part of the research was to generate an understanding of the evolutionary dynamics that have shaped and continue to structure the social-cultural landscape on which Great Zimbabwe is located.

The approach followed here starts from a need to understand the dynamics and historical development of the present-day cultural landscape in order to arrive at its present cultural significance rather than to understand better the detailed functions and appearance of landscapes in the past. The objective is to demonstrate that at any given time the cultural landscape is not static. This implies that the definition of Great Zimbabwe as a cultural place is always changing. The perceptions too are ever changing given both cultural and political influences. The approach also aims at giving a better understanding of what the cultural landscape is. This then leads to the development of methods of understanding the current landscape in archaeological terms and of assessing its cultural values in order to guide the decisions in the management of the cultural property and its landscape. Documenting and understanding cultural landscapes is important for preservation and presentation of cultural property because without it, the cultural significance remains incomplete.

Landscape research varies widely from the systematic/scientific environmental reconstruction approaches of Rossignol and Wandsnider (1992), to historical ecological approaches which look at the environment as cumulative human modification effects (Balee 1998; Crumley 1994; Whitehead 1998), to the phenomenological perspectives of Tilley (1994) and Bender (1992). The latter also explores the cultural meanings...
associated with a landscape and the metaphors and symbolism through which meanings are expressed. In this chapter the landscape is seen as an arena of political discourse, not as something already understood but socially constructed and hence subject to continuous reinterpretation (e.g. Hewison 1987; Bender 1993; McGlade 1999).

In terms of definition, cultural landscapes are geographic areas that include both cultural and natural resources and are associated with historic developments, events, and activities or exhibit cultural values. Culture exists in people's minds, not on the ground. However, the activities, which shape the landscape maybe culturally constructed (Mulk & Bayliss-Smith 1999). In practical terms cultural landscapes consist of topography; vegetation, structures and settlements. Tilley (1994) suggests five classifications of space through which identities of place are constructed. somatic, perceptual, existential, architectural and cognitive space. Heritage management always engages with all forms of these interwoven spaces. In most cases cultural landscapes subsume three vital concepts for heritage management.

- Nature as fundamental heritage in its own right.
- Environment as the setting of human actions.
- Sense of place as awareness of local differences and cultural links with specific phenomenon on the landscape. These could be tangible or intangible.

All this leads to awareness of natural and cultural complexity and the stewardship needs of the landscape. This landscape provides an important dimension for understanding and experiencing the larger contexts - landscapes are created by people. Thus landscape can be viewed as part of the cosmology of a people. In most African societies there is no distinction between nature and creator and no sharp separation between humanity and nature. The trees, mountains, rocks, forests and animals are treated as part of human life. They too are supposed to have a soul. Thus the landscape provides for the interplay of the human and natural species in a shared environment. For example in Ghana the sacred groves of Tali which covers 25 square kilometres of dense forests, provide a catchment area that protects drinking sources and provide herbs for medicinal purposes. These groves and forests are protected through a system of taboos and customs provided by the custodianship of five villages. Thus it becomes difficult to separate nature from culture (Amoaka-Atta 1995). The landscape is also a communal resource. It should be pointed out that the focus of this thesis on cultural resources is in a sense artificial, as a discussion of this resource is intricately intertwined with the use and control of other resources such as water, soil, forests and grasslands.

The monuments on the landscape can also be seen as a cultural mnemonics-monumentally connected with local communities and organizations. Monuments can also be seen as permanent markers on the landscape interpreted and dealt with in many different ways after they were built in prehistory. This relationship between landscapes, monuments and cultures occurs continuously and cannot be seen as frozen at a particular moment. This in many ways challenges the whole basis of authenticity in setting as expounded by the World Heritage Convention (1972).

The cultural landscape created at Great Zimbabwe includes both intentional and unintentional environmental modifications. Intentional changes include the erection of the monument and the internal management regulations which were put in place from 1902 through the various legislation. The unintentional include the various effects of continued farming activities and the effects of land appropriation and redistribution. The use of parts of the monument as cattle pens at the turn of the century, the construction of tourist facilities, the setting up of a golf course or the construction of a water reservoir are all intentional events, which have left their mark on the cultural landscape. It has to be pointed out that the cultural landscape around Great Zimbabwe has evidence of human occupation for all the major archaeological periods extending from hunting and gathering communities of several millennia BC to the farming communities of recent historical times. The focus on the monument does not mean that other earlier or later landscapes are unimportant.
6.2. Data collection

The recording and classification of archaeological sites in the past has concentrated on discrete sites usually identified by a six-figure grid reference which refers to a map to an area approximately 100 by 100 meters. This translates to a dot in real terms with a defined location but with no defined boundary. These dots have been viewed as representing past settlement patterns. In this research, although these dots are used they represent nodes of activity areas rather than the physical place. The attributes associated with the location coordinates are viewed as the data set, which we can use to infer meaning for the occupied place. The attributes include site type, finds, site size and geographic setting. They also give us the sense of the place and its relationship with the immediate environment. The main data source for studying the cultural landscape before 1800 is the location records from the survey conducted in 1996-7 and this is complemented by records from the Archaeological Survey site database located in Harare. The main aim of the survey was to establish the settlement patterns and obtain a greater understanding of the landscape area around the prehistoric urban centre at Great Zimbabwe. The vegetation on the granite formation that characterizes the landscape comprises largely of *Brachystegia*, *Apocynaceae* spp and *Acacia* spp. The soils are mainly sandy with patchy areas of reddish clay areas. The survey was carried out by pedestrian field walking. Since the survey was conducted during winter, visibility on the ground surface was optimum. Although local people were at times interviewed in order to locate sites, this proved to be time consuming and cumbersome. The information given was mainly biased towards recent sites and walled places. They were oblivious to any other sites including conspicuous panels of Rock Art.

The area for this study was the 10 km radius around the present day core area as defined by the fenced boundary (Plate 6.1). The area was chosen as a sample to give insight into the dynamics that might have a bearing on the preservation and presentation of the monument and its context. Whilst it is clear that the catchment area of Great Zimbabwe in prehistoric times goes beyond this, the objective here was to study the immediate impact on the management of the monument. As pointed out by Sinclair (1987) the information from the database from Archaeological Survey has limitations in terms of accuracy and sample bias. This is particularly so when trying to evaluate settlement size and socio-economic relationships among sites in the same locality. However we can interpolate roughly the level of occupation and hence setting on the landscape. Furthermore although on the map these places appear as dots, they represent spheres of interactions and therefore are part of a dynamic cultural landscape. Given the ability to relatively date the places, this gives us a way of deciphering the cultural landscape through time.

6.3. The cultural landscape before the 19th century

Figure 6.1 shows that the area around Great Zimbabwe was sparsely populated during the Stone Age. Hunter-gatherers seem to have had a limited impact on the cultural landscape in terms of physical alteration and lasting impression. Recent studies on hunter-gatherers have shown the strong ideological links these communities had with their natural environment and landscape (Jolly 1996; Ouzman & Wadley 1997; Kinahan 1999). Thus the absence of visible physical impacts on the landscape does not necessarily mean that there were not strong relationships between humans and nature. Very often we seem to think that human effects on the landscape are always negative and this should be reflected by some scars on the natural environment.

The situation seems to have altered with the arrival of Early Farming Communities. Although such activities as iron smelting and subsistence farming might have played a role in altering certain aspects of the landscape, this appears to have been limited. The Early Farming Communities in the area seem to have favoured riverine areas and the localized climate at Great Zimbabwe itself does not appear to have attracted any significant attention. Very few sites were located on hills (Fig. 6.2).

The situation appears to have changed with the appearance of the Later Farming Communities who seemed to favour hilltops. During the
Plate 6.1. The cultural landscape and research area in November 1999 (Land sat 7).
same period the monumental architecture at Great Zimbabwe began to be constructed. At one level it seems as if the monumental structures were built to imitate the natural distinctive features on the landscape like granite boulders. Some of the boulders were even incorporated into some of the stone enclosures thus forming a symbiotic relationship between natural and cultural creations. Nature was incorporated into newer structures as they provided a source of social power in the form of monumental architecture. Not only did the stone structures resemble the natural granite boulders they were obviously constructed out of raw material that could be obtained from outcrops of this kind. The granite boulders, outcrops and shelters would have played a crucial role in human perceptions of the world. The connection of the rock boulders and shelters with rainmaking and Mwari belief system is well established (Beach 1982; Ranger 1999). It is no coincidence that the other most important religious place to the Shona, the Matopo (Matonjeni) landscape is characterized by natural granite boulders, outcrops, caves and shelters.

The effects of the resultant settlement and associated landscape modification were largely owing to the heavy population concentration. Another sign of incremental population growth is the development of building platforms on the slopes of the hill (Fig. 6.3). Apart from the central areas of Great Zimbabwe, evidence of settlement has been found on a number of small hills that surround the designated monument. This evidence is in the form of exposed walls, the remains of dhaka walls, ceramics and middens. This evidence is important because it confirms Garlake’s (1973) and Sinclair’s (1987) suggestions that the stone walling must be viewed merely as one component of a building technology, a component for which most evidence happens to have survived. Very little archaeological work has been done on most of these peripheral settlements. However, the determination of the internal socio-political and temporal relationships of the component parts of Great Zimbabwe is as important as finding the relationships between this complex and the smaller walled and unwalled sites in the immediate vicinity. By looking beyond the walls we begin to have a clearer definition of what the monument is about and how we can interpret and present the cultural landscape.

The spatial layout of Great Zimbabwe and other Madzimbabwe tradition sites has been the subject of considerable discussions (Sinclair 1987; Mahachi 1991; Huffman 1997). Sinclair (1984) and Garlake (1978) have alluded to the possibility of transhumance at Great Zimbabwe extending the catchment area to more than 40 km. Cattle grazing played a major part in determining relationships with the natural environment. Most archaeologists (see Garlake 1973; Mahachi 1991; Chipunza 1994) seem to agree that the building was not planned and represents a series of events rather than a single one. However, whether it was intentional or unintentional, the construction of the monumental architecture and the associated settlement appears to have had a tremendous impact on the landscape development from henceforth. The effects on the surrounding landscape which might result in the modification of the area due to agriculture, cutting and burning of wood for domestic and metallurgical purposes is debatable. Metallurgy is well attested with reports of iron smelting and gold working (Hall 1905; Caton-Thompson 1931; Ndoro 1994). The excavation of dhaka for building however, did leave physical impressions in the form of dug out pits. The relative absence of vegetation in some parts of Great Zimbabwe today might be explained through the large concentration of population. However, as indicated below this fails to explain why the enclosures were overgrown by the 1900s, unless there was a deliberate policy to remove vegetation and make sure that it does not grow outside the enclosures. If we assume that the core area was effectively occupied for at least 200 years, the vegetation would have recovered over the 400 years after occupation. This seems to have happened with the areas inside the enclosures.

It has been indicated from the archaeological research conducted so far that large population movements possibly accompanied the decline of Great Zimbabwe (Garlake 1973; Beach 1980). This is also supported by existing oral traditions (Abraham 1966, Robinson 1966). The reasons
Figure 6.1. Distribution of Stone Age sites in the study area.
Figure 6.2. Distribution of Early Farming Communities (c. 200-900) in the study area.
for the decline of Great Zimbabwe have been partly explained in terms of ecological problems. This explanation is virtually indisputable. The argument is that the local environment collapsed because of over-exploitation in every essential aspect of subsistence agriculture. It just failed to cope with the concentration of people. However, if the archaeological sites from this period are reliable indicators of occupation it appears the area continued to attract large-scale populations (Fig. 6.4). The settlements appear to have been smaller but right up to the 1800s large concentrations seem to have been the norm around Great Zimbabwe. Once the monumental structures were constructed, it appears the area become a major attraction of settlements. Although the favourable climatic conditions were also an important factor, the communities in this area were not oblivious to the monumental structures around them. The fact that they did not destroy them or reuse the stones means that they respected them as part of their cultural landscape.

6.4. The cultural landscape after the 19th century

Apart from the archaeological survey data, the information on the situation after 1800 is complemented by oral interviews and also by published reports by same European travellers. These sources clearly document a vibrant and dynamic but contested landscape.

From the archaeological survey data for the period after 1800 (generally referred to as Refuge but hereafter as Terminal Zimbabwe), the area around Great Zimbabwe was again densely populated (Fig. 6.5 & Fig. 6.6). Mauch and Bent also corroborate this high population density during their first visit to the area. Carl Mauch mentions that several petty chiefs whose settlements were often built near or on top of precipitous kopjes generally occupied the Lake Mutirikwe area. He wrote that chief Matewere’s village near Mushagashi River consisted of 30 to 40 houses:

'built around a large boulder on the Southern side of a considerable granite massif of about 120 feet in height'
Figure 6.4. Distribution of Later Farming Communities (c. 900–1700 AD) in the study area.
Figure 6.5. Distribution of sites during the Terminal Zimbabwe phase in the study area.
Figure 6.6. Distribution of historical places around Great Zimbabwe (post 1800).
Bent (1892, p. 31) wrote:

‘All the people and tribes around Zimbabwe... and this is the most populous part of the whole country... call themselves by one name... ‘.

Oral and published data suggest that 19th century settlements were generally large and occupied hilltop locations and that a lot of farming was going on in this area (Palmer 1977; Beach 1977; Bhila 1982). Collett’s excavations at Goose Bay site also confirm the location and size of the Terminal Zimbabwe phase settlements (Mahachi 1991).

There is both oral and documental evidence to the effect that the local communities in these areas were subject to Ndebele raids of the nineteenth century. The settlement location during the Terminal Zimbabwe period was to a large extent determined by these. However, we have no direct evidence that the area around Great Zimbabwe itself was raided. Besides the fear of raids it appears that settlements were generally located on hilltops and were usually fortified with rough walling. From the oral traditions we also get the impression that a number of conflicts seem to have taken place around or at Great Zimbabwe. According to Mteuwa (1976), during the later part of the 1800s Mugabe drove away the Nemanwa people from the area and occupied the hill at Great Zimbabwe. This is corroborated by Mauch’s accounts (Burke 1969). The Nemanwa clan according to Mteuwa (1976) is known to have broken away from the old Mutoko-Budya Shumba Nyamuziwa dynasty sometime in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries. From the Mutoko area they moved southwards and finally settled at Great Zimbabwe. They did not occupy it for long as they were driven away by the Duma under Mugabe who occupied the area until the BSA Company drove them away in 1902. According to traditions collected by Robinson (1966), Mugabe had left the Save area on hearing that the Rozwi had been driven away by the Nemanwa people. There is however very little evidence of the Rozwi having occupied the area (Beach 1980). These conflicts that were primarily over the occupation of land near or at Great Zimbabwe were witnessed by Bent (1892), Willoughby (1893) and by Posselt in 1898. Thus from this it appears that the landscape at Great Zimbabwe was a contested one with the victor occupying the monument and hence controlling access. Mauch again confirms that Mugabe’s relative Haruzivishe had become the high priest of the monument even though the group had arrived in the area fairly late. During the late 1800s it appears access to the monument was not strictly limited. Bent witnessed on several occasions that cattle were grazing within the monument and that people were being buried within the monument itself particularly on the hill. Chief Mugabe’s brother even lived on the hill at Great Zimbabwe but not in the stone enclosures.

However the annexation of Great Zimbabwe by the BSA Company and its subsequent imposition of the 1902 Ordinance, changed the way people interacted with the place. The introduction of systematic management led to changes in the cultural landscape. With legislation and property law, cultural sites become government property. As far back as 1909 recommendations by Masey (1911) advocated the fencing of the Great Zimbabwe estate to prevent cattle grazing and fires caused by local communities. Thus the community was not only denied access to the cultural heritage site but also to the natural resources within the monument. This led to the alteration of the cultural landscape and the creation of mistrust between the local community and the heritage agency. Although government regimes have changed, the mistrust has continued to the present.

Following the establishment of the company rule, the collection of tax from Africans, called the Hut Tax was imposed from 1893. Each house in a settlement cost the household head 10 shillings. This and other related developments clearly had direct implications on the local settlement patterns and altered the cultural landscape. The traditional settlement arrangement in the village changed from the 1920’s when it was rearranged into lines of houses for what was thought to be better management of the veld. With the 1931 Land Apportionment Act, the 720 hectares at Great Zimbabwe were declared a National Park and the areas immediately to the north and southeast were designated European land. The local community also lost land to the Dutch Reformed
Church, which had grabbed the land adjacent to the monument. This led to mass movement of populations to other areas. The mass movement also continued in 1961 when the Kyle Dam was built and the Kyle Game Park was designated. More than three-quarters of the land that originally was being contested by Mugabe, Charumbira and Nemanwa people had been lost to the government by 1970. Areas around the monument become private property. Above all, they had lost all access and control of Great Zimbabwe.

6.5. Vegetation

A major component of any cultural landscape is the vegetation, which plays an important part in the overall preservation and presentation of any monument. Some trees in Shona tradition have special roles as intermediaries with the divine. Some forests are considered the home of the spirits and become sacred. The importance of trees is especially interesting in African mythology, either as a single tree or as a species, each with special attributes or more broadly as sacred woods or forests. The relationship between nature and culture is also important. Shona resource management finds natural expression in environmental knowledge, technical and ritual practices. Resource management is embedded in the belief systems which have in turn contributed to the conservation, sustainable use of both cultural and natural resources. Usually shrines represent a quintessential natural source of culture; the two are inseparable, so that human society has no meaning without the rocks, the pools, the caves and the trees and they in turn are given meaning only by the residence among them human beings (Ranger 1999). In the area around Great Zimbabwe the Nemanwa, Charumbira and Mugabe people do have trees, which are considered important in communicating with the ancestors. Some of these areas are within the presently designated monument. No sacred forests exist for any of the groups but individual trees or species seem to be significant. For example *Parinari curatelifolia* (Muhacha). Some of the trees were indicated to the writer. Although trees could be used for such purposes outside the monument it was clear that ceremonies or rituals held within the monument were regarded as far more important and desirable. However given the blanket prohibition of such activities they had to look for other sites to enable them to communicate with their ancestors.

During this project a limited study of the vegetation growing in the Great Zimbabwe estate were identified and their effects on the preservation of the site were evaluated in Chapter 5. Here the net effect on the management of vegetation on the site will be re-examined in the context of the development of the cultural landscape. The research into the vegetation in part was aimed at assessing the changes that have taken place on the monument in the last 100 years. It was also felt that vegetation more than anything else would indicate lasting effects on the landscape. Thus the intention was to study the presence or absence of certain species.

Historically, vegetation has been seen as a major problem for the stone structures from both esthetical and conservation points of view. The early travellers who visited the place commented on the vegetation and this also marked the beginning of vegetation clearance. The creation of the golf course in 1960 and the setting up of visitor facilities led to the clearing of many areas in the core area of the monument. The clearing of vegetation on the site was one of R. N. Halls principle activities. Subsequent curators who followed him also continued this practice.

Carl Mauch complained that the dense vegetation hampered his work on site:

‘However, the ruined walls were hidden to such an extent by trees, thorns, nettles, creepers, shrubs, grass and dry branches, that I had to do the sketch without accurate measurements’.

From his writing we can identify the major species of trees present on site (Table 6.1).

This can be compared with Bent’s a few years later who add the following (Table 6.2).

We however, have to bear in mind that these people were not interested in the vegetation and in most cases were not able to identify some of the species present. In 1997 when the present investigations were done the following tree species were identified (Table 6.3).
Table 6.1. Identification of major species of trees in Great Zimbabwe after Carl Mauch's writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Shona Name</th>
<th>Ndebele Name</th>
<th>Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Afzelia quanzensis</em></td>
<td>Mukamba</td>
<td>Umkamba</td>
<td>Wood carving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Albizia arianthifolia</em></td>
<td>Mucherenje</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Artabotrys hancockianus</em></td>
<td>Mudavashoko</td>
<td>Umthabilila</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Brachystegia glaucescens</em></td>
<td>Muunze</td>
<td>Umbuze</td>
<td>General purpose wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Brachystegia spiciformis</em></td>
<td>Musasa</td>
<td>Igonde</td>
<td>General purpose wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Canna indica</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Grewia sp.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Maerua angolensis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ibiswa, Umfusamvu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Markhamia acuminata</em></td>
<td>Mugopa, Mudyanhara</td>
<td>Umpetakwale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rothmannia fischeri</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2. T. Bent’s identification (adding to the species in Table 6.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Shona Name</th>
<th>Ndebele Name</th>
<th>Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Alsophia capensis</em></td>
<td>Mukonde</td>
<td>Umhlonhlo</td>
<td>Medicinal purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Euphorbia sp.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Protea repens</em></td>
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Table 6.3. Results of inventory of tree species in Great Zimbabwe 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Shona Name</th>
<th>Ndebele Name</th>
<th>Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Acacia karoo</em></td>
<td>Mubayamhodoro</td>
<td>Isinga</td>
<td>Medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Albizia amara</em></td>
<td>Muora</td>
<td>Umbola</td>
<td>Wasting soap &amp; medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Albizia gummifera</em></td>
<td>Munjerenge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Aloe chabaudii</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Aloe excelsa</em></td>
<td>Gavakava, Ruvati</td>
<td>Inhlaba</td>
<td>Medicinal (treatment of woods)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Annona senegalensis</em></td>
<td>Muoro</td>
<td>Ibubesi</td>
<td>Medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Antidesma venosum</em></td>
<td>Mushambarathwawa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Berchemia discolor</em></td>
<td>Munyi</td>
<td>Umnyiyi</td>
<td>Edible fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Brachylaena roundata</em></td>
<td>Mukapamabwe</td>
<td>Umpahlia, Umngehe</td>
<td>General purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Celtis africana</em></td>
<td>Murina, Mugara</td>
<td>Umdhlautu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Delsperma mahoni</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Diospyros mespiliformis</em></td>
<td>Mushuma</td>
<td>Umdlawuzo</td>
<td>Edible fruits &amp; timber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dovyalis caffra</em></td>
<td>Tsririoto</td>
<td>Umgokolo</td>
<td>Edible fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Erythrina abyssinica</em></td>
<td>Mutti</td>
<td>Umgqogqogo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Name</td>
<td>Shona Name</td>
<td>Ndebele Name</td>
<td>Uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ficus burkei</td>
<td>Mutsamvi</td>
<td>Intenjane</td>
<td>Edible fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ficus capensis</td>
<td>Mukayu</td>
<td>Umkhxiwa</td>
<td>Edible fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flacourtia indica</td>
<td>Mududwe</td>
<td>Umhunduluka</td>
<td>Edible fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardenia jovis-tonantis</td>
<td>Mutara</td>
<td>Umvalasangwana</td>
<td>Carving ornaments &amp; medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lannea edulis</td>
<td>Mustambatsi</td>
<td>Intakubomvu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lannea discolor</td>
<td>Mushamba</td>
<td>Isigangatsha</td>
<td>General purpose timber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lantana camara</td>
<td>Mbarapati</td>
<td>Ubuhobi besikhiwa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maytenus undata</td>
<td></td>
<td>Iqayi emhlope</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meteropyxis dehniae</td>
<td>Muchechete</td>
<td>Umbumbulu</td>
<td>Edible fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimusops zeyheri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemesis zimbabweres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obertia tenax</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ozoroa reticulata</td>
<td>Mugaragunguwo</td>
<td>Isafice</td>
<td>Fuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parinari curatellifolia</td>
<td>Muhacha</td>
<td>Umkhuna</td>
<td>Edible fruits, communication with the spirit world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pericopsis angolensis</td>
<td>Muvanga</td>
<td>Umbanga</td>
<td>General purpose timber &amp; medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilostigma thonningii</td>
<td>Musckesa</td>
<td>Ihabahaba</td>
<td>Pods eaten and roots used for medicinal purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Podrana brycei</td>
<td>Gwebwa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polypodium polypodiodes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pomheya rosea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sclerocarya caffra</td>
<td>Mapfura</td>
<td>Umganu</td>
<td>Fruits (made into intoxicating drink)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solanecia marnii</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strychnos coccoideoides</td>
<td>Mutamba</td>
<td>Umkhemethswane</td>
<td>Fruit &amp; medicinal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syzygium cordatum</td>
<td>Mukute</td>
<td>Umdoni</td>
<td>Fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trema guineensis</td>
<td>Mufefeti</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gun powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uapaca Kirkiana</td>
<td>Muzhanje</td>
<td>Umhobohobo</td>
<td>Fruit/Charcoal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vangueria infausta</td>
<td>Munzvirwa</td>
<td>Umthofu</td>
<td>Fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernonina myriantha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yetex payos</td>
<td>Mutsuhvu</td>
<td>Umishwankela</td>
<td>Edible fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ximenia caffra</td>
<td>Muntengeni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ziziphus mucronata</td>
<td>Muchecheni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from the indigenous vegetation, some exotic trees have also been introduced on the landscape as indicated in Chapter 5. The exotic trees disturb and also distort the esthetical appearance of the landscape. As a result of their introduction some indigenous species disappear or no longer do very well owing to competition. The main exotic species are the Jacaranda (Jacaranda mimosifolia) the Eucalyptus and the Lantana camara. These species were introduced over many years by various management regimes at the monument. Apart from introduction of exotic trees, certain indigenous species were encouraged and helped to propagate in order to create a particular scenery. For example, the Historic Monuments Commission encouraged the propagation of the Aloe excelsa. An aloe garden was even created for the visitors. This was supposed to create a romantic scenery around the monument. However, the aesthetic appearance of any monument is purely subjective Mueller (1998) suggests that the same aloes create a somewhat morbid atmosphere! Thus the resultant landscape has been altered and reshaped by the successive heritage management regimes who have been in charge of the monument. This process is continuing even today with several rehabilitation programs being introduced (see Nehowa 1997; Mueller 1998). There is no doubt that the Jacaranda and the Eucalyptus trees were deliberately introduced. The Jacarandas are mainly concentrated in areas where there are buildings, e.g. the curio shop, the museum, lodges and staff houses. It appears one of the reasons for its introduction was to camouflage the built up areas. The Eucalyptus trees are mainly concentrated in the built area as well as at the bottom of the Hill Complex particularly on the western side.

*Lantana camara* might not have been deliberately planted. The weed colonises large areas in a very short period of time. By 1980 almost 70% of the designated monument was infested by this weed. The most affected area was the slope of the Hill Complex (see Sassoon 1982). The problem with *Lantana camara* apart from destabilizing the cultural material is that it makes parts of the site inaccessible and also affects the aesthetic appearance of the monument. It gives it the impression of an uncared-for monument. Efforts to eliminate the weed using herbicides have met with only partial success. This might be owing to the methods of application.

Given the controlled management of vegetation within the estate several observations can be made. The management system pertaining to the fauna and flora in the estate has followed the national park management systems. This normally assumes that the subsistence methods of the indigenous communities ignore the ecological carrying capacity threshold of the area. This in turn destroys the natural equilibrium that had existed between people and nature. They completely forget that before colonialism nature and people co-existed in the area from time immemorial. Cordell (1993) has even suggested that the implementation of protective legislation can be characterized as a new wave of colonialism, which excludes people from their ancestral areas (Hitchcock 1990; Homewood & Rodgers 1987). There is mounting evidence that many landscapes, which have historically been considered as natural, and degrading on account of human impact are in fact depreciation because humans are excluded from the systems. This has been demonstrated on the island of New Guinea (Fairhead & Leach 1996) and in Australia (Jones 1969). Research in Australia is particularly interesting in that the distribution and diversity of Australian biota across the continent are considered artefacts of Aboriginal peoples intentional management. This is also witnessed in Namibia in the Nyae Nyae area where the ecology is a result of the product of careful strategic burning. The local community the Ju/hoansi argued that many places in the northern reaches of Nyae Nyae have degraded claiming that this is due to absence of a burning regime during the colonial times (Powel 1998).

According to the local elders in Nemamwa, Mugabe and Charumbia area fires play an important role in grazing regeneration, germination of species and in bringing rain to the area. It is part of their subsistence system that has to be done at some point during the year before the planting season. Further more they argue that the absents of regular burning results in biomass accumulation and this makes the area prone to veld fires which in turn destroy trees and expose
sacred places. In contrast to non-western land users notions of fire, land managers subscribing to conventional scientific management principles have only very recently began to realize the need for fires in maintaining an ecological balance. Fires within the estate were not allowed and as a result vegetation cover has increased. The continued non-burning of vegetation has created a dangerous situation. Any fires nowadays tend to be difficult to extinguish given the accumulated fuel over many years. This has created an artificial forest around Great Zimbabwe. This artificial forest has meant that considerable time and funds have to be spent in fire prevention. Surely before 1902 fires were part of forestry management in the area. The assumption has been that the heat generated by the fires will affect the stone walls. Thus fire management is seen as part of the preservation strategies for the dry-stone walling. These policies have now led to a situation where the occurrence of fire becomes a real danger to the cultural landscape given the accumulation of dead wood in the monument. Apart from fires, certain species appear to have been targets of previous administrators before 1980 a lot of the indigenous species were replaced with fast growing ones.

The concentration of high population in the designated communal areas has also led to a critical harvesting of trees in the areas around the monument for fuel. Recently the curio industry fuelled by tourists who visit the monument has led to depletion of some species. These seem to be poached from the monument or national parks. As pointed out by Sinclair (1987) it appears that most of the Brachystegia species are depleted within the core area itself. This is perhaps partly due to a deliberate policy in the early 1960’s to replace some of the trees with the Aloe excelsa, which has flower and creates a romantic atmosphere.

The diverse vegetation of the monument reflects the range of management systems, fire, rainfall and other environmental parameters present in the area. The insulation of the estate for the past 100 years from the outside communities has largely contributed to the diversity and uniqueness of the flora. The flora also demonstrates a variety of responses to fire and vegetation management by past management regimes. Fire has long been part of the environment of what is now the monument. Lightning and indigenous community burning practices have significantly influenced the development of plant and animal communities. In some floral regimes burning is a necessary component of maintaining vegetation balance; in others fires damage significantly the possibilities of regeneration. Some adapted to fire, some are dependent on it for their survival and others are destroyed by it. Thus the present flora and to a large extent the landscape has been altered over the past century to the extent that it is now impossible to recreate the original landscape.

Of all the natural resources at Great Zimbabwe, vegetation has been one of the most contentious issues. It has had a direct bearing on the system of management on the estate. Apart from fuel wood, vegetation is important for grazing and the carving of curios. The fact that the management system is geared towards the interests of tourists has generated tension and animosity with the local communities. The local communities are usually prohibited from harvesting vegetation for fear that this will affect the aesthetics of the monument. The preservationist approach has proved costly and difficult to police, as the dispossessed local population who live around the peripheries of the designated monument are often forced because of resources scarcity to encroach upon the protected areas. The protected monument lead to shrinkage of the land resources accessible to the local communities, they are forced to modify their methods of subsistence which usually leads to unsustainable land use practices (Deihl 1985). For example around Great Zimbabwe overgrazing, soil exhaustion and high population density is a major problem.

6.6. Present setting

At present the land surrounding Great Zimbabwe estate is still under different land holding systems (Fig. 6.1). To the north there is the Mutirikwe National Park (state land) and to the west is the communal land on which is the Nemanwa Growth Point. The land still remaining in the communal area is divided among
Chiefs Mugabe, Charumbira and Nemanwa. On the eastern side some commercial farms still exist, some of which have now been divided into smallholder plots. Some of the farms have been earmarked for resettlement. To the south is the Dutch Reformed Church land used for educational and limited farming purposes. However, the whole area around Great Zimbabwe from 1980 has witnessed several 'squatter and eviction' problems. One of the suggested solutions to the problem of ‘squatters’ and ‘preservation’ has been the idea of creating a buffer zone and fencing off the designated area. NMMZ have been able to fence the area and this has resulted in the creation of an isolated estate managed and administered as a no go area for the local community. Both natural and cultural resources in the designated area are not legally available to them. However, the local people have contested the question of creating a buffer zone. For example in 1985 the Governor of the province told the people around the monument to move away from the area since the monument was government property. The elder’s reply was that they knew no boundaries in the past and therefore would not respect the buffer zone.

In 1980 when the country become independent, mass movements were witnessed around Great Zimbabwe with people moving into the National Park area for land. However, they were quickly evicted. Apart from the question of shortage of land, Great Zimbabwe has also become an economic attraction with many people wanting to settle around it in search of employment opportunities. It is no wonder then that the area around it has been subject to squatter problems and the mushrooming of unplanned settlements. The shortage of grazing and farming land does not seem to deter would be settlers.

Fieldwork observations and inquiries on the current situation produced five general land and natural environmental categories that were viewed as essential for consideration in the management of the cultural landscape near Great Zimbabwe. These are:

- Cultivation (this was considered important but observations were that very few families depended on crop cultivation).
- Grazing lands. (Cattle ownership is still regarded as very important).
- Wood harvesting for fuel and carving.
- Tourist facilities.
- At least five areas were identified as important for rituals and these included three trees.
- Burial areas.

It however emerged that the Hill Complex area was regarded as the most sacred area. The concept of a sense of belonging to a place enshrined in religious and spiritual beliefs affects a community’s disposition towards the cultural landscape. Usually the community cares for only those materials and metaphysical elements that have direct significance to their spiritual apparatus. Some sites may be sacrosanct and unalienable, but other manifestations of the cultural landscape might be demolished or neglected as having no significance. The local communities felt that the monument and its environs were worth looking after and caring for.

Within the 10-km radius considered here, several tourists’ facilities have been established in the past decade. The population around Great Zimbabwe has increased and the landscape has also significantly changed through time. There have also been new developments like the establishment of curio markets and reduction in the area under cultivation. The developments related to tourism have also led to the growth of a semi urban area at Nemanwa growth point. The growth has been fuelled by the need to provide housing to the various tourist enterprises which have been established. This has led to demands for modern installations like water reservoirs and were even located in the monument itself in 1998. This was done without any impact assessment of the construction of the reservoirs on the cultural landscape. The perceived economic gains from provision of tourist services goes back to the 1890's as witnessed by Bent (1892). This has continued to the present. However there is clear evidence that in times of drought, e.g. 1992, more than 90% of families within the study area were dependent on providing various services to the tourist industry. These have transformed the cultural landscape in several ways. As indicated on the satellite image (Plate 6.1 taken November
Figure 6.7. Land classification based on the Landsat 7 images taken in November 1999 (see Plate 6.1).
the communal areas are overgrazed and have had a depletion of vegetation cover (see Fig. 6.7 on land classification based on the satellite image). However, this has not been the case with the area designated as the national monument and private land. Part of the National Park north of the monument has sparse vegetation due to the fact that until 1984 the area had squatters and now it is beginning to recover. To the east of the monument are areas which have recently come under resettlement programs and although these were established less than ten years ago, vegetation cover is fast disappearing (Fig. 6.8).

**6.7. Discussion**

The particular behaviour of the people towards a monument in a given social and historical context is informed by their collective understanding of the past. The cultural memory reassures the members of a cultural group of their identity and supplies them with an awareness of unity and singularity in time and space. More often than not prehistoric monuments acted as visible time markers in the landscape, referring people back to the distant past and prompting them to treat the site in a particular way (Lowenthal 1985; Evans 1985; Holtorf 1998). Identity of the past and present is very often closely associated with specific locations and structures in the landscape. The accumulation of evidence from different periods in particular locations suggests that people have always had a very strong sense of place with regard to Great Zimbabwe and its associated landscape. The frequent recurring settlement on the cultural landscape imply a sense of belonging and continuity built upon human experience and cultural identity. More recently it is clear that the communities around the monument do not consider the Great Zimbabwe as an ancient relic but a cultural landscape from which they derive their spiritual and economic livelihood. Thus Great Zimbabwe is not just about a Later Farming Community civilization, but also about people who live around it today. The transfer to state ownership of much of the cultural property and the land resulted in displacement of people and also led to local disempowerment with regard to the control and access to the monument. This also led to new management systems of the cultural landscape. For a long time now the new heritage management systems have given credibility to the position that local knowledge and local concepts of protecting the cultural landscape (as well as the ecological systems) are a result of superstitions and of subjective interpretation. They seem to support Malinowski's (1954) discredited assertion the indigenous communities interests in totems and taboos is inspired by nothing more than the rumblings of their stomachs (Powell 1998).

Great Zimbabwe is part of a cultural landscape in the functional sense and also because of its historical dimensions. Its functional role emanates from the importance of the area as an economic resource and as part of the natural resource. There also exists within the immediate area of the designated monument many traces of cultural presence in the past, such as all the habitation sites which we can trace from the Stone Age period. However, Great Zimbabwe's cultural significance goes beyond the communities around it. The imposition first of the status of National Monument and later in 1986 of World Heritage position appears to have placed boundaries, regulations and legal restrictions. These have led to the curtailment of viewing the monument in its proper setting and accepting that it is part of a wider cultural landscape. In order to define this cultural entity and manage it we need to appreciate the way in which past and present communities have encoded their values on it rather than confining ourselves to the physical fabric of the stone walls.
Figure 6.8. Land use around Great Zimbabwe in 1992.
7. GREAT ZIMBABWE: CULTURAL RESOURCE VALUES

7.1. Introduction

It is clear from the previous chapter that Great Zimbabwe is far from being an ancient relic whose only interest is to the antiquarian and to the foreign tourists. It has been demonstrated that it is a dynamic cultural landscape and that contemporary communities around the monument depend on it for economic and spiritual survival. In order to redress the emphases on technofixes in the management of this vibrant cultural landscape, this chapter examines the cultural values associated with the World Heritage site. It is argued that in order to develop an effective management system the values of this heritage to past, present and future society must be assessed. The values of a cultural landscape such as Great Zimbabwe are varied and at times conflicting. These values are constantly changing as Lowenthal (1985) remarks:

... preservation in itself reveals that permanence is illusion. The more we save, the more aware we become that such remains are continually altered and reinterpreted... what is preserved like what is remembered is neither a true or resemble likeness of past reality (p. 410)

The monument at Great Zimbabwe represents the best example of the Madzimbabwe tradition and culture as the largest, most evolved and best-preserved monument of a type unique to Southern Africa. The monument together with associated remains contribute to an archaeological landscape without parallel in Southern Africa which richly demonstrates human experience and achievement in prehistoric times.

Ultimately, cultural sites depend for their value on the recognition society, or sections of it, affords them. In order to manage such a place as Great Zimbabwe there is need to understand in detail the nature of the cultural values of the place to society, so that appropriate management which conserves these values, can occur. If we understand these values, we minimize the risk that management decisions will be made which inadvertently destroys or diminish important aspects of the site's significance. The cultural significance of a site are the values it holds for the community, or sections of the community. As a concept, cultural significance's purpose is to help identify and assess the attributes which make a place of value to the community, to the nation and to the world. Once the value of a place is understood, informed decisions can now be made to enable the values to be retained or revealed. The objectives of identifying these values are:

• to know why the place is important
• to identify the nature of the values and how they come about
• to evaluate the importance of the values

If we accept that most cultural sites have some value in these terms, why do we have to evaluate them? The answer is in two parts.

Firstly as indicated in earlier chapters, there are many management alternatives for any place, and for proper decision-making we need to know its significance as a prerequisite for deciding its future.

Some of the alternatives are to:
• Make conservation its main aim.
• Incorporate conservation of the site as part of the land management package for the area.
• Passively manage a site with little active intervention that might alter the place.
• Allow or recommend the destruction of a site, because of conflicting land use decisions about the appropriate course of action decided upon.

Decisions about the alternate course of action depend on assessment of the degree and type of value that the place has. The assessment of this value is compared with other values or needs that society has. Accepting that we cannot preserve and actively conserve all sites, assessment allows decisions to be made about appropriate management of a particular place.

Secondly, even when a place is very important, legally protected, and proposed for active conservation, we need details as to why it is significant in order to determine the most appropriate method of conserving its cultural significance. Some ‘conservation’ measures may actually detract from the cultural significance. For instance, some forms of protection or interpretation may compromise the aesthetic significance of a place. For example the construction of a water reservoir in the middle of a monument might affect the landscape, even though its location might be sound engineering for the provision of water. The evaluation requires the placing of the site in its historic and social context, and relevant consultation with the community in which the site exists, or for which it is particularly significant. Risk management becomes important in such cases.

7.2. Cultural values

- economic
- aesthetic

The Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS also has four categories namely:
- social
- historical
- scientific
- aesthetic

Whilst Lipe's categories largely arise out of the experiences of heritage management in Europe and North America, for the Burra Charter these arise out of the Australian situation. The Australian situation shares many similarities with Zimbabwe and indeed Southern Africa. These include the colonial experience and minority or majority rights problems of access to land etc. For the purposes of evaluating the values of Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site it was felt that the Burra Charter is appropriate and thus warrant some elaboration.

Social value: Social value embraces the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national, or other cultural sentiments to a majority or minority group (The Australian ICOMOS 1988). Obviously many traditional sites have such a value. The local, regional or national community may find them a source of pride, or education, or celebration, or a symbol of enduring culture. This may be because the site is accessible and well known, rather than particularly well preserved or scientifically important.

These values are very important and are probably the 'strongest' in terms of the conservation of a site. They apply not only to the finest and best example of sites. Local, relatively unknown sites may also have powerful values that are given to them by the local community.
still a potential for disagreement on how to manage the site! The Maasai feel that they should determine its management whilst the government feels that the site is of world significance and therefore cannot be managed locally.

Equally frequently, places with religious or traditional value also have great social significance which relies on the knowledge of the community. They get their value from this association. A good example of such a place is Njelele in the Matopo. This is supposed to be the most important Mwari shrine in Zimbabwe (Ranger 1999). There is no physical evidence for the site but the place is important, spiritually and socially. Nowadays the aspect of intangible heritage is becoming more and more openly discussed (Rossler & Saouma 1999). In many instances a place has both tangible and intangible aspects as seems to be the case for Great Zimbabwe.

One aspect of significance which has been poorly represented in conservation thinking in the past, has been the value of sites to local communities. Perhaps this has been because the definition and evaluation of community value is far more difficult than many others. Part of the reason in places like Southern Africa, has already been discussed in previous chapters, for example that local communities do not understand the scientific techniques required by modern heritage management systems. The other is the various evictions and resettlements, during the colonial and postcolonial period. This helped to cut the community from the traditional sites and hence the values they had ascribed to the places in their original area. There are many places valued by communities which are unknown to the wider society. These special places often contribute to the community’s sense of stability by reflecting the historic, scenic, recreational or social experiences common to that community and which distinguish that community and that locality from other communities and localities. Often the realization of the value of the site only comes when the place is threatened.

Places often have a range of other values such as historical, scientific or aesthetic interests to the whole community or to the particular group which the area is associated. They often become part of the majority’s heritage. There are often problems for indigenous groups in the majority culture’s attitude to the minorities’ heritage. The particular concerns and wishes of the minority tend to be disregarded or belittled. In colonial times even the concerns of the majority were ignored. For example, people may not want ‘outsiders’ to visit sites that are culturally significant. These values may, on occasion, conflict with the official aims of governments in developing countries. Sub-groups may use their heritage to identify themselves as different from other sub-groups and this may be perceived as undermining a policy of building a unified nation. These potential conflicts in assigning value may be resolved by applying a general ‘rule of thumb’: as long as the source of value is important to most members of the population, then the place should be preserved. Within this framework, the specific interpretation of the site by sub-groups within the population is of no concern. Thus, Rhodes’s grave should be protected because he is an important figure in the history of Zimbabwe. The majority of Zimbabweans will probably have a negative evaluation of Rhodes’ contribution to the country although some groups will evaluate his contribution positively.

**Historic value**: This value recognizes the contribution a place makes to the achievement and to our knowledge of the past. A place can be a typical or well-preserved example of a cultural, group, period of time, or type of human activity, or it can be associated with a particular individual. Often, a place rather than representing one phase or aspect of history, has a long sequence of history, and shows this in its development. Many places have historic value because they reflect a long period of human history. They take our imagination back in time and cause us to ponder on the past lifestyles and histories of our ancestors. Such places are a trigger to the historic imagination and have powerful evocative and educational value. Rhodes’ grave in the Matopo or Nyadzonya and Chimioyo in Mozambique or Sharpville and Robben Island in South Africa would be cases in point.

**Scientific value**: These are features of a place that provide, or have a realistic potential to yield
knowledge that is not obtainable elsewhere. The scientific or research value of a place will depend upon the importance of the data involved or its rarity, quality or representativeness and on the degree to which the place may contribute further substantial information. This value is variously called scientific, archaeological, research or information value. Scientific or research value has often been the major value attached to places by Western professionals and Western Law. It has been used not only to protect sites but also to remove them from their owners' care. As indicated in Chapter 2, many legislation in Southern Africa protect places because of their scientific value. This as we saw led to the removal of access to the site by the local communities and traditional custodians. Findings from scientific research have at times been used to interpret a site or culture in a way with which traditional people may not agree. However, scientific value has the potential to add or even enhance other values, which can result in a very strong case for protection. An example the site of Thulamela in the Kruger National Parks in South Africa, recent scientific research has led to it being linked to the local community thus providing a new value to the site. Before the 1996 excavation very little was known about Thulamela. The same can be said of the site of Manyiken in Mozambique. Here the work of archaeologists (from Uppsala and Eduardo Mondlane universities) led to the increased appreciation of the site by the local communities. At Great Zimbabwe it can also be argued that the work of archaeologists in the last century did enhance the value of the monument.

**Aesthetic value:** Aesthetic value may be described as the beauty of design, association or mood that the place possesses or it may be demonstration in a place, of a particular design, style, artistic development of high level or craftsmanship. This is a recognition that a place represents a high point of the creative achievement in its design, its style, artistic development and craftsmanship. Aesthetic value may sometimes be difficult to measure or quantify. In Western society with its strong emphasis on measured time, the concept and symbolism of ancient things and the evidence of time's passing has itself a strong effect on the visitor. The concept of 'alienness' or 'otherness' is also very strong. These combined with innate beauty of the art and setting produce a powerful aesthetic and emotional experience. This is in contrast to the local community views. Time past is the immeasurable and dynamic because it is the time of the ancestors. The past is very often seen as the present. Aesthetic value is therefore subjective, especially when it arises from cultural backgrounds and individual taste. Aesthetics, like beauty "is in the eyes of the beholder".

These cultural values are almost always interrelated and subject to interpretation. They also apply differently to a local area, region, a country and to the world. In other words a cultural value might appeal differently in different context and circumstances. Various sections of a site might also have different values. For example at the site of Silozwane, the cave is important scientifically for its contribution to our understanding of the hunter-gatherer communities, on the other hand the hill has religious significance to the present Kalanga community who conduct rituals there.

Within the cultural values economic values are beginning to have an influence and therefore should be considered as derived values. Generally the economic value applies because other values are present. However a place may represent the only source of opportunity for revenue and employment or may be held as a focus for potential achievement in this arena. These values are critical reality. Economic issues very often temper decisions. Places perceived to have a high economic potential often attract more interest and can therefore be more susceptible to exploitation. Very often the economic values depends on the location of the site. For example a site near an urban centre or area of hyper tourist activities like Domboshava is likely to have an economic value to people who live around it. There is potential of attracting visitors who in turn might buy souvenirs, need accommodation and transport. Thus apart from providing direct income there is potential for employment and other down stream economic development.
7.3. Global and national values

The cultural value of Great Zimbabwe is clearly seen in the fact that the country is named after it. More importantly even before independence the site had been declared a National Monument. In 1937 on the recommendations of the Commission for the Preservation of National and Historical Monuments and Relics in terms of section 9 of the Monuments and Relics Act (Chapter 70), Great Zimbabwe was declared a National Monument. This designation led to the transfer to state ownership of the communally owned landscape and its associated resources. Hunting, harvesting of forest products and religious rituals were then banned. This led to large-scale displacement of communities located in the designated area. It also led to local dis-empowerment in regard to control of resource utilization management and access to many parts of the cultural property. The traditional taboos and rules of ensuring ecological balance were discarded and yet government itself particularly after independence did not have the resources to enforce the protective legislations.

Great Zimbabwe also provides a prime example of the past ingenuity and achievement of Africans. As such Africans across ethnic boundaries regarded Great Zimbabwe as an African heritage, it has become more than just part of national heritage but an essential part of the African heritage. It can also be argued that Great Zimbabwe provided the liberation movements with inspiration (see Chapter 5).

The outstanding universal value of Great Zimbabwe was recognized in 1986 by inscribing it as a World Heritage Site under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. The Convention provides for the identification, protection, conservation, and presentation of cultural and natural sites of outstanding universal value. For a site to be included on the World Heritage list, it must at least meet one of the six criteria set out in the Convention. The inscription of Great Zimbabwe on the list was based on three of the criteria, as set out by the convention, namely:

- Represents a masterpiece of human creative genius
- Bears a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared.
- Be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.

Thus the cultural values of Great Zimbabwe have to be considered at various levels; the local, national, regional and global and these do not always coincide. At times they may be in conflict. Managing a cultural site involves resolving and negotiating these seemingly irreconcilable values. Conflicting and ambiguous values and interests in cultural resources emanating from the local, national and global values also result in multiple jurisdictions concerning, use ownership, access and control of the heritage. For example the international conventions have to be applied at Great Zimbabwe in order to satisfy its World Heritage Status. At the same time the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe’s protective legislation act 25:11 has to operate at national level together with all the other national and district regulation. At each level access is continuously limited.

7.4. Analyses of values for Great Zimbabwe

It has to be pointed out at the outset that the administration National Museums and Monuments usually blames the local community for not fully appreciating the values of the site and they in turn accuse the government agent of desecrating the monument. Whilst some of the cultural values for Great Zimbabwe are assumed to be known, an assessment was carried out among the local community, tourists and workers in the hospitality industry around Great Zimbabwe. These groups were identified as the communities who had a direct bearing or link with the monument (stakeholders). Traditionally the Nemanwa and Mugabe people have had claims of custodianship over the monument. However, given the long turbulent demographic history around the monument it is now impossible to say that only these two groups have a legitimate claim to Great Zimbabwe (see Mtetwa 1976). This is particularly so if we are considering the
monument as part of a cultural landscape. However, the further a group is from the monument the less their relationship and impact on the monument and its landscape. For this study it was felt that those within ten kilometres around the designated monuments have a stronger attachment and they have a direct influence on the cultural landscape and the monument. They are more likely to be affected by the management systems in place at the monument. That should not however deny the fact that this is an arbitrary boundary and that decisions made twenty or fifty kilometres away could also have some influence on the cultural landscape.

Like in most parts of Zimbabwe the basic social unit in the area was the household imba-through to the village musha and then the district dunhu. The village which is the bases of the community recognizes itself as a congregation of households. The village then is part of a larger community (territorially). In the area are approximately 73 villages. The people have a strong religious and cultural belief system based on ancestral spirit reverence. However, many have been influenced by missionary activities and Christian teachings particularly by the Dutch Reformed Church through its mission station at Morgenster farm. In a way the cultural belief systems have been eroded to some extent by the Christian faith which looks down upon them. Important however, from a heritage management point of view is the underlying traditional and cultural views and values attached to the monument and its environs.

Within the ten-kilometre radius are two hotels and nine lodges built to provide facilities to those visiting the monument. There are also various government organization and local authorities in the area. Of importance to the landscape is National Parks and Masvingo Rural Council. Several schools exist in the neighbourhood of the monument. These include Nemanwa Primary School, Chirichoga Secondary School, Morgenester College, and many others.

Apart from the values ascribed to the monument the research was aimed at determining the general knowledge which the community had on the monument. It was felt that understanding these values would lead to the creation of an environment conducive to a participatory heritage management built on an understanding of a common heritage. In order to evaluate the value and also the attitudes of people towards the monument interviews were held over a period of three years. The first set of interviews was conducted in 1997 August and another followed in the following year. August was chosen as the month with the highest recorded number of visitors in the past five year (from 1992). These two sets of interviews were targeted at the local community (i.e. people living within ten kilometre radius), Zimbabwean tourists (visitors from within Zimbabwe excluding those from Masvingo town), Foreign visitors and people employed in the hospitality industry. The total sample for the two years is shown in Table 7.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample interviewed</th>
<th>Approximate population</th>
<th>Approximate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zimbabwean Tourist</td>
<td>85 350 (in three weeks)</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Tourist</td>
<td>159 900 (in three weeks)</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Community</td>
<td>202 3500 (estimate from District Administrators Office)</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Workers</td>
<td>27 200</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The interviews were carried out over a period of three weeks. Apart from asking questions participant observation was very important for example on the question of benefits to the community. Most people indicated that they did not and yet they were employed by organizations such as NMMZ or the Hotels. Most of the interviews with the local community took place at their homes.

The third set of interviews was aimed at the local communities around Great Zimbabwe and was aimed at verifying certain trends which seemed to be emerging from the first set of interviews. This final interview was carried out in January 2000 and 98 individuals were interviewed.

**Ranking the monument**

From the interviews all groups recognize the importance of the site as a national and a place of world importance (Fig. 7.1). Most of the people interviewed were not aware of its World Heritage status although a number thought that it was one of the “Seven Wonders of the World”. This was especially so from the foreign tourists. However, very few considered its importance for the local area. Even with the local community although they wanted to have access they felt that Great Zimbabwe was of national importance first and some referred to it as a national shrine. Generally respondents had varying levels of knowledge about the site.

*Cultural values:* From the interviews (Fig. 7.2 & Fig. 7.3) it is clear that the local communities view the place as one with social values particularly rituals associated with the traditional belief systems. Whilst it is fair to say that Great Zimbabwe is sacred to the Shona people it is important to note that although they are regarded as a single group there are significant regional and local differences, especially in the area of religion. Ancestral spirits play a fundamental role in the daily lives of people and on many different levels. These range from the family to the whole community or even at national level, as Lan’s account of the importance of the spirit mediums to the liberation struggle shows (Lan 1985). Although the spirit world can be divided into various categories (Lan 1985, p 38), it is the *mudzimu* and *mhondoro*, which are important in relation to Great Zimbabwe. It is them who are believed to have built Great Zimbabwe and still dwell there according to the local informants. They lead all the traditional ceremonies performed at Great Zimbabwe. They own the land and control rain. They have more power than the political chiefs do (Lan 1985, p. 34).

From the interviews it was clear that the Matopo (Matonjeni and Njelele) are by far more sacred to the Shona than Great Zimbabwe. However at Great Zimbabwe the Hill Complex emerged as the most sacred part of the monument particularly the cave. It is here that the spirits used to speak through the rocks. Some speak of huge caves and underground passages in the Hill Complex. In recent times the Conical Tower has also gained popularity particularly with the Nemamwa people. For the local communities, Great Zimbabwe is viewed as a sacred place es-

![Figure 7.1. Significance of the site as expressed by interviewed people.](image-url)
especially the cave in the Hill. They are seen as the only way by which the ancestors can be contacted because they are said to be living in and speaking from these places. Local informants cite incidences when voices were heard emanating from the caves and water that miraculously appeared whenever the rightful spirit medium went to the area to prepare the grain for the brewing of beer used at the ceremonies as some of the mysteries that had vanished. Chief Nemanwa said that Madzimbabwe were not built for living people but for the spirits of the dead, and the houses within them were for the spirit mediums. He claims that the Nemamwa were the rightful custodians of the monument. He says that the people came to Great Zimbabwe for solutions to different calamities befalling them. Summers (1971, p. 2) says:

Dzimbabwe was a place sacred to the chiefs and his ancestors where formal supplications were made to the Great God Mwari in times of dire tribal need: drought, cattle diseases and human epidemics.

Great Zimbabwe was proclaimed a National Monument on the basis of its archaeological strength notwithstanding the fact that even the very early travellers like Posselt, Bent and Mauch accounts of the nineteenth century attach great spiritual significance to the site. In recent appeals to government, the traditional leadership living around Great Zimbabwe had this to say:

'There used to be a lot of communication among traditional custodians of sacred shrines. The white government stopped the communication because they wanted to assert their power. When independence came and the Africans took control the traditional leaders celebrated because they felt we could now practice our customs and traditions. Every month customs and traditions were practiced. There used to be one major gathering at sacred places each year. That is no more allowed except clandestinely.'

With this attitude the local people complain that the heritage managers at Great Zimbabwe were denying them freedom of cultural expression by prohibiting them from carrying out ceremonies at the site. To the local communities the place is essentially linked to the land, their ancestors, their culture and the site embodies life forces. Thus the place is important because the spirits continue to reside in it. Several elders were very eloquent about the remote history of the monument, referring to oral histories and traditions which all seemed to paint a golden age during prehistoric times.
Tourism and economic dimensions

The tourists perceive the monument differently from the other groups. Generally speaking the aesthetic and scientific values are considered to be the main values for the monument. The older tourists above 50 consider aesthetics as of paramount importance and consider the ruinous nature of the place as creating a romantic atmosphere. Their ideas are also reinforced by what they perceive as the most important area on the monument. The Great Enclosure, the Shona Village and the museum are considered important areas. The Great Enclosure was seen as of “architecturally pleasing appearance”. It is interesting to note that the reconstructed village is a major tourist attraction. This is partly due to the live activities which take place at the village. Even the local Zimbabwean tourists seem to have the same perceptions. However, for them they consider the economic values as important particularly the benefits in terms of regional development and job creation (Fig. 7.4).

A traditional craft market exists at the fringe of the monument as one of the downstream industries of Great Zimbabwe. The market sells traditional souvenirs to tourists who visit Great Zimbabwe. Tourists buy souvenirs from them as a fulfilment of their visit to the site which forms the bond between the site and tourist. More than 80% of the working population in the area of study had relatives who were employed by the hospitality industry and the monument. From the District Council this is one of the areas which has one of the highest employed rural population in the province.

It appears most families seem to benefit from their location around Great Zimbabwe, all though most people seem not to recognize this. Thus the answers were deduced from observation of activities the people were engaged in. The concept of benefits was usually perceived as direct cash benefit. It also emerged from answering to this question that most local communities felt that National Museums and the hospitality industries were making huge profits in their activities. The benefit of employment though acknowledged after reminding them, it was always felt that the high paying jobs or those of authority did not go to the local community. The local residents did not see the general development around the monument as a significant benefit.

Ownership of the monument

This question was at times confused with the original builders of the site, particularly among the tourists (Fig. 7.5). However, it was surprising that people were confused particularly the local community on who actually managed the site. Some thought it was ZimSun Hotels and others that it was government. To most, it was difficult to remember the actual name of the organization responsible for the site. This might be in part due to lack of any meaningful advertising campaign on the part of NMMZ. Very few could actually remember the full name of NMMZ. Very often it was simply referred to as

![Figure 7.4. Benefits from Great Zimbabwe.](image)
"Museum or Monuments organization." A high proportion of the people interviewed regarded the site as now having been appropriated by government and that officially it was no longer a communal property. Differences in attitudes about who owns the site can have profound effects on the success of managing the heritage. Whist heritage managers felt that they were protecting the site on behalf of the local communities, they in turn felt that their interests had been usurped.

**Restoration programs**

On the walls collapsing most people said that most of the walls were collapsing because the ancestors were not pleased with what was going on. "Unless we are allowed to appease our ancestors the way we like, the collapsing of walls shall continue and worsen". They also claim that it is traditionally wrong and culturally unacceptable to restore the fallen walls. The excavation and preservation and restoration works are contentious issues today. From a local Shona perspective the spirit of a man remains with the house he built or dwell in during his lifetime. If the abandoned has collapsed then it is because it is the wish of the spirits. Restoration is viewed as worsening the situation. They say that if walls fall, it is the desire of the ancestors and they should be left alone. Some believe that if conservation is to be carried out traditional ceremonies should be conducted first. Thus conflict between western views of preservation for posterity and that what belongs to the ancestors. The situation at Great Zimbabwe is consistent with the observations of Mabvadya (1990) in northern Zimbabwe. His study on the local attitudes to museums and monuments outlines similar issues pertaining to the restoration of walls at Madzimbabwe tradition sites. The elders argued that these places were the homes of the ancestors. When they disintegrate and fall into ruins, there was nothing wrong. The ancestors were simply abandoning their homes and relocating to some other places. Heritage Manager should not interfere with this natural process. It is also clear that the monument is not just the architecturally pleasing stone walls but also the natural resources, the land boundaries, the historically shared experience and traditional knowledge. This conflict is not unique to Zimbabwe. For example in Thailand the heritage managers of the ancient Buddhist temples of Chaing Saen feel that the architectural fabric has to be preserved whilst for the local community the collapse of the temples is regarded as the wishes of Buddha (Lertrit 1997).

Both categories of tourists were also opposed to massive restoration of the structures at Great Zimbabwe. Whilst they appreciated the efforts being taken to preserve the fabric of the monument, they argued that restoration interfered with the authenticity of the monument.

**7.5. Cultural values for Great Zimbabwe**

Cultural places, such as Great Zimbabwe, depend for their sustainability on the recognition...
society affords them. The presence or absence of values will lead to the safeguarding and preservation of cultural heritage resources or in other instances could lead to their neglect and destruction. Great Zimbabwe is a site laden with multiple cultural values.

**Social values:** From the research carried out at Great Zimbabwe, it is clear that despite the policies of NMMZ, is a revered national shrine: a place of worship symbolizing national and cultural identity of Zimbabwe. The site is home to the departed and living spirits of Zimbabwe. As a result, the site continues to play a central religious role and thus several religious activities continue to be held at Great Zimbabwe. The local communities (Charumbira, Nemanwa and Mugabe) hold the place with esteem because of its spiritual/religious value. These indigenous communities regard the place as the abode of spirits; **dzimbahwe**. These communities have continued to use the site for rainmaking, spirit appeasing ceremonies and many other traditional rituals relating to the socio-economic plight or welfare of the indigenous communities. As Bourdillon (1987) puts it, land fertility and water are linked and thus ceremonies to request for rain are held almost annually. “For the local communities rain is life: without it animals, plants and people will die” (Pwiti & Mvenge 1996, p. 819).

**Historical value:** The archaeological research done in the past century has demonstrated the centrality of the monument to Zimbabwean history and Southern Africa (Beach, 1982; Sinclair 1987; Garlake 1973; Pikirayi 1993). There are also recorded oral histories which link the monument with the development of the Munhumutapa Empire. Such historical links with the past which also include material evidence of long distance trade in the sub-region, has given the site an immense historical value or significance.

**Scientific value:** The array of cultural and the natural values of the monument are of immense scientific values and provide opportunities for extracting knowledge about the prehistoric development of the Shona and the Bantu speakers. It also provides opportunities to study the evolution of this cultural landscape. The beauty and natural environment of the site together with the cultural property provide a powerful source of inspiration to a variety of disciplines like architecture, engineering, geology, art, religion etc.

**Aesthetic values:** The aesthetic value of Great Zimbabwe includes aspects such as the size and form of the monument, architectural style, materials of the fabric and the general visual appearance. This value rests on the site being the most spectacular site in terms of size and design in the Sub-Saharan Africa, comparable to site such as Stonehenge, Acropolis and the Pyramids of Egypt, all of which are physically attractive to see. Great Zimbabwe epitomizes the design principles of an architectural style, whose physical appearance has captured the imagination of all those who have visited the site, particularly the dry-stone architecture.

**Economic values:** Great Zimbabwe has potential value as a source of revenue through tourism. The site has attracted visitors from the times of Carl Mauch owing to its values. This generates the much-needed foreign currency. In addition, there are several downstream industries such as Hoteliers, tour-operators, transport hire companies, curio and craft centre and labour (directly or indirectly). The spin-off benefits include the development of the local areas either directly or indirectly owing to the importance of the site.

7.6. Discussion

The cultural landscape at Great Zimbabwe has a mélange of values. The local inhabitants depend on it for varying degrees in order to subsist and commune with their ancestors. Heritage managers, government officials, politicians, regional planners, national and international agencies also in some way inhabit the Great Zimbabwe cultural landscape. The outcome of the numerous interests acting upon each other is a diversity of attitudes and aspirations. Some of the prominent complaints are that conservation at Great Zimbabwe does not respect the site’s central religious value that is just as vital as or even more important than the aesthetic and economic values. Local people complain that the concern of the heritage manager is to see the standing walls at expense of religious values. The local communities point out that the cave in the Hill Com-
plex is actually ignored by the heritage managers. The caves are seen as the dwelling places of the ancestors and they should be honoured as sacred. They also say that there is nothing as important as the caves at the site because they house the people responsible for the well being of the local people. Local traditional elders maintain that the ancestors look after all sites used for cultural functions. Sacred areas are supposed to be out of bounds at anytime except during ceremonies. People refrain from doing any activity that may damage or destroy a place. This type of managing cultural places is buttressed in places by local belief systems.

From the interviews it appears that the local community around the monument does not appreciate the way the monument has been managed. It appears very little efforts have been made to give them accesses to the monument or restore their pride in the history of Great Zimbabwe. Their alternative perceptions and histories of the monument have not been considered central to the survival of the cultural property. In most cases as demonstrated earlier they are considered a major threat to the survival of the monument mainly through their illegal activities like collecting firewood and conducting rituals. These activities are blamed for the frequent fires on the monument.

The empowering of local communities and the restoration of pride with the local heritage is a contentious issue in most parts of Southern Africa. If this were to happen then communities around heritage places need to be involved in the preservation of sites in their locality. The involvement in such endeavours makes them feel proud and they see the need for the continued survival of the heritage places. Whist preservation offers a chance for community involvement this is usually not done. The excuse is that this is a highly technical subject which is better left to technocrats who know better. One example of local involvement in heritage management was at the Zimbabwe type-site of Manyikeni located in Mozambique’s south central region. By 1978 some 400 local people had participated voluntarily in the fieldwork at the site, and in the following year a site museum was opened in an attempt to make the archaeological site accessible to the local communities (Sinclair et al. 1993(a): p. 429).

Another example is the restoration of the stone madzimbabwe type monument at Thulamela, occupied between AD 1400–1700. The Shona dialect-speaking people, who made up part of modern Venda community, are directly linked to Thulamela. The Venda who were moved from this area when the park was created claim traditional ownership of this site (although this ownership was been contested (Nehemani pers. comm.). Apart from the Venda the Tsonga, Shangaan and Sotho also lived in the same area. However it appears the last people to stay in the area were the Makuleke Tsonga who were evicted in 1969 to make way for the expansion of the Kruger national Parks (they too are claiming to have built the site). A restoration project to rehabilitate the stone ruins began its preliminary work in 1994. The program involved systematic excavation around the collapsed stone walls so as to establish the general direction and foundation of the walled enclosures. After scrutinizing the wall styles the enclosures were reconstructed using modern stone masons. The width and height of each wall was determined by the bulk of the original stone collapse (Miller 1996). The work at Thulamela was primarily archaeological research and the reconstruction should therefore be seen as an interpretation of what it could have been like. No attempts were made to return the stone blocks to their original position. This would have been impossible given the general state of collapse on the site. However the discovery of burials during the excavation led to the need to involve the Venda people in the way the project was being implemented. It was also meant to provide ethnographic depth to the interpretation of the remains. Thus the project endeavoured to set-up negotiated decision-making processes that involved local communities in the long term site management. The attraction of Thulamela was not just in the stone walls similar to the Great Zimbabwe but to the gold-adorned skeletons discovered during the excavations in 1996. The co-operation between academic archaeologists and Venda chiefs in resolving sensitive issues relating to the excavation and rebuilding of remains at Thulamela has
been hailed as a model of successful negations. The Venda people have taken immense pride in the excavations and restoration project. The opening of the site to the public affirms the complexity of African culture in Southern Africa and reclaims a significant chapter in Venda history (Davison, 1998). Yet the site is in the Kruger National Park and the Venda community leaves outside the park. Thus the community cannot have access to the cultural place unless the Park Warden grants it. This leads to the critical questions of access and local community participation. Is participation appearing at the official opening? What role does Thulamela play today to the Venda culture? What questions of land ownership can arise from this exercise?
8. PRESENTATION OF THE MONUMENT

8.1. Introduction

In Chapter 7 it was demonstrated that various groups have different interests in the monument. It was also outlined that the interests of the tourists and perhaps of the urbanised Zimbabwean coincide very much with those of the heritage managers and the ideas espoused by international organisations like UNESCO and ICCROM. However, the majority of the local communities are ill at ease with these ideas. These new values seem to deny the local community any meaningful access to their heritage. It is proposed in this chapter that to begin to address the question of access and restoration of pride among the local communities their interests must be incorporated in the way the monument is generally presented. The raison d'être for preservation of the cultural heritage in the final analysis is presentation to the general public. By reconciling the various cultural values of the site we began to address some of the problems of making various groups have access and be proud of their past and their heritage. It is also argued that this approach does not alienate the foreign visitor but that it offers an experience, which is uniquely African.

Presentation (public interpretation) includes a broad scope of endeavours ranging from formal education and curriculum development to less structured programs such as site tours and museum displays. It also encompasses singular communication devices such as the publication of popular histories, public awareness posters, brochures and development of multimedia presentations.

Stone (1994) identifies four basic approaches to presentation of the archaeological remains.

- Academic or theoretical archaeology.
- Indigenous views of the past.
- School history.
- The past as presented to the public in museums and archaeological sites.

Generally in Southern Africa the academic interpretation and the museum presentation represent the same approach and as Mazel and Ritchie (1994) indicate the museum displays and the way monuments are presented has not changed significantly in the past fifty years or so.

8.2. Academic interpretation and public access

Archaeologists have for sometime been aware of the importance of interpretation, of the way evidence is exhibited, the social responsibilities, which they have, and the possible implications for human rights (Gatherecole & Lowenthal 1990). The interpretation and presentation of archaeological sites like Great Zimbabwe has always been done by academics. The original debate on Great Zimbabwe from the time of Carl Mauch to the late 1970s was the question of the authorship of the monumental architecture. The crucial research by Randall-Maclver in 1905 helped to solve this debate. This established the date and African origins of the Madzimbabwe structures. Subsequent work by Caton-Thomp-
son (1931), Summers (1964), Robinson (1961), Whitty (1961), and others essentially refined Maciver's monumental work. After the 1970's the debate on the origins of Great Zimbabwe among academics was generally regarded as a non-issue. The debate shifted to the study of non-walled areas or dwellings outside the prestigious monumental walls (see Garlake 1973; Huffman 1997; Sinclair 1984) and this led to discussions on the socio-political aspects of the Zimbabwe state. The last few years have been dominated by Huffman's (1981; 1984; 1986; 1997) application of structuralist and cognitive archaeology to the core of the monument. His interpretation has largely been based on a combination of data sources; archaeology, ethnography and Portuguese records. His main thrust has been to address questions of the social and political organisation of the builders of the monumental architecture. His assertion has been that the basic structures of the monument were established at the beginning of occupation and that the town remained so for the next 200 years of its existence (see Fig. 8.1, for a reconstruction of his interpretation). His analyses lead to the identification of the Hill Complex as the Kings residence, the Eastern Enclosure as the ritual area and that the Kings wives lived in the valley below with the Great Enclosure designated for female initiation. There has been a welter of criticism from fellow academics to Huffman's interpretation (see Beach, 1998; Chipunza 1994; Mahachi 1991). Most of the criticism has centred on Huffman's misreading of the Portuguese documents and uncritical use of Shona oral traditions (Beach 1998), the inappropriate use of Venda ethnography (Mahachi 1991) and ignoring the chronostratigraphic sequence of the site (Collett, Vines & Hughes 1992; Chipunza 1994).

The situation of Great Zimbabwe is not unique. Despite many advances made in Argentinian archaeology particularly to bring to light important evidence of the past 10,000 years, very little attention has been paid to the transfer of this knowledge to the education system or to the community at large (Oliva, 1994). Commenting on the situation in India Chakrabarti (2000) points out that the way archaeology has been practised in the subcontinent keeps a vast segment of the Indian population away from a sense of positive participation in the country's past. The debates on Great Zimbabwe have largely remained academic and limited efforts have been made to make the interpretation available to schools or the general public. This was clearly demonstrated during the interviews at Great Zimbabwe (Fig. 8.1). Generally most people were aware of the builders of Great Zimbabwe. Among the local community however, within the over 50 age group some attributed the building to Arabs or said they did not know. This was surprising given that those who said so were fairly educated (e.g. teachers, nurses, civil servants). This might be a reflection of what they had been taught in schools during the 1960s to the 70's. Some of what was said also borrowed heavily from books like Miller (1960) published during this period. It was however clear that for all the groups the question of the origins was paramount and is still an issue, which needs to be addressed and openly discussed. What is important to recognize here is the fact that some aspects of myths about the origins of the site, as well as some stereotypes of Africans and African culture reminiscent of Victorian and Rhodesian times have not only survived, but also found their way into Shona oral traditions. The situation is broadly consistent with that of the Australian Aborigines.

Langford (1983) has shown that despite positive changes in the perception of Aboriginal prehistory by archaeologists, some Aborigines do have problems in accepting the position of archaeologists. A number still view their history through the "officially" discarded views about aboriginal cultural heritage. Among the Shona, Beach (1974) has clearly demonstrated how interpretation of the recent past reflects the colonial prejudices especially as seen in local oral histories regarding Ndebele/Shona relations. During the interviews some informants gave a variety of modified versions of the Arabs having built Great Zimbabwe. Some of the local people confessed their convictions that the Shona could not have had the capacity to construct such structures. It is apparent that these informants have grown up in a socio-political milieu that denigrated everything that was African. They
Figure 8.1. Huffman's interpretation of core area at Great Zimbabwe (after Beach 1998).
now fail to draw apart those elements of the past that are truly historical and those that were forced on them either through the colonial education system or via other forms of information exchange (Ucko 1994). It was also illustrated that whilst the debate on the origins of the Zimbabwe tradition was solved decades ago by archaeologists the general public (those who visit the monument and those who live near it) have not yet had access to this information. The site museum and the guidebooks have failed to communicate some of the most interesting and vibrant discussions on the monument.

Sources of information
The source of information on how different groups come to know about the site were varied. However academic literature was not one of them. Generally there seems to be a lack of any organised campaign to inform people on the monument. This is compounded by the lack of suitable and affordable literature at the monument. The main source of information for the local communities is the word of mouth, oral history and from general history taught at schools. Schools were the main source of information for the Zimbabwe tourist. For the foreign tourists travel literature was the main source particularly the book Lonely Planet. This book is very inaccurate not just on Great Zimbabwe but also on other sites in Southern Africa and yet more than 70% of the tourists had read this book. Very few people were aware of the general academic debates going on about the site despite the fact that the site museum had abridged versions of Huffman’s interpretations.

8.3. Alternative interpretation
As indicated above question of the builders of Great Zimbabwe among the general public is still debatable. Although it is generally agreed that the ancestral Shona were responsible for the construction each individual group seems to claim ownership. For example both the Newanwa and Mugabe groups claim to have built the place despite the fact that historically they arrived re-

Figure 8.2. Who built Great Zimbabwe?

Figure 8.3. Sources of information on Great Zimbabwe.
cently into the area (see Chapter 7). The national significance and the resultant political clout has led to this situation where every group would like to be associated with the monument. However, although they are many competing claims on the ownership of the monument, they all agree on the significance of the place as a national shrine along side other places like Njelele. There is also agreement that religious activities synonymous with the place should be allowed to take place.

Despite the fact that the local communities have their own opinion on the history and significance of the monument these have had little impact on the way the monument has been presented or interpreted. These opinions as expressed in Chapter 7 have largely been based on oral traditions and histories and academics have dismissed them as baseless myths and legends. Ken Mufuka’s (1983) book was the first bold attempt to incorporate the opinions of the local communities in the way the monument was being presented to the general public. His book is largely on oral histories collected from the local communities. These largely emphasises the idea of a bright and glorious life at Great Zimbabwe. This interpretation contrast very sharply with those reached by academic historians like Mtetwa (1976) and Beach (1980) who describe conditions at Great Zimbabwe as slum-like. Mufuka’s (1983, p. 24) interpretation portrays the place as a classless society adding that music, intoxicating drink and roasted meat were part of the daily pleasures enjoyed by the hangers on at Great Zimbabwe. Many ordinary Zimbabweans welcomed the exploitation of myths and legends by Mufuka. It offered a heritage, which they could easily identify with. This heritage was timeless and devoid of the chronological classifications of archaeology.

8.4. Presentation and the public

Most visitors to archaeological sites often lack any but the most basic information about the place they are visiting. Their ignorance means that they have a set of standard questions that need to be answered. These normally centre on the people who built and lived in the monument. Typical questions are: who built it and when? Why did they abandon it? Who lived in this area? What did they do here? How did they build it? Providing answers for these questions is therefore one of the primary requirements if visitors are to be satisfied. The time constraints that affect visitors, coupled with their short attention span, makes it imperative that these questions are answered in a simple and clear manner. The number of messages provided should be limited to those necessary to answer the six basic questions outlined above.

Tourists also have difficulty in visualising what the site would have looked like. This extends to the understanding of rock-paintings where the composition reflects chaotic ‘trance experiences’. The difficulties in visualising what a site would have looked like are often compounded by the problem of differential preservation. The elements that visitors cannot see - for example the decayed dhaka structures at sites like Great Zimbabwe lead them to construct incorrect interpretations on the basis of what they can see. It is therefore essential to provide on-site displays, which help the tourist to visualise an area in its totality. In the late 1970’s National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia produced a guide book with illustrations reconstructed sections of the monument to show the relationship of the stone walls and use of some of the enclosures (Fig. 8.4 & Fig. 8.5). Albeit limited, this went a long way in explaining life during the period during Great Zimbabwe’s period. The map accompanying the guidebook was also illustrated (Fig. 8.6).

The monuments core area consists of a set of walled enclosures that are concentrated into an area of slightly more than fifty hectares. As indicated in earlier chapters there are a number of outlying enclosures scattered over the rest of the designated monument, as well as a number of occupation areas that lack stone walls but which are dated by the associated pottery to the Zimbabwe period. The core area of walled enclosures is at present the principle area for the general public presentation and interpretation. The other areas are generally regarded as no go areas and have not been prepared for official public access. Even with the core area, presentation and interpretation to the public is a complex prob-
lem. At present the monument is presented and interpreted mainly at the site museum and through tour guides and guidebook provided by National Museums and Monuments. Private tour companies also provide tour guides. Apart from the map at the entrance there are no actual information or interpretative panels or signs on the monument. All the signs provided are directional or regulatory. There are at least three in situ displays of dhaka structures. The main one is the miniature construction of the Posselt house in the Valley Enclosures. In 1987 the Posselt house in the Western Valley Enclosure was excavated. It was decided to leave the area unbackfilled in order to show visitors the relationship between the stone walls and dhaka structures. After ten years structures were affected by rapid deterioration due to the visitors and effects of the elements on the remains. Backfilling after ten years of exposure meant that the only place where visitors could have an insight into the relationship between the stone walling and the ordinary dwelling houses had to be closed. A quarter size miniature has now been constructed in its place. The other two are in the Hill Complex and do not have any interpretation information.

The presentation and interpretation in the museum displays and the guidebook is derived from archaeological sources. No mention or reference is made to the ‘myths, legends, oral histories or folklore’ related to the monument. Yet during our interviews with the local community elders it is clear that there are many legends and oral traditions pertaining to the monument of Great Zimbabwe. The official presentation and interpretation mainly focuses on the site as a relic with no relevance to today’s socio-economic or cultural environment. The monument is presented as a bygone civilisation.

As Fritz and Plog (1970) put it “We suspect that unless the archaeologists finds ways to make their research increasingly relevant to the modern world, the modern world will find it increasingly capable to getting along without archaeology”. The same can be said about sites like Great Zimbabwe. Thus our presentation need to be made more relevant and accessible to the public. It can also be argued that although we claim to preserve for future generations, the heritage is with us and the present generations have a right to enjoy it. Here the public is taken to mean simply those people who do not regard themselves as professional researchers. However the public is not homogeneous group. In Southern Africa the public can be divided into three broad groups: a) The foreign visitors who in most cases come to enjoy and learn. b) Local middle class and educated groups have similar interest to (a) but have cultural affiliation to the site. c) Local people who come for the above reasons but have religious interest in the sites.

If we are to make successful exhibitions it is necessary to understand the needs of this heterogeneous public.

All these groups hold consistently changing and potentially conflicting attitudes to the monuments as indicated in Chapter 7. Their interests have to be catered for. These attitudes are continuously changing given the ideological environment. The history of Great Zimbabwe might illustrate this point. Carl Mauch as indicated earlier, brought the Great Zimbabwe site to the attention of Europeans in the 1860s. Its size and grandeur impressed many and soon study tours from Europe began (Fig. 8.7). The presentation of this monument has not escaped the racial prejudices with which the early historiography of the site is synonymous. Suffice to mention that to a large extent the settler population from the 1900s to 1980 provided the organisational milieu, funds and audience for every research at Great Zimbabwe and this also had an influence on the conservation and presentation of the site (Garlake 1982). From 1965-1980 the Rhodesia Front acted to control and censor all museum displays, material guide books and archaeological writing that was accessible to the “public”. Africans were not encouraged to visit the site except as providers of tourist service. The control of access to this monument and its grandeur also promoted an opposite reaction in the African Nationalist political movement of the 1960-70s who saw the site as a powerful political symbol. This turbulent history of the monument affects its presentation in the future. It can be argued that presentation and exhibition of archaeological materials and remains especially those
Figure 8.4. Illustration of relationship of houses and stone enclosures by Lance Penny 1976. (Note the lack of human figures owing to Rhodesian censorship. (National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia).

Figure 8.5. Illustration by Lance Penny in 1976 to help visitors to interpret Great Zimbabwe (National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia).
Figure 8.6. Illustrated map of Great Zimbabwe by Lance Penny (National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe).
with varied symbolic overtones will never be objective and will always present controversial debates. Stonehenge and the Acropolis are well known examples.

So far the public who visit museums and cultural sites have been assumed to consist of foreign visitors or people with a European connection. The idea has been that the sites and exhibits are unique and mysterious and can only appeal to curious foreign visitors. This is demonstrated by the medium of communication used for displays and in guide books. Using both the Fry and Cloze test, the official guide books and labels on exhibitions in Zimbabwe Museums scores an average reading level of above 17 years whilst the university student reading levels is around 15. Besides being above local reading levels both the guide book and museums displays are biased towards the use of technical terminology. For example the fairly complex pottery classifications used by archaeologists are indiscriminately used on displays aimed at the public. The use of English and the above mentioned facts mean that more than 70% of the African community is alienated from the site. Yet any good preservation strategies will depend on the interest of the local communities who need guide books in indigenous languages.

The oral traditions, myths and legends, which the western scholar so much despised, have to find their way into the exhibitions, displays and general presentations. This serves not just the local communities, but the foreign visitor, who is genuinely interested in the culture of the area, for it creates that visitor experience which is uniquely Southern African. It also helps to generate the contextual framework in which to interpret the cultural heritage. As Bourdieu (1984) puts it, a work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence that is the code, into which it is encoded. Bourdieu (1977) introduces the concept of *habitus*, which takes into account the wider social contexts that provide the basis on which culture is assimilated, in the appreciation of archaeological remains and what they represent. These he says is founded in the influence of home and the school in representing these values. Bourdieu’s underlying thesis is that people, in order to appreciate or understand certain cultural resources, must have experienced certain forms of socialisation, that is a familial upbringing and

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*Figure 8.7. Carl Mauch’s first impressions of Great Zimbabwe and the surrounding landscape (from Burke 1969).*
education, that has endowed them with the cultural competence necessary to recognise such things. Yet the study of the past in the schools curricula is dominated by the past as presented in written records.

The presentation of the past through archaeology has tended to be sketchy at most and for obvious reasons that presented by indigenous communities' non-existence Any meaningful and lasting exhibition strategy will depend on the interest of the indigenous local communities. In order to cater for all these people it is necessary to use indigenous languages. The use of indigenous languages should not just be a direct translation of the English version but should utilise concepts which the locals can identify with. An example is the well-executed display panels at Domboshava caves, which are translated into Shona. However, the complex trance hypotheses theory of Louis Williams is also thrown into the indigenous version of the panel. The panels even dismiss the rain making ceremony as past practices and yet the last one was held in 1998! Whilst the indigenous people should be given access to enjoyment of their heritage by use of a medium which they are familiar with, this should not be equated with the exclusive right to interpret the site as suggested by Mufuka (1983). The suggestion is that there should be parallel ways of presentations of monuments in countries like Zimbabwe with a long colonial experience, by using traditional museum and exhibition techniques which take into consideration the language and cultural environment of the area. The promotion of the monument among schools children and the public should also include concepts of heritage preservation. However, the varying requirements of the public require more than plan exhibition, they must be professionally executed. If properly executed exhibitions are an effective means of interpreting the past and conveying information. The more they can stimulate visitor's interests and emotions and create an enjoyable experience, the more likely they are to learn. Studies conducted recently found that the most important factors at visitor centres appear to be the interpretative theme, the presentation media and the overall atmosphere of the displays.

8.5. Visitor management

Visitor management incorporates a number of methods, skills and techniques such as psychological barriers, signs and staff presence to protect areas, to the provision of presentation (interpretation) programs such as guides, guidebooks and visitor facility aimed at enhancing the understanding the place and maintaining its significance. The main aim of visitor management should be the provision of a worthwhile on-site experience (Pearson & Sullivan 1995).

There are two aspects of visitor management that should be considered when dealing with presentation of the archaeological remains.

- The provision of a worthwhile visitor experience and enjoyment.
- The provision of this experience with minimum interference to the conservation of the site and its immediate environs.

Recent studies show that the number of visitors to Great Zimbabwe has been increasing and obviously this has an effect on the site or museum (Table 8.1). The visitors facilities can also be extended beyond their intended capacity. All these factors mean that in order to give the public access and limit damage to the cultural heritage careful planning and monitoring is paramount.

Visitors on average spend about two and a half-hours on the monument per visit, and ap-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Paying visitors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 1989 to June 1990</td>
<td>84 960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1990 to June 1991</td>
<td>87 820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1991 to June 1992</td>
<td>88 296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1992 to June 1993</td>
<td>70 720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1993 to June 1994</td>
<td>102 877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1994 to June 1995</td>
<td>111 649</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1995 to June 1996</td>
<td>120 993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1996 to June 1997</td>
<td>91 652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1997 to June 1998</td>
<td>88 122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1998 to June 1999</td>
<td>153 343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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proximately 80% of the time at specific areas. In order of priority these are the Great Enclosure, the Curio shop and the Hill Complex. Even in these areas specific locations are preferred for example around the Conical Tower in the Great Enclosure. This preference for certain areas inevitably causes a certain amount of erosion to the ground and archaeological remains. The erosion can also trigger foundation problems on stone walls. There is therefore need to alleviate pressure on these popular spots by providing alternative routes. Flexible but easily controlled alternative paths for visitors should be available. The alternatives will cater for the disabled and elderly who may find it difficult to visit certain sections of the monument. It would be difficult to restrict visits to certain areas but the only way to alleviate this pressure is to provide worthwhile exhibits and in-site interpretation areas. For example in the Hill Complex the PWD pit can be utilised to show the public the occupation sequence of the site. This has been shown to work with the Valley Enclosures. Before the 1987 excavation in the valley very few visitors went to the area but now with the exhibition excavation it is beginning to attract attention. The centralisation of visitors’ amenities like car parks, Curio shop, entrance and main museum offer greater control of the flow of visitors and limit unnecessary intervention into the historic environment of the monument. Provision of areas to take photographs would also limit the climbing of the walls and walking over archaeological remains. The diversity of routes to view the monument can also be utilised as a vehicle to give the visitors a varied but rich experience of the heritage.

One major problem with large out door sites is how to sustain the interest of the visitor throughout the tour. This is very difficult given that most of the interpretation is done in a single museum. Studies in Australia have indicated that on average visitor interest at an archaeological site is captured for approximately 20 minutes before it starts to wander. It is therefore paramount to have in-situ displays in various sections of the site than at one centralised place. This will then be complemented by the main museum as the interpretation centre. Frequent exhibitions of archaeological excavation would help de-mystify archaeological methods of recovering data to the general public. These will be presented as alternatives to oral traditions and local legends, which are the sources of local history in most of sub-Saharan Africa. Similar exhibitions on conservation work and methods would also help in making visitors aware of some of the problems of the site. Full-scale and model reconstruction and living exhibition of traditional crafts (demonstration) will also help bring archaeology to life and give the public an added satisfaction. However, several constrains have to be taken into account in the presentation and interpretation of the monument and landscape. Inter alia these are the protection and conservation of the significant values of the site and the capacity of the site to have more visitors.

8.6. An educational resource

One of the most important roles of the archaeologist in Zimbabwe, which has important implications for the future of the discipline of archaeology, is trying to get the teachers to understand what archaeologists do and how archaeological methodology can be applied in the classroom. This will ensure that the next generation recognises its value. Archaeology is an extremely visual subject and one that cries out for student involvement in a proactive way.

Studies carried out in the classroom and at archaeological sites demonstrate that the application of archaeology is an effective tool. They show that the application of archaeology in the classroom was a powerful means of introducing the excluded past (Stone & Makkenzie 1990). In South Africa it provided pupils with the tools to challenge and deal with the negative images of the past and associated racial, ethnic and gender stereotypes created by past system. For example, it has been shown that archaeology can enhance pupils awareness and appreciation of the contribution made by all South Africans in the country’s past by providing new ways of investigating the past and allowing them to question the authority of the written record. By introducing pupils to the whole gamut of different kinds of evidence, the experience of the past is not lim-
ited to the comparison of different texts; rather their eyes are opened to a multiplicity of clues about the past that exist independently of the written word. This also places them in a position to expand their knowledge and understanding of the unwritten Southern African past.

The interaction with actual artefacts in specific context is a valuable and effective means of promoting empathy and eagerness to engage and identify with the past. Archaeology can enable pupils to understand and engage with the process of interpretation. Using multimedia techniques can also fulfil this. A multimedia presentation provides a creative and educational platform for schoolchildren to explore a wide range of source materials on the history of a place. It also promotes and stimulates the use of computers in general. Multimedia collects various media such as video, sound, graphics, animation and text that together come to form a single unit. Interactive multimedia offers the user control and navigation ability of the presented material. The CD format has several advantages to benefit from, among others easy handling and transport, high storage capacities, durability and low costs.

As part of this study a multimedia program was produced in order to popularise Great Zimbabwe and archaeology in schools. The objectives of the project were:

To make the methods and results of archaeological research accessible to children in such a way as to kindle enthusiasm for and encourage understanding of historical and cultural processes.

To build and encourage an appreciation of the value of African archaeology and archaeology in general.

The work has resulted in a pilot demo, based on the following themes:

Understanding Great Zimbabwe — This theme basically introduced the site of Great Zimbabwe particularly the four main components, namely the Great Enclosure, Hill Complex, Valley Enclosure and the Peripheral areas.

Great Zimbabwe, Madzimbabwe — The theme utilises a series of simple questions to discuss the life at Great Zimbabwe. Using the questions, the origins of the site, the life during its occupation, the fashion and religion are presented.

Myths and Legends — This theme was aimed at showing that there are alternative histories. The theme uses a popular myths about a pair of magical zoomorphic pots.

Looking after Great Zimbabwe — The theme discusses the conservation efforts being carried out in order to ensure that present and future generations enjoy this monument.

Other Zimbabwe sites — This theme introduces other Madzimbabwe sites in the region like Manyikenii in Mozambique, Thulamela in South Africa and Domboshaba in Botswana.

The resultant CDROM utilised both scientific knowledge as provided by archaeologists and also the oral histories and legends as provided by traditional knowledge sources. Some of the academic debates on the social use and life at Great Zimbabwe were explored using cartoon drawings and animated figures to make the exploration of the CD interesting (Fig. 8.8). The idea was also not to rely too much on text for communication. The images are accompanied by music provided by the participating schools. Thus they were not just recipients of the CD but also participated in its making.

The pilot demo was presented in Zimbabwe to three teachers training colleges and two primary schools in September 1999 and the reaction was overwhelming. The students enjoyed the experience and they also learnt something about Great Zimbabwe. The idea of targeting teachers training colleges was based on practical issues. First they were likely to have computers and secondly it was hoped that once they graduate they will then be able to pass on the information to their pupils.

The overall objective of this project was the dissemination of archaeological knowledge to the general public with particular emphasis on educational institutions located around Great Zimbabwe.

It can be argued that children who use the multimedia assimilate the images and this has a profound effect on the way the knowledge is constructed and the past perceived in adult life. Images demand less privileged knowledge, less of the jargon that sets academics apart from the
Overcrowding and squalid conditions
Beach's interpretation.

Life in the Golden Age—partyng and feasting
Mufuka's interpretation.

Figure 8.8. Some of the illustrated interpretations from the educational CD.
general public. A picture may be recognised outside the relativist domain of language.

8.7. Discussion

It is clear that presentation of the past in schools curricula and in museums and site interpretations will benefit from a greater understanding of how the past is interpreted by archaeologists and indigenous peoples. It is therefore argued here that a greater understanding by the general public and pupils will ensure greater levels of protection of the site. The extension of the ways in which the past is studied and understood by students and members of the general public would go a long way in empowering indigenous communities and making them proud again after so many years of being alienated from these monuments and denied meaningful access. The incorporation of indigenous values and views into the way archaeologists, museums and educational institutions present the past would also enrich these in terms of the academic discourse on the presented heritage. It is argued that the preservation of the heritage must incorporate methods, which will make it easier for schools and the local communities to utilise the resource. National Museums and Monuments has made some limited attempts to address children, two booklets were produced one by Sanyabumbi (1992) a children's colour book and the other by Mvenge and Masona (1994). Both utilised animated story telling as a vehicle of educating children about Great Zimbabwe. Unfortunately these booklets were never distributed to schools but sold at the monument as part of the tourist literature.

The monuments in Southern Africa provide special presentation problems. Visitors are equipped with different levels of skills and expectations. The displays therefore have to cater for all ages including adults with no reading skills. The diversity in the level of skills is further complicated by the fact that Southern African countries are multi-lingual societies in which not everyone necessarily speaks the same language. Whilst most foreign visitors speak English there are some who do not. The use of visual images would go a long way towards reducing barriers imposed by lingual restrictions.

It is argued that presentation of archaeological places in Africa as cultural attractions offers the opportunity to surmount its colonial past and reconstruct its archaeological interpretation in a practically viable manner. Yet as Garlake (1982) observed in Zimbabwe, despite attainment of political independence and the removal of censorship in the practice of archeology Great Zimbabwe (indeed most archaeological monuments) remains to the mass of the population 'a remote and meaningless abstraction alienated from all that is significant in their culture'. Although this statement was made in 1982 the situation remains partly true almost 20 years later. However as indicated above efforts are being made to rectify the problems created in the past. This ultimately rest on the new generation of archaeologist, researchers and the public at large to overcome the very deep divisions resulting from the imposition of and clash of differing world views on the Zimbabwe plateau over the past 500 years.
9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1. Introduction
Although heritage management systems in Southern Africa are slowly changing, the experience from Great Zimbabwe and elsewhere as indicated in previous chapters hardly supports this view. This has meant focusing on the tangible elements of the heritage and over emphasizing the monumental and archaeological aspects. The colonial experience and the introduction of international conventions from such organisations as UNESCO seem to have had a strong influence in the way heritage management has evolved. These seem to promote the idea of monuments, sites or places as relics from the past with limited relevance to the present socio-cultural environment. The experience from Great Zimbabwe and elsewhere as indicated in previous chapters is hardly the case. The practice of heritage management in Southern Africa has in the past ignored the role of local communities or people in the process of managing cultural sites. This is not surprising given that most heritage managers are researcher professionals i.e. Archaeologists, Botanist, Historians, Anthropologists etc whose main concern in the heritage has previously always been to put to the fore ‘objects’ ‘artefacts’ ‘monuments’ and ‘specimens’. This in the end removes the people from the environs of such monuments as Great Zimbabwe, Domboshaba or Thulamela. By isolating these monuments we create buffer zones to exclude them from the local communities. The designated monuments and sites are intricately intertwined with people’s lives, as they are part and parcel of a vibrant and dynamic cultural landscape. Thus heritage management has both a technical and a political dimension. There is need to have access to first rate, unarguable technical data, but also realistic information on legal, regional and political situation. Generally the experience also demonstrates that the cultural landscape on which the monuments are situated are not just represented by the tangible physical aspects like the architectural and archaeological remains. This requires being sensitive to the archaeology vision which recognises the importance of the contextual setting (Hodder 1992) and which looks beyond the myopic focus on the site, artefact or monument. The metaphysical or intangible aspects are of great importance particularly if we are to understand the total cultural significance of these places. Great Zimbabwe, like Njelele in the Matopo is regarded by many Zimbabweans as first and foremost a National Shrine. It is also regarded by many African people all over the world as a symbol of African identity. The Local communities too regard the place as of spiritual significance. It has therefore been argued that the local and indigenous communities have been denied access to the place due to initially the colonial practice and later the new heritage management systems which turn to ignore the metaphysical aspects of the place. Access to the cultural property by local and indigenous communities is very impor-
tant not only because the heritage is theirs. It also will help in restoring damaged self-confidence. If any development projects are to succeed then the communities concerned must be self-confident and this can be achieved once people begin to be proud about their past and also that they own the heritage.

9.2. Preservation

At Great Zimbabwe any conservation programme has to recognise that structures like the dry-stone walls started falling and collapsing from the moment they were built. They were unique structures and had their own inherent weakness and problems. This means that intervention in the form of rebuilding and alterations must have been a continuous process over the two or so centuries of effective occupation. The same can be said of the other structures like the dhaka houses; old ones destroyed and new ones constructed in their place. This process of continuous building and alterations is a clearly demonstrated by the exposed and now eroding sections of the Western Enclosure in the Hill Complex. Here the stratigraphy shows the continuity of occupation with structures lying on top of each other, thus providing a visual chronostratigraphic sequence of the Hill. Therefore, it appears that the continued existence of most of the structures depended on a regular maintenance programme. We do not know how long dhaka structures lasted with regular maintenance, but the dry-stone lasted several centuries with minimum intervention. Any conservation programme of this monument must therefore place emphasis on regular monitoring and maintenance for the preservation of the structures and objects.

From the previous chapters the steps taken to preserve monuments like Great Zimbabwe or Thulamela have all been based on sound international conservation principles as espoused by the Venice Charter (1954). It can therefore be argued that the practice of conserving monuments and archaeological remains has been acceptable internationally. However there are some disturbing attitudes, which we can trace, back to the last century. From the 1900s a number of sites have had sections of them destroyed by treasure hunters looking for gold. Some of the early archaeological excavations were not systematic and were destructive particularly to structural remains. Most excavators were mainly interested in the artefacts. At places like Naletale, Dananombe, Khami, Mapungubwe and K2 excavated trenches made in the past have left unsightly scars on the archaeological landscape (Plate 9.1). At times water collects into these uncovered trenches and thus promotes rapid decay of artefacts. At places such as Naletale and Dananombe the trenches were not systematic and thus show the impression of haphazard archaeological research. At Great Zimbabwe excavations by Hall and Bent also left such scars on the surface of the site. This is important when dealing with such places like Great Zimbabwe where we have to consider the structural relations and their environment. This is very important also in terms of presentation of the site. As indicated earlier a comprehensive conservation strategy should include the image one is trying to preserve.

9.3. Presentation

Presentation is not just about visitor management but a whole range of on-site experiences ranging from the entrance, facilities, accessibility of information provided and what people remember about the place. Presentation basically should centre on communication. It is ironic that the public most directly connected to the heritage has not been a primary audience for presenting monuments. Although there are some notable and promising moves to address the situation such attempts are still in the minority. Of significance has been the recently conducted ritual ceremony to open a sacred water fountain at Great Zimbabwe monument. The sacred natural water fountain had been closed and sealed using concrete in the 1950's. This action did not please the neighbouring communities of Charumbira, Nemanwa and Mugabe because they regarded the fountain as a gift from the ancestors particularly during draught years. In 2000 NMMZ sponsored a ritual ceremony to reopen the fountain and this allowed the local community to have access to the site.

However, apart from allowing the local community access to the monument to perform rituals and perhaps use of some resources attempts must also be made to communicate the profes-
sional research results by archaeologists and conservators. The results must be presented in various ways so as to reach the different interest groups who have an interest in the heritage. In short the general public must be informed and whilst educational efforts take time to yield results it is the only way of ensuring that present and future generations play a part in managing their own heritage.

9.4. Conclusions

Besides the promotion of the site to the public and local community the conservation of ruined monument like Great Zimbabwe must be based on simple but familiar techniques. These should preferably be derived from the traditional and local conditions of the area. There is need to find appropriate and sympathetic solutions that do not depend on expensive imported high technology. The management of monuments is influenced in many ways by our ideas of the contemporary world. Thus in order to present the archaeological heritage successfully to the public, the strategy of preservation and presentation must be integrated. This needs a multi-disciplinary team to formulate and implement. The central issue is how to make the monument intelligible and accessible to the public in a way that avoids degrading the very site that people want to see and also bequeath it to the next generation so that they too can have archaeological sites they deserve. As a cultural asset, cultural tourism is one way in which the rural community around Great Zimbabwe and in many other places can begin to develop. It is a source of income, and in most cases the only feasible source. Besides the local community the tourist industry provides the much needed funding for the total conservation strategy. However, there is a danger that we may become too concerned with heritage as a marketable commodity and lose sight of the educational and conservation objectives. Thus a corporate strategy to develop the heritage industry should adopt a code of practice that reconciles the needs of the monument and its environment with those of the public. These must also take into consideration the impact of all this on the local rural community. The future of conservation and heritage management in most developing countries will depend on how these can be seen as enhancing the life and development of the area. Adopting a purely academic view towards the monuments will in the long run lead to neglect of the heritage and ensure that both
the local community and policy makers ignore its management. This will also mean no funding for heritage management projects, which will clearly be given low priority by central government due to lack of tangible and meaningful benefits to the development of the country. By reconciling the various cultural values of places we begin to address some of the problems of making local communities and the public in general have access and be proud of their past. It can also be argued that for local people to begin to participate in any economic and democratic development in the present world they must be proud of themselves and their heritage.

In the final analysis, it has to be realized that the long-term management of heritage places in Southern Africa will depend on continued evaluation of the local environment rather than huge dosages of international aid. The best is a management ethos that arises from the local socio-environment. The future of places like Great Zimbabwe, Khami, Domboshaba, Thulamela and Manyikeni will depend on the values society ascribe to them at any given time. Their management therefore must be based on wide consultation and accommodation of the diverse interests and aspirations.
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This thesis explores traditional ways of heritage management. They are discussed in relation to the various experiences at the Great Zimbabwe National Monument. The architectural conservation programmes implemented at Great Zimbabwe are outlined and reviewed in the context of archaeological heritage management in Southern Africa. The thesis emphasizes the need for integrative planning and management structures that promote a rapprochement between scientific and local knowledge. This provides the best chance of avoiding irreversible cultural degradation resulting from arbitrary decisions of management and policy makers.